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ENG
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Layers Project

Recently, there have been multiple disgusting attacks against the Asian community. These attacks were unprovoked and mostly targeted against the elderly. Being a part of this community, I feel strongly about it, and I'd like to take a deeper dive and get to the core of the issue. During the rise of Covid-19, Asian-Americans were seen as threats because it was thought that the virus was a genetic disorder, and all Asians had it. Fueled by this initial thought, nothing was made better when Donald J. Trump called Covid-19 the "Chinese Virus" in front of millions of people. When you take both these things into account, you can start to see why people began attacking us. My people have been killed, beat down, assaulted and we still stand strong together. The purpose of this assignment is to provide 'layers' into the topic that I'm speaking upon, and I believe that this specific topic that I chose has many layers to it.

Ever since Asian Americans began migrating to the U.S, they were almost immediately seen as a threat. In an article titled, The long history of racism against Asian Americans in the U.S. written by Adrian De Leon, I was able to find a general timeline of the discrimination against Asian Americans. People believed that Asians were "unfit to migrate to America due to the general white population". Because of this uprising, the Chinese Exclusion Act was put into place. Essentially, this prohibited anyone from China to be able to migrate to the states. It wasn't just the Chinese who had to undergo these rules though. Japanese Americans were sent into internment camps under Executive Order 9066. This was after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt was under heavy pressure and decided to send people who had

nothing to do with the attack to these camps. With the constant flow of hate and discrimination, people began to become more used to being the oppressors towards Asian-Americans. Each issue that I spoke about earlier contributed to issues that would have arisen in the future. These situations had already set initial precedents for years to come.

Growing up, I was almost always made fun of because of my race. People would often mock my home language by saying, “ching chong,” or pulling the sides of their eyes to make them seem more slanted. It seems as if racism against my people is something like a trend. To many people, making fun of me was just humorous, but to me, it was just saddening. These precedents that I spoke about earlier is something that many parents passed onto their children. These children learned how to be racist from their parents, and people like me have to just sit there and deal with it. However, the parents of these children grew up in a time where racism was a societal norm. Parents can’t fully be blamed for something that they simply aren’t educated on. Society has to do with failing new generations and failing to educate them. After learning how to be racist from their parents, these children take these mannerisms into public spaces like school. It’s not only in school that people experience these types of situations but in more professional areas like work there’s racism as well. The Health Impacts of Covid-19 Related Racial Discrimination of Asian Americans Extend Into the Workplace written by Aurora B. Le touches upon how Covid-19 caused hate to spread into the workplace. It’s almost unthinkable that in a professional setting, people still aren’t afraid to be racist. In the medical field, Filipinos make up for around 30% of registered nurses, and since the start of Covid, represent around 30% of registered nurse deaths. This just goes to show that Asian-Americans aren’t just sitting around and doing nothing for this nation. If our people are going into hospital

rooms, and saving lives there at the risk of their own, why should other people be so selfish as to inflict harm on them?

At the beginning of this whole virus, the attacks on Asian-Americans were high, and there was a new one almost daily. However, my community was not as vocal as they are currently. This situation itself has its own layers to it. While many Asian-Americans were being attacked, we were afraid to stand up for ourselves because we were loathed with self-doubt. Throughout all of our lives, we were used to not being heard by others and looked down on. After the killing of George Floyd, the black community began protesting and a movement had already begun. Right behind them was the Asian-American community. We fought alongside BLM and knew we wanted a change in the system. Months after this, the attacks on Asian-Americans began. We expected help, and other people to speak out alongside us, but none came. This time though, we were prepared to stand up for ourselves. All over social media, people are posting about stopping Asian hate, and every day, there's a new attack. Almost no one except the Asian community is saying anything about it. In fact, many of these posts have people typing "LOL" and mocking the community. The Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (AP3CON) has received thousands of reports about discrimination since the beginning of the pandemic, and not much has changed. Blatant hate crimes in the news are almost never labeled as hate crimes, and it seems like the higher-ups aren't doing much to protect our people. With so many attacks going on daily, it almost seems like it's a trend to hurt our people.

In a study found by Bongki Woo and Jungmi Jun, it seems like discrimination sometimes varied by socioeconomic differences (age, gender, education, income), which could explain why many people tend to target an older age group. In the same study, it was found that 33% of participants had gone through Covid-19 related discrimination. If you relate this to the general

population of the United States, that's almost 6.9 million Asian-Americans who could have potentially been discriminated against in this year alone. The fact that a number that large could even be a possibility is just absurd. It was also found that Asian-Americans are typically more depressed than other racial groups. This could correlate with discrimination as well as many other things. Oftentimes, we feel like we aren't enough, and the shackles that society tends to put on us may lead to us feeling more depressed than others. It's important to emphasize how Asian-Americans tend to be more pressured throughout their childhood due to the high expectations placed on them. We're supposed to be 'smart,' and these stereotypes often cause us to feel like failures when we don't meet these expectations. Aside from this, being "depressed" seems to be a common trait within teens these days, and because I'm still a teen, I know that my generation is one of the more mellow and gloomy generations.

Asian-Americans make up around 5.6% of the total population in American, which makes people feel like we're easily targetable. In the journal, *Discrimination in the United States: Experiences of Asian Americans*, a study was also conducted that found similar results. This journal gave a solid conclusion about potential solutions to this issue. There are many communities online that can serve as great places for people to talk to each other about their issues. However, many of these communities aren't exactly easy to get into, and they're sometimes hard to find unless you're looking for them specifically. Another viable solution presented is the call for more culturally competent mental health services that are catered specifically for Asian-Americans. Since most of the world can be digital now, it would be important for everything to be accessed via the internet. There are many people who are unable to even leave their homes out of fear, and making these services online would be a great help for everyone. The more services available to the general public, the more people that can be saved.

It's without being said that discrimination against any race will probably never stop, but public aid for those races can continue to improve.

The American Journal of Public Health includes an article titled, *Potential Impact of Covid-19-Related Racial Discrimination on the Health of Asian Americans*, there's some of the more hopeful aspects of this situation included. This article touched upon how Asian-Americans have been the butt of hate crimes since "Yellow Peril." However, there have been many significant changes since that time that allow us to defend ourselves better. There has been an emergence of more ways to track these events of racial bias. Also, because of the awareness that's been spreading, there can only be improvements from here. As long as people continue to shed light on this situation, there will be positives.

This Layers project helped me realize just how many layers are involved in what seems like a straightforward situation. These hate crimes should never be happening, and if they ever do happen, justice needs to be served. Being a part of this community that's endured so much doesn't make me feel embarrassed, but instead allows me to feel empowered. The Asian-American community has gone through hell and back since World War II, and we deserve to be heard. Every single layer has affected this situation, from the Yellow Peril to BLM to the pandemic. It was about time that everything bottled up and we ended up erupting. I really enjoyed writing about my community, and I learned many new things. I never knew that Asian-Americans made up only 5.6% of the population and were one of the more depressed communities.

Questions:

1. Do you think a counter argument would have been necessary for this kind of issue?

2. I feel like my sentences are a bit short compared to those that my classmates have written. Do you see this as an issue?
3. My writing was a mix of sources and input. Should I emphasize one form more than the other?
4. I'd like you to think about your opinion on this topic and keep that in mind while reading my writing.
5. While reading my paper, has any of your opinions changed on the topic, or did you learn anything new about the topic?

Bibliography

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