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*Summer 2020*

# ASIAN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST

*The official newsletter of the Asian American  
Psychological Association*



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August 2020

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**3** **President's Message**  
**5** **Finance Report**  
MATT LEE & JAN ESTRADELLO

**6** **Membership Report**  
KAVITA ATWAL

**7** **Statements in Solidarity  
with BLM**

**12** **Dialogic Reflections**  
*Educating youth during times of  
COVID-19*  
MAICA PORCADAS

**14** **Sticks and Stones**  
*Parenting while Asian during COVID-  
19*  
PORTIA CHAN

**16** **"I Am Not a Virus"**  
*From bullying to bravery--caring  
with courage*  
MELE KRAMER

**20** **Meaning in the Time of  
Coronavirus**  
DARCY S. F. ING

**22** **Fighting Stigma in the  
World of an "Infodemic"**  
SOYONG KIM & ANNIE RESNIKOFF

**24** **What is Love? COVID, Don't  
Hurt Me**  
MICHAEL HUYNH



**31**  
REMEMBERING  
DR. JEAN LAU  
CHIN

**26** **Empowering Professional  
Experiences**  
CAITI BRADBURY, JOCELYN BUHAIN,  
MUHAMMAD BILAL & MIN-JEONG YANG

**28** **Embracing racism, not expertise,  
is leading to a new wave of trauma**  
SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI

**31** **Remembering a Hero Always  
Within Us**  
MATTHEW MOCK

**34** **In Memory**  
*A dedication to Dr. Jean Lau Chin, Ed.D.*

**35** **Announcements**

**36** **AAPA Newsletter Team**

**39** **AAPA Executive Council**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

RICHELLE CONCEPCION

PSY.D., MPH.

*PRESIDENT*



I was on an airplane, on my way back from some training in Washington D.C. when I was hearing the news about this mysterious respiratory virus that was infecting thousands by the day. I remember watching the various news shows where numerous reporters described the potential origins of the disease from a large open market in Wuhan, China. As

a public health professional trained in epidemiology and disease pathology, I understood the science behind the virus' development and spread via airborne transmission. What I didn't expect was the development of a racism pandemic spewed out of misinformation from various media sources. The thousands of racist acts that have been documented since March 2020 are reminiscent of the incidents that occurred as a consequence of other epidemics. They also spawned flashbacks of hatred and misunderstanding can lead to tragedies such as the death of Vincent Chin. What has given me hope in light of everything COVID-related is the plethora of resources that were developed for support and to foster much-needed healing in our communities. Though I'm saddened to think that the instances of racism may not go away anytime soon, I try to focus on the impact that our communities have as we come together in solidarity.

My husband and I were talking recently about our own experiences with racism. He told me that a few years ago while out of state for military training, he and a co-worker who identified as Haitian American were walking in the local downtown area after having dinner. They were stopped by law enforcement officers who questioned their activities in the middle of the night and were subsequently patted down. While my husband was cleared immediately after showing the officers his military ID, his friend was not so fortunate as he was forced to remove several articles of clothing to prove to the officers that he was not an imminent threat. My husband told me that he stood by in shock and tried to intervene but was told to remain quiet and remain where he was. After the experience, my husband asked his friend how he felt about being violated by the police.

His friend shrugged and said, "It's something I've been used to as a Black man living in the US". When he said that, my heart broke.

Though I already knew the answer, I kept asking myself, "why does this keep happening," especially when recalling the recent deaths of Mr. Arbery and Breonna Taylor, and the countless others whose deaths weren't reported in the news. When I learned that the other officers involved didn't get charged with murder until now, my immediate thought was, "Why TF did it take so long?"

I can't necessarily say that the thoughts above were recent revelations as opposed to ongoing inner dialogues that I'm still processing about the other injustices before this one. What I do know was that my anger incited me enough to want to take action. While I considered the various courses of action I could choose from, I had to determine what was most appropriate for me as an Asian American woman who identified as an ally.

Truthfully, I didn't think I had any right to call myself an ally of the Black community or to support the Black Lives Matter movement because I grew up with anti-Black values. I had a colonial mentality of valuing "whiteness," and I've had to do work for the past several years to reject those values. The reality is that my anti-Black views have been so internalized at such a deep level, to the point that these values are traced back to my ancestors, that I still have much work to do-- and a long way to go.

I reflect on the times in history when

our Black siblings stood in solidarity with us in our fight for justice, and it made me think about how we can stand by our Black siblings. Such is the case of Corporal David Fagen, who would later become Captain of the Philippine Army, and other African American soldiers who defected during the Philippine American War. In the 1970s, when the city of San Francisco was trying to evict Filipinos from Little Manila to build the Financial District, the Black Panthers stood by the Filipino Community. I also reflect on the work of Yuri Kochiyama and Larry Itliong, Asian American activists who stood with movements such as the black liberation and the United Farmworkers' movements, respectively.

In light of the recent tragic events, I am grateful to several folks in our community who've lent their voices to uplift our Black siblings while still battling the impact of racism and Xenophobia associated with COVID-19. Whichever way our folks decide to fight the good fight, we can commit to doing so in solidarity.

I didn't want to close without recognizing someone whose voice has been instrumental in empowering numerous others. We lost Dr. Jean Lau Chin in May and truly felt a void in our community as she left a lasting imprint on those whose lives she touched as a leader, professor, and mentor. She was known to be a selfless individual who advocated for inclusion and diversity. As an AAPA community, may we continue to uphold many of the values she epitomized.

# FINANCE REPORT

**MATT LEE, PH.D. & JAN ESTRELLADO, PH.D.**  
*CO-FINANCE OFFICERS*

AAPA's Co-Finance Officers (FOs) Matt Lee and Jan Estrellado are happy to report that AAPA's bank accounts are in good condition. Our total combined balance from ETrade and PayPal is \$145,219.87 as of March 23, 2020. Subtracting fiscal agent accounts and AAPA Division balances, AAPA's main account has \$93,763.32 in working capital.

The FOs are pleased to share the following updates with the AAPA membership:

- **2020 BUDGET** The FOs facilitated the approval of a 2020 budget at the January 2020 EC retreat. The 2020 budget continues addressing the financial growth of the organization, with funds earmarked for the organization's reincorporation process, and improvements to the organization's online presence. The budget includes projected income streams, Division balances, and estimated loss/gain. The organization's largest expense this first quarter was the EC Retreat, whose receipts totaled to \$9,201.33.
- **DIVISION BUDGET REQUESTS** At the retreat, all approved 2019 and 2020 Division requests for funds were disbursed. In particular, we want to recognize the generosity of Divisions' leadership, who scaled back many of their requests in order to prioritize our reincorporation procedures and online management and keep the overall organization financially healthy.
- **TAXES** The FOs created a tax filing process that will ensure greater annual tax compliance.
- **DIVISION FINANCES** The FOs will begin sending division finance officers copies of their quarterly reports to help track spending and to increase tax compliance.
- **REIMBURSEMENTS** The FOs streamlined the reimbursement process to distribute funds more quickly.
- **LONG-TERM FINANCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE** The FOs consulted with Joyce Chu, treasurer of Division 45, in preparation for discussions with the EC to develop a long-term financial infrastructure for AAPA, including a reserve and investment strategy.
- **FINANCE OFFICER BYLAWS** In February 2020, the FOs submitted a revised list of bylaws specific to the FO role.
- **FINANCIAL ASSISTANTS** The FOs hired two student financial assistants in the past few months. Katherine Au will work primarily with Matt Lee on reimbursements and banking. Lynette Lively-Cookson will work primarily with Jan Estrellado on tax compliance.
- **BANK ACCOUNT CONSOLIDATION** The process to move AAPA's accounts to a single bank account with credit cards and Division treasurer subaccounts is on hold, as past presidents from AAPA continue working on closing the organization's status in Arizona and starting a new reincorporation process in California.

# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

**KAVITA ATWAL, PH.D.**  
*MEMBERSHIP OFFICER*

Hello AAPA Members,

The Asian American Psychological Association currently has a total membership count of 1,237 members. Please see the table below for a breakdown of the membership categories.

Thank you for being an AAPA member! AAPA's membership has been steadily growing and we would like to see this trend continue, so please help us recruit new members to join our AAPA community!

You can easily edit your AAPA membership through our website at [www.aapaonline.org](http://www.aapaonline.org). We have added an option to add Division membership online as well! If you are having difficulty logging into your account, there is an option to reset your password online.

Your AAPA membership will last for an entire year from the date that you signed up and will be automatically renewed after the year is complete. Please email us if you would like to opt out of having your membership automatically renewed.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding AAPA membership, please do not hesitate to contact me at [kavitaatwal@gmail.com](mailto:kavitaatwal@gmail.com).

Thank you for your continuing support of AAPA!

Best,  
Kavita Atwal, Ph.D.

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Students	763
Professional	465
Emeritus	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>1237</b>

# STATEMENT

## *The Asian American Psychological Association Reaffirms Solidarity with Black Lives Matter during Pandemic of Racism*

The Asian American Psychological Association mourns the loss of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, innocent lives and countless unnamed others lost to violent murders. We, once again, stand strongly against systemic violence and affirm that Black Lives Matter. We wish to show our unwavering support and solidarity with our Black siblings both within and outside of our AAPA membership. As an organization and community of immigrants, refugees, and people of color, we unequivocally condemn such acts of hate and violence and commit to supporting our members, students, victims, families, and communities during these difficult times. We, once again, urge our membership to continue working on identifying and dismantling the anti-black racism that exists within Asian American communities and beyond. A system that does not value Black lives will never truly value Asian lives.

As psychologists and mental health professionals, we recognize the racial and physical violence and traumatic grief that is being forced on Black Americans. We reject the lie of White Supremacy and call upon our membership to lead their respective communities in unlearning the myths that divide us from our siblings. We cannot stand idly by and must recognize the historical implications of our silence visually re-depicted by the two Asian American bystander officers in the murder of George Floyd. The historical stressors of oppression and injustice on Black Americans have consistently been linked to reductions in psychological wellness (Gee et al., 2019). Indeed, almost all Black Americans report experiencing racism, with the majority reporting daily encounters (APA, 2016). These constant attacks deplete psychological and physiological resources while perpetrating hostile and threatening environments.

To help move forward, we strongly advocate for institutional change through individual and systemic evaluations to help pinpoint areas of bias, followed by appropriate programming across workplaces, schools,

and government systems. We suggest more intensive training and vetting at all stages and levels of the police academy to reduce racial bias and improve de-escalation skills. And most importantly, we ask our leaders (local to national) to take a strong stance against anti-Black racism and violence.

To our Black members, students, and professionals, we encourage you to make yourself a priority and create space for your personal self-care and that of your community. We also encourage you to consider reaching out to your family, friends, religious and spiritual institutions, mental health professionals, and local community and support groups.

For allies and supporters, we encourage you to reach out to folks within your network to allow space for sharing, venting, grieving, fear, and any other emotions that might arise. We encourage you to hold yourself accountable in ways that you can to not be silent-- stand up, speak out, and support our African American and Black siblings. Work to identify, deconstruct, and remove the Anti-Blackness lurking in your daily interactions, on your social media, and in your teaching, research, service, and advocacy work. Make your allyship local and visible. We also encourage you to engage in discussions with the children in your lives about racism especially as they're watching some of the most recent events in the media.

We demand justice and accountability for George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor. We also send our sincere condolences to their respective friends, family, and community as they mourn yet more losses of light and power in the Black community.

### **Past AAPA Statements**

<https://aapaonline.org/?s=statement>

### **References**

- Hope, E. C., Hoggard, L. S., & Thomas, A. (2016). Becoming an adult in the face of racism. *Monitor on Psychology*, 47(6), 35-38.
- Gee, G. C., Hing, A., Mohammed, S., Tabor, D. C., & Williams, D. R. (2019). Racism and the life course: taking time seriously. *American journal of public health*, 109(S1), S43-S47.

### **Resource**

Live Document of Resources Against Anti-Blackness started by Dr. Jayakar V. Nayak [bit.ly/combat-antiblackness](https://bit.ly/combat-antiblackness)

# STATEMENT

## *DoSAA Stands in Solidarity With Black Lives Matter*

**We are DoSAA - the Asian American Psychological Association's Division on South Asian Americans.** As an organization composed of South Asian Americans who hold multiple marginalized identities and are impacted by oppression and the inequality of our society, one of our goals is to create safe spaces in which trust and community can be built. Now, we hurt with our people, and we stand in solidarity with our Black communities to call for anti-racism and to break down the systems of inequality and oppression we are all mired in. We are together. We are united.

It is important for us to understand the privilege that we, as South Asian Americans, hold in this world. We need to address the anti-Blackness in our South Asian American community. We recognize that it can be uncomfortable, painful, and psychologically taxing to do so, but it is our responsibility to stand in solidarity. As mental health professionals, we understand the profound, widespread, and ingrained impact of systems of injustice and oppression on emotional and mental wellbeing, and take seriously our duty to be a part of a society that moves towards justice.

Let's start and maintain conversations about anti-Blackness, social justice, intersectionality, and advocacy for permanent justice. Let's support each other. Let's not stay silent. Let us be united, together.



# STATEMENT

## ***AAPA Division on Students' Statement Concerning Anti-Black Racism***

As an organization committed to challenging systemic racism, the Asian American Psychological Association's Division on Students (DoS) stands in solidarity with the Black community as we mourn the untimely deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and Tony McDade. DoS unequivocally condemns the disproportionate use of excessive force by police in Black communities and supports efforts to hold all officers accountable for their state-sanctioned violence.

It is critical for our Asian American communities to actively work against anti-Blackness. Officer Tou Thao's complicity in the murder of George Floyd demonstrates our need to address internalized racism and alignment with White hegemonic beliefs among Asian American communities and in the academe. We must not turn another blind eye in this difficult time, and we must also resolve ourselves to take action.

As the demand for justice and reform continues through protests across the nation, DoS fully stands with Black communities, including Black students and colleagues in the field of psychology, and we are here to provide support in whatever ways we can. We also acknowledge that a statement of support in and of itself will not suffice. In order to fully stand in solidarity with Black communities and commit ourselves to challenge anti-Blackness, it is imperative for us to do more, to say more, and to speak out more. Below, we provide links that would allow you to support and contribute to ongoing efforts to support Black communities:

- **Write to your representatives to support reparations for our Black siblings:**
  - <https://action.aclu.org/send-message/reparations-slavery-now>
- **Black Visions Minneapolis** (*Local MN Chapter of a national organization working to dismantle systems of oppression and violence*)
  - <https://secure.everyaction.com/4omQDAR0oUiUagTu0EG-Ig2>
- **North Star Health Collective** (*Healthcare initiative that also provides trainings, resources, and street medical support to community organizing efforts*)
  - <https://www.northstarhealthcollective.org/donate>

- **Donate to the Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi):**
  - [https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/FND/DonateFund.aspx?Site=ABPSI&WebCode=DonateNow&Action=Add&prd\\_key=a13028b7-1f1b-4957-8e06-ec4c64cf7990&fun\\_key=667df65f-3c85-4691-a9cd-617d3e7281eb&Name=Association](https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/FND/DonateFund.aspx?Site=ABPSI&WebCode=DonateNow&Action=Add&prd_key=a13028b7-1f1b-4957-8e06-ec4c64cf7990&fun_key=667df65f-3c85-4691-a9cd-617d3e7281eb&Name=Association)
- **Donate to ABPsi Trauma Relief Fund:**
  - <https://www.abpsi.org/culturaltraumarelief.html>
- **Support Black Muslim Psychology:**
  - <https://www.blackmuslimpsychology.org/>
- **Donate to Black LGBTQIA + Migrant Project (BLMP)**
  - <https://transgenderlawcenter.org/programs/blmp>
- **Donate to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Foundation**
  - <https://thehbcufoundation.org/donate/>
- **Donate to Black Student Fund**
  - <https://blackstudentfund.org/donate-v2/>
- **Here is a national resource list of organizations that work with Black communities, legal, community bail, and memorial funds you can donate to), political education resources** (Credit: @botanicaldyke Twiter/IG)
  - <https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/1CjZMORRVuv-l-qo4B0YfmOTqIOa3GUS207t5iuLZmyA/mobilebasic?usp=mail>

With grief and solidarity,

*Asian American Psychological Association's Division on Students*

# DIALOGIC REFLECTIONS: EDUCATING YOUTH DURING TIMES OF COVID-19

*MAICA PORCADAS*

It goes without saying that being an educator is no easy feat. The concept of “classroom management” takes on an entirely new meaning as face-to-face interactions transition into a virtual space. Although we greatly value caution in order to protect ourselves and our communities, youth and educators may find themselves at a standstill. Unpredictability within the classroom and stress related to navigating the digital landscape becomes a challenge as students are pushed to find ways to balance their academics and everyday life. However, the impact of COVID-19’s call to shift learning online is short of being an impasse.

The opportunity to teach Asian American Studies, with a group of co-educators, to youth in San Francisco has had many memorable learning moments. In light of the pandemic, this has not only been an opportunity to focus more on student needs, but also to realize that conversations regarding the connection between classroom content and student experience are inevitable. It is during times like this when we are able to slow down and intentionally prioritize and assess class material in terms of what has been done, and the work that still has to be done.

## WHAT WE ARE TEACHING OUR YOUTH

### *Becoming Critical Media Consumers*

Being able to talk about the effects of media on self-perception, as well as

how youth process and analyze information about their communities, are skills we highlight within our online classroom. Not only do we practice critical media literacy, but we also have our students reflect on the emotional effects and responses they have to specific types of media. We believe that this is an invaluable skill to practice in order for our youth to be able to deduce credible sources and the impacts it has on their well-being.

### *Self-reflection: connecting resiliency and wellness*

Self-reflection is another important skill that our youth practice. We emphasize the understanding that their own personal experiences are a form of knowledge. The affirmation and reminder that our youth are currently present as history unfolds helps provide a connection of their experiences to the world around them. The fact that our youth are practicing different forms of wellness in a time of pandemic is an illustration of their growing tenacity and self-awareness.

### *Empathetic solidarity*

Whether or not our students identify as Asian American, we engage in the concept of empathy. In spite of the rise of antiAsian violence, we connect historical narratives of communities of color to build a sense of community solidarity and identifying parallels of collective struggles. Even if we are not able to experience exact instances of oppression,

we encourage our students to foster a sense of unity through the struggles that they or their communities may have faced in the past or currently.

## WHAT OUR YOUTH ARE TEACHING US

### *Emotional Grounding: Family*

For many, the role of family and being able to have more time with them has played an important role in being able to navigate emotions and reduce anxieties. This reminds us that family can be an important proponent within the classroom. Our youth cannot be detached from the concerns that their families and community may face. By extending communication and involvement of academic matters to them, our youth are able to bridge the significance of familial capital into their academic endeavors and beyond.

### *Challenges in Student-Centered Curricula*

Pacing of the class is one of the greatest challenges we have noticed within our virtual classroom. It is easy to provide work; however, to be able to offer intentional lesson planning that does not overwhelm students poses difficulties when there is a lack of face-to-face check-ins. Conversations on assignment forums may sometimes feel more superficial and transactional, versus the goal of working together to create transformational experiences. This brings up the necessity to review how we can make online platforms more student-centered, but also illustrates authenticity in the work being done.

### *Extension of Care*

Regardless of how well educators plan ahead, there are bound to be barriers that we come across where it will feel like we can do more than we already are. To be able to be there for our youth and to be able to cultivate a space for them where they can share ideas, feelings, and questions without fear of being judged is progress, in itself. It is essential to be mindful about the capacities that our youth are able to provide, but it is also essential for educators to be cognizant of their capacities, as well. For educators, or anyone who works with youth: authentic care for our students is also demonstrated in how we take care of ourselves.

*" The concepts we aspire to teach our middle schoolers are lessons worth teaching youth beyond the classroom "*

regardless of whether or not there is a pandemic at hand. Moving forward, there is a large need to focus on having students practice becoming critical advocates in their education and well-being. When engaging in student-centered curricula, there must be opportunities to include conversations about combating issues of oppression. Along with identifying and naming steps to move forward, the dialogue must always end on a note that presents a sense of hope. Often we are figuring out what we can teach our youth, and with every possible chance, we must also take the time to reflect on what they are teaching us.

# STICKS AND STONES: PARENTING WHILE ASIAN DURING COVID-19

*PORTIA CHAN, M.A., CPRS-E*

When I was a kid in the 1980s, there was this silly rhyme that said that “sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” It was often used as a way to silence children when they complained about being called a racial slur or other type of insult on the playground. Well, words can hurt, and they can also be used to justify aggressive acts and violent attacks.

When I heard the rhetoric about “Kung Flu” or the “Chinese Virus” and about the increase in racist and violent acts against Asians and Asian Americans, I froze. The most chilling report was the one about the family who was stabbed at a Sam’s Club in Texas, and two of the victims were ages 2 and 6. Then I saw more reports about elderly Asian Americans being physically assaulted, and I learned that Asian American women were the most likely targets of this type of violence. With each report I read, my anxiety levels rose to the point of panic.

Then it became more personal for me. In one of the online parenting groups on Facebook, the administrator posted a cartoon about how, years from now, she expected to be telling her grandchildren about how we all had to stay home and conserve toilet paper all because someone in China decided to eat a bat. I thought this person was my friendly acquaintance, but, when I asked her about this post, she vehemently denied that it was racist. I asked her if she would have time to talk about it so that I could explain the

nuances, and she claimed to not have the time and then proceeded to unfriend me after I sent her some articles about other, more scientifically-based, theories about the possible causes of COVID-19.

Parenting is complicated, even without the context of a global pandemic. Parenting while one identifies as an ethnic and/or racial minority presents another set of nuances and considerations. When these two situations converge, then the whole is something other than the sum of its parts. While I study and do research in educational and developmental psychology and have been a middle and high school teacher, I am no expert. These days, while I juggle working remotely with my husband’s now online teaching schedule and our children’s virtual classes, sometimes I become confused, overwhelmed, anxious, and tired. Since we are sheltering in place, the option of asking my parents, who live less than ten minutes away, to look after our children while we work is not available now. The new rhythm requires balancing all parts of me – wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and professional – all at once, and it is more about grace and flexibility than it is about balance like it used to be.

When it comes to my children, I am a protective mama bear, which is different from a tiger mom and all of its racist caricature and connotations. As their mother, it is my responsibility to protect them and to look after their education and well-being by

providing a loving and stable home. I am helping them to grow into happy, well-adjusted individuals who make meaningful contributions to their communities and enjoy mutual and fulfilling relationships. Probably, this is what we all do. But what happens when we face microaggressions or overt racism as parents? I have had my experiences with this, even before COVID-19. When I was pregnant with my son, I worked for the foundation of a prestigious high school for gifted students. We had a parent volunteer, a woman of privilege in race and socioeconomic status, who often gave me the cold shoulder and refused to be trained by me on databases and other office procedures. Each week, she became more and more unfriendly until she exploded.

She made a sarcastic comment at me, and I defended myself. She stood up and started yelling at me. She probably would have slapped me, if she could. The Director of Security walked by to check in on me. She stormed out. When I caught my breath, I excused myself for the day, and I held in my tears until I got home. This woman knew her White privilege and expected me to know my place. She clearly did not see me or the baby growing inside me as human or to her level.

As I walked into my home with tears in my eyes, my daughter, then almost three years old, gave me a big hug and offered me her most prized belonging, which was her pink blanket. She called it "blanky" and put it on my lap and rubbed my shoulders. The

administration at the school called to check on me and even offered to expel this parent from the school grounds for verbally harassing me. I thought about it. It was a tempting offer, but, as a mother, I thought of this woman's daughter and said that it was alright and not to embarrass the student for her mother's ill-mannered behavior.

As painful as it is to remember this episode or others like it, I have learned to remember that it can be a matter of focus. While this individual and others on the

foundation treated me poorly to the point of not even checking on me when I gave birth or sending any type of well wishes for my son, they were actually the minority. It is an interesting play on words here.

The majority of the teachers and staff at the school have become like family to me, and these types of meaningful connections are the protective factors that can ensure positive growth and development over a lifetime. As I reflect upon how I talk to my children about racism, discrimination, and COVID-19, my tactic has changed. Instead of focusing on the cases of violence or hate speech, I tell them that their family loves, supports, and protects them and that our community is full of people who will be their good friends and that we will take care of each other. This is the "blanky" I offer them, and it is also the "blanky" I build each day in our community.

"This woman knew her White privilege and expected me to know my place."

# "I AM NOT A VIRUS" RESPONSE: FROM BULLYING TO BRAVERY

## CARING WITH COURAGE DURING COVID-19

*MELE KRAMER, M.S.*

In Mid-March cities across the country began “shelter in place” orders. As tensions, anxiety and long lines in the grocery stores rose, so did anxiety about the unknown. In times of fear, people often react instead of respond. My city Scottsdale, AZ was no different. In the early days of “shelter in place,” I stood in the long windy checkout line at the grocery store. As I was chatting with others in line I realized, I needed hand soap. One of the people next to me pointed to Aisle 23 and mentioned they would hold my cart and place. As I quickly returned back to my cart and place in line, a man a few spaces behind me started yelling: “There is a line lady!” Fortunately, many people stood up for me and I went back to my cart without incident. Shortly after, an Asian woman in her mid-70’s who did not speak English, wandered to the front of the line and the same man started yelling at her. She clearly did not understand so I looked back and said she’s my mother. Then let her go in front of me. Although the man continued to roll his eyes and grumble under his breath, we both got our groceries unscathed.

Personally, I did not feel I was singled out for being Asian. However, it could have been perceived as such. It wasn’t until I got home that I realized it could have gone badly. Putting this in perspective, in any other time and place, cutting in line would still have caused people to get angry for sure. As an Asian American, how should we act and behave in a time when Xenophobia is heightened? When do we know when we are the target of racial discrimination or latent frustration during these uncertain times? May, 20, 2020, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi announced there were over 1,900 racially motivated incidences against Asian Americans have been reported since COVID crisis began, and likely exponentially more unreported. Knowing this is a real problem we are facing; it is important to be aware of things that seem to invite discrimination. It is important to be aware of how our “Asian-

ness” and culture might invite misunderstanding, and how we can manage and deflect hostilities during uncertain times.

Recognizing racial discrimination and having a plan is important. Recognizing when a hostility is intended to put one in their “place” is key. The conundrum many Asian Americans are facing today is identifying and knowing the difference between a microaggression or a reactive and impatient behavior by people during a stressful situation with many unknowns. Sue et al. (2007) defines microaggressions as “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271). Knowing what these look and sound like, and how you feel when these happen can help you to pivoting quickly. Some examples of racial microaggressions may be common stereotypical comments about our looks and behaviors. The most important identifier is if it pertains to your race and you feel uncomfortable because of the comment. If you are uncomfortable, it most likely was a microaggression. If you addressed it, but received invalidations such as “you are too sensitive” or told “It was just a joke,” it was likely a microaggression. Remarks that disrespect the individual and their culture are damaging put downs. It is a clear indication to pivot and remove yourself from the situation as quickly as possible and distance yourself from people and situations that behave in this way. If it is in the workplace, report it. Get witness support if possible. It is important to have support from anyone that has courage to stand up for what is right with you, whether they are Asian or not. Standing for humanity in times of fear is power.

Since there is a lack of unified leadership coupled with an engineered fear fueling media, our nation is already on edge. Knowing we can’t control what others think, it is incumbent upon us as individuals to control how we think and act first, then as a collective population act in ways that unify and empower us. Many years ago, I was a flight attendant and the first rule taught and communicated to passengers is to put your own safety mask on first, before helping another. This is one of those times when we need to ensure our own safety mask of well-being is on so we and our family’s safety are protected first. This can be done using “Extreme Selfcare.” This means mentally and physically taking care of our well-being. Extreme self-care also means being aware of and assisting our own most vulnerable community members and our cultural essence that may unknowingly provoke others.

**Starting with self-care means finding ways to keep your outlook and positive and body healthy so you can power through the crisis. Some simple ways to do this would be to start and keep a “feel good” go-to list with top things that make YOU instantly happy and do at least 5 of them each day.**

- Make a list of daily, weekly & monthly goals both personal and professional
- Have a support buddy and/or virtual chat group that schedules frequent meetups
- Take time in nature such as hiking, gardening or other ways to get outside.
- Take care of your physical health daily by eating healthy foods & exercising daily
- Take care of your mental health by Meditating daily at least 5 minutes per day
- Enjoy creativity, paint, write, sing and dance. This gets positive energy flowing!
- Journal daily! List all your accomplishments and what you are grateful for Have an outlet for your feelings – especially anger and anxiety (separate journal)
- Keep aligned with what you are proud of about YOU, your family, your culture and your heritage and immerse yourself in it!
- Leverage those who support AAPI communities.

Then collectively stand up for each other through collaboration, and community action. This can be done in ways that empowers us collectively. There are many virtual and social media AAPI webinars and meetings during shelter in place. Complete the Census and register to VOTE. Our voice is heard through voting and being counted in the census. Our voices matter! Celebrate AAPI Awareness Month –Invite others to share our uniqueness such as our favorite recipes and food, virtual cultural events, wear your cultural costumes for the virtual events, create great memories publicly with people who support you! Once your cup is filled it will be harder for others “opinions” to affect you. When we take care of ourselves and each other, we thrive not just as Asian Americans, but in unity and for humanity.

The Asian grandmother in the store did not know me, nor did she know what was happening. Little things we do, make a difference not just for our community but for humanity. This potentially could have been a tense situation that was diffused simply by owning her as my family member without worrying about the consequence. The people in line did the same for me, only minutes before. Reflecting back on this and remembering the man’s face, he clearly was angrier than the average person. I could speculate in hindsight it was a person who was racist or I can choose to speculate it was

just a person having a bad day. Until a person makes racial slurs, it is important to take the high road and assume nothing. It is our diversity that makes this country the melting pot and model for the world. Most importantly - Share what we love about our cultures with others. This helps break the cycle of fear and invites those who are afraid into our unique cultures. Be the one who chooses to wash fear away with the beauty of our uniqueness – This is how we dispel racism.

Lorenzo and Reeves (2018) found “Companies with above-average total diversity, measured within six dimensions of diversity (migration, industry, career path, gender, education, age), had both 19% points higher innovation revenues and 9% points higher EBIT margins, on average. All six dimensions of diversity had statistically significant correlations with innovation, both individually and collectively” (Lorenzo & Reeves, 2018). Our uniqueness is what contributes to the diversity of this incredible United States of America. Our founding leaders of the United States has a proclamation on the U.S. currency that reflects the intended economic strength a diversified nation provides. The inscription was and still is intended to leverage all the resources diversity contributes in a unified prosperous nation. This is not just an Asian American concern; it is a concern for all humanity.

*"Be the one who  
chooses to wash  
fear away with the  
beauty of our  
uniqueness -- this  
is how we dispel  
racism"*

E pluribus Unum, which is Latin meaning: Out of many we are ONE!

*~We are all in this Together!*

# MEANING IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

*DARCY S. F. ING, PSY.D.*

THE GLOBAL EFFECTS OF THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS INCLUDE WIDESPREAD SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, PHYSICAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES TO EVERY PART OF DAILY LIFE. Whether sheltering in place or beginning to venture out, around the world people are dealing with uncertainty, frustration, adversity, and loss. Media coverage is near-constant, and in America, an increasingly divided society is beginning to fracture. People continue to fall ill, the crisis drags on, and humanity and other living beings continue to suffer.

In Harvard Business Review – Ascend, grief expert David Kessler remarked, “We feel the world has changed, and it has. We know this is temporary, but it doesn’t feel that way, and we realize things will be different. Just as going to the airport is forever different from how it was before 9/11, things will change and this is the point at which they changed. The loss of normalcy; the fear of economic toll; the loss of connection. This is hitting us and we’re grieving. Collectively. We are not used to this kind of collective grief.”

***“We realize that we are mortal,  
vulnerable, and that feeling of safety  
is gone.”***

9/11 involved the deaths of nearly 3,000 Americans. At the beginning of June, the US had 3000 cases per day and as of July it is now 60,000 per day. The world has been transformed. This is our new normal, and there is no end in sight. Most of us know that things will be worse before they get better. Thus, our grief includes anticipatory grief, the same kind of grief when a loved one gets a terminal illness. We realize that we are mortal, vulnerable, and that feeling of safety is gone. The landscape of the world we knew no longer exists.

For those isolating in an effort to remain healthy, the virus has also brought a crisis of isolation, a loss of connectedness. Even for those who enjoy solitude, some social contact is important. Human relationships provide us with companionship and support, especially during times of stress. Now our relationships no longer include physical contact, and are dependent on modern technology. In hospitals, no visitors are allowed, and the sick are dying surrounded by strangers instead of their families.

Because of this, most of us are anxious. Our minds travel to the future, generating images of the worst, most irrevocable coming catastrophes. In doing so we seek to prepare for loss, to have some control over the situation. Unfortunately, there is still

so much uncertainty and unknown facts that we cannot know when that scary future will arrive. No one seems to be in charge. Coping with that anxiety involves staying in the present. It means becoming aware of black and white thinking, and seeking those gray spaces in between. Our loved ones may stay healthy, or they may become terminally ill. Here in the present, we don't know. Dealing with anxiety means letting go of what we cannot control, and reminding ourselves of what we can control.

What friends or neighbors do is out of your control. What people in other states do is also out of your control. Wearing a face mask and staying six feet away is in your control. Washing your hands is also in your control. As more people wear masks and stay distant, the risk of getting sick drops considerably. This may feel like forever, but it is not.

Emotions are not forever either. They can lessen in intensity, or shift over time. Fighting our feelings does not make them go away. Staying present with feelings, letting them wash over us, lets us feel their power, but also helps us let them go.

All around us, people are dealing with powerful emotions. There is worry and grief for a past that is gone, but there is also courage and hope from those who survive. There is compassion and creativity in people making face masks for others, and finding ways to gather together safely. Admiration and encouragement is being shouted at caregivers from balconies. Caring is found in the eyes of a face-mask wearing professional, or helpful grocery store worker. This is a time of seeming contradictions. A time of solitary togetherness, mystery and challenge, hurting and healing.

Most of us are familiar with the stages of grief: Denial, Anger, Bargaining, Depression, and Acceptance. David Kessler states that Elizabeth Kübler-Ross's family gave him permission to add a sixth stage to grief: Meaning.

Viktor Frankl wrote, "Ultimately, man should not ask what the meaning of his life is, but rather must recognize that it is he who is being asked. It is not what we expect from life, but what life expects from us. We are being questioned by life, every moment of every day. And our answer to life is in how we are living every moment of every day. Our answer is in our right actions and our taking of responsibility."

This is a time to slow down, to learn every day joy and happiness. It is a time to let go of attachment to outcome, and to work on just being, instead of always doing. It is a time to attach to the process, not the outcome, which we don't know anyway. Try to do your best, but remember that your best will be different on days when we are grieving or exhausted than on days when we are energized or joyful. Persist. Share your feelings with others, on the phone, in a letter or email, or by videoconference. You are not alone.

So what meaning do we make of the time of coronavirus? There's an Internet meme that may be helpful: "Perhaps when the dust settles, we can realize how very little we need, how very much we actually have, and the true value of human connection."

# FIGHTING STIGMA IN THE WORLD OF AN "INFODEMIC"

*SOYONG KIM, PH.D. & ANNIE RESNIKOFF, B.A*

The sudden onset of COVID-19, a new and highly contagious coronavirus often causing serious respiratory illness, has catalyzed an "infodemic." On April 15, 2020, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford published a report on how people in six countries (Argentina, Germany, South Korea, Spain, the U.K., and the U.S.) access information about COVID-19 and how they understand misinformation presented via different sources and platforms. When asked about information-seeking habits around COVID-19, the majority of U.S. participants indicated relying on news organizations (54%), and scientists, doctors, or health experts (49%).

On the other hand, when intersected with levels of education, it was found that individuals with lower levels of education in the U.S. tended to rely on information from lay people, rather than relying on news organizations or the national government. These findings are striking, particularly in the context of a global pandemic, as disparities in accurate information can cause harmful, and sometimes, deadly effects. Combined with fear associated with an unknown disease, in recent months, we have seen how

underlying racial biases towards Asian Americans have been amplified and highlighted the "otherness" of Asian communities in the U.S.

A defining component accelerating the spread of misinformation surrounding the current crisis, is social media. The population is absorbing inaccuracies on common sources, such as Facebook and Twitter, while simultaneously creating the falsehoods that spread around the world in an instant. According to Pew Research Center, half of Americans report difficulty determining what is true and not true about the outbreak, and two-thirds of adults (64%) report seeing some news or information that is completely fabricated.

An unfortunate consequence has translated into a rise in misattributed blame. Many Asian Americans have suffered undue hate based on nothing but individual ignorance and an unwarranted belief of expertise. They have been targeted as carriers of the virus, assumed to be sick when seen wearing masks, or greeted with skepticism over past whereabouts, at times under the impression that origin of descent relates to virus exposure. When, in fact, the data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests that less than 5% of confirmed COVID-19 cases are Asian Americans, while more than half of the positive cases are White Americans (52.3%). Inaccuracies within racial claims are only made more powerful through a perpetual social media loop that discounts factual evidence.

It is critical that we use our collective voices to guide through the current crisis. While it is certainly valuable to add our voices to raise awareness on racial injustice issues and take a responsive

stand, it is simply not enough. More proactive measures are needed to prevent the spread of misinformation, if at all possible. During the week of March 30, 2020, at any given day, more than 8,000 tweets were posed on Twitter using a hashtag, #ChineseVirus, whereas about 600 tweets were posed using a hashtag, #RacismIsAVirus, which was created in response to the increase in hate crimes during the pandemic. Through social media, the feasibility of promoting misinformation, especially racially insensitive claims, is exponential.

First, our efforts to "stop the hate" can start from an off-line context. The Reuters Institute report indicates that approximately 30% of U.S. respondents seek out information about coronavirus from their parents, relatives, friends, or neighbors. These groups can become our first line of contact in which we serve as a personal informant. We may also warn them about the peril of social media, as it has the potential for serving as an outlet for misleading information. This is not to say that using social media should be discouraged. Now more than ever, social media has brought people together and strengthened interpersonal reliance. Understanding both sides of its existence will only increase digital literacy that is crucial during a pandemic, and enhance our ability to defeat the crisis of an "infodemic."

Second, similar efforts can be carried in virtual spaces. When possible, we, as a scientific community, can provide data-driven evidence that refutes misinformation. Engage in a dialogue with a simple goal in mind: sharing evidence for science, reducing tensions, and avoiding emotional burdens. A complicated balance for people can be

expecting scientific data while acknowledging that the novelty of the virus can cause some degree of variance in current understanding. Given that, as more data is analyzed, experts are more clear on their recommendations.

Lastly, on a more systemic level, we must request that local and federal government officials provide accurate and consistent information to their citizens. The World Health Organization's disease naming guidelines clearly indicates that linking certain disease names including COVID-19 to geographical locations or ethnic/racial groups is strongly discouraged, as such a practice can increase biases and stigma towards targeted communities. Similarly, officials should be comprehensive in explaining the current stage of information to minimize the risk of misguided personal interpretation. Balancing science, communication, and policy, the information provided by public officials should be clear, transparent and factual. We can leave the invention of a COVID-19 vaccine to doctors and scientists, but we cannot rely on others for an 'infodemic' cure.



*Soyong Kim, Ph.D. (left) and Annie Resnikoff, B.A., (right), research fellow and research assistant, respectively, at the department of Psychiatry and Human Behaviors at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University*

# WHAT IS LOVE? COVID, DON'T HURT ME

*MICHAEL P. HUYNH, MPH*

**During this COVID-19 era, many people find themselves physically and also socially distant from others.** Given the World Health Organization (WHO) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations to be at least six feet apart from others, it is essential to find ways to strengthen social connections beyond in-person encounters. Utilizing Gary Chapman's five love languages as a framework provides means for building better support networks. The five love languages are receiving gifts, acts of service, words of affirmation, quality time, and physical touch. Expressing these love languages is not exclusive to romantic relationships; friends, family, neighbors, students, and even work colleagues can benefit from strengthening bonds. As staying at home increases the risk of isolation and loneliness, it is vital to remain emotionally close with those significant to us.



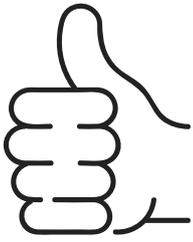
## Receiving Gifts

Gift-giving has become a popular option to demonstrate care for others, especially since no physical contact is needed! With the ease of online shopping, mailing presents allows individuals to stay at home and lessen the need to go out and purchase items in person. A food delivery is also an important gift to offer; if a friend or family member has a favorite restaurant or a go-to place to drink coffee or boba, you can directly order from these places, deliver to your loved ones, and continue supporting small businesses. If helping your local community is of particular interest, donating money to charities is more needed than ever to keep these services running, and your financial generosity would aid many recipients who are struggling to survive through this pandemic.

## Acts of Service

Taking time to offer gestures of kindness to others can be immensely positive to both the people receiving such services and those who are giving them in the first place. This could mean offering to help others by picking up groceries or medicine, volunteering for local organizations, or making masks to help slow the spread of COVID-19. For students, keeping each other accountable to study during a phone or video call is another way to maintain connections while ensuring steps toward academic success. Creating systems of support also includes providing support for your own self when possible, such as setting aside hours for personal hobbies or meditation each week.





## Words of Affirmation

While it is mainstream to think that “actions speak louder than words,” sometimes the simple act of providing messages of validation and encouragement can be just as powerful for people to feel appreciated. Sending emails or text messages to check in on others is an effective way to let friends and family know that you care about how they are doing during this difficult period. For those who wish to show a greater sense of appreciation, writing gratitude letters about why someone has been a positive influence to your life is especially helpful to deepen connections with loved ones. With the stress and uncertainty that comes with coping from the COVID-19 outbreak, it can feel difficult or impossible to discuss these issues with the people you know. Calling a crisis line is a way to speak with a trained counselor to discuss important life stressors in a free and confidential manner. Lastly, for those who wish to speak to a mental health professional for a longer period of time, seeking teletherapy services is an important step to support your wellbeing and mental health by developing sustainable coping strategies in the safety of your home.

## Quality Time

A love language that may be challenging to apply during quarantine is spending quality time. For many people, in-person encounters have quickly changed to video chats through platforms like FaceTime and Zoom. In some ways, this has felt more constrained with internet interruptions, yet video calls have also become beneficial in building different kinds of connections. This includes seeing the inside of a friend’s house for the first time or reaching out to friends who are outside of your immediate geographic area more regularly. Some people have also found it enjoyable to watch movies together on Netflix Party or play multiplayer games like Houseparty, Jackbox, and Animal Crossing: New Horizons to spend time and have fun with each other. For those that wish to spend time discussing more difficult emotions with others, people have created online support groups, such as Subtle Asian Mental Health on Facebook, to provide spaces that offer open dialogue in navigating issues like depression/anxiety, school stress, working from home, or changes in family dynamics.

## Physical Touch

Although people cannot necessarily be in close physical proximity without compromising other individuals’ health, there are ways to find comfort through warm embraces from even their current surroundings. For those who prefer hugs, this can be hugging a pillow or stuffed animal every so often. Taking a bath, using a neck/back massager, or sleeping with a weighted blanket are additional means of taking good physical care of your body and achieving a state of relaxation. While it may not be the same as holding someone’s hands, tending to your pets or gardening requires not only working with your hands but also remembering to care for the animals and plants that we hold dearly in our homes.

**While these love languages are not an all-inclusive, comprehensive list of ways to find support in this new lifestyle during the COVID-19 era, it is a reminder of the many mechanisms that we as humans have continued to adapt with uncertainty and technological changes. In a time when so much is unknown about the future, we can remind our loved ones and ourselves that despite physical distancing, we are not alone and can still give hope wherever we are.**

# EMPOWERING PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

*CAITI BRADBURY, M.A., LMHCDR*  
*JOCELYN BUHAIN, PH.D.*  
*MUHAMMAD BILAL, M.A.,*  
*MIN-JEONG (MJ) YANG, M.S.*

The intersections of our racial identities, professional identities, and cultural values play foundational roles in our lives as Asian/Asian American professionals. The choice of selecting a career in psychology, counseling, or mental health felt sub-standard and non-celebrated, due to the invalidation expressed within the Asian community. Another added layer of difficulty was that exposure to Asian therapists in our personal and collegiate lives might be non-existent. The result of cultural stigma and inadequate social references can result in a limited sense of belonging and shared identity. Our experiences and awareness of these intersectional identities are core components of our professional journeys and work with clients, and these identities remain critical factors in defining therapy outcomes. Whether we are working as counselor interns or seasoned clinicians, awareness of our intersecting identities become salient in the therapeutic space, and has the power to influence and shape our experiences working with clients and colleagues of similar and differing ethnic backgrounds. We share with you some of our experiences in hopes to relay that what you may be experiencing in isolation is truly a more universal story.

As four colleagues working at a large university counseling center, we all identify as Asian mental health professionals. It is within reason that these shared identities may lead to internalized self-doubts or questions of which MJ, for example, reports in her experiences include those such as, “what if I am speaking English weirdly” or “what if my clients are disappointed because I am from a different culture and country,” or even, “what if I am doing a bad job?” This can be attributed to how people express emotions, the use of language, and overall interpersonal communications between various cultures. There is also the tendency of being stereotyped as “model minorities,” which can sound promising to help Asian-identified clients trust their counselor’s competence and strengthening the therapeutic alliance, but it also carries the risk of reinforcing negative labels and stereotypes.

Mental health professionals are predominately White in the continental US, but with more minorities joining our profession, one area lacking in attention is the covert racism toward minority counselors. Even though we may receive comments from non-Asian individuals such as, “your English is so good” or “I am very impressed that you are doing your clinical work in another language,” which

are meant to be well-intended, those statements are in fact innocuous microaggressions stemming from the social microcosm of racial superiority ingrained in American society. Another example of this can be seen in our therapeutic work with clients of non-Asian ethnic backgrounds, in other words, racially mis-matched therapeutic relationships (Yoshida, 2013). These can range from dismissive tones and gestures to explicit comments, such as “I want to work with someone who is from here [USA]”, implying that an Asian individual cannot be American.

In racially-matched therapeutic relationships, transference and countertransference may function as the root of clinical challenges (Yoshida, 2013). Bilal observed that Asian clients with higher acculturation exhibit more transference resulting in either concealing their concerns or quitting therapy altogether. For example, one of his clients came with undisclosed apprehensions regarding working with an Asian-identified counselor. It was only at the time of termination, that the client shared her initial fear that her concerns would be minimized. On the other hand, transference in clients with low acculturation exhibits itself as surrendering of their autonomy and relying upon the clinician to solve their problems as they would with elders in their community, a strong parallel to Eastern cultural values. The aforementioned encourages us to be more sensitive to the unique world views of racially-matched clients and to be aware of the high risk of generalizing based on cultural assumptions, thereby fostering positive therapeutic outcomes with the clients we serve.



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- 2 Jocelyn Buhain, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
- 3 Min-Jeong (MJ) Yang, M.S., Doctoral Intern
- 4 Muhammad Bilal, M.A., Registered Mental Health Counselor Intern

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When it comes to collegial relationships, one of the benefits of working with racially mis-matched colleagues is their ability to impart the same cultural competencies during our interactions as they do with their minority clients; however, despite their cultural sensitivity, it can feel isolating at times not to have them fully understand the cultural nuances or the experience of our Asian identities. This can create a barrier to the sense of belonging and universality that we all desire; however, with more Asian clinicians joining this workforce, an opportunity has opened to connect with them, which has reduced this loneliness and facilitated a sense of community. The privilege of connecting and collaborating with racially-matched colleagues not only empowers us but validates our journeys in becoming Asian clinicians in the backdrop of cultural expectations and familial stigma associated with the mental health profession.

Given the emotional intra- and inter-ethnic therapeutic experiences that this article discussed, moving forward, we plan to host a monthly support and/or consultation meeting within our center. We hope these meetings serve as a safe space for us to explore the ongoing challenges and stressors we experience in our clinical and professional work, as well as the opportunities for us to celebrate the joys we may encounter that others may not fully understand due to the lack of shared identity as Asian/Asian-American counselors. Now is the time, especially given what is happening in our global world, to unite as colleagues. In thinking of this transition to support each other, there

would likely be parallel processes occurring between what we may experience in the empowering space to address our needs as mental health professionals, and the experience of group members who have participated in our Empowering Asian Voices therapy group over the last year. Hopefully those reading this article may feel empowered to also find a supportive network of colleagues who can embrace and hold that cherished space of solidarity, universality, and compassion.

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# EMBRACING RACISM, NOT EXPERTISE IS LEADING TO A NEW WAVE OF TRAUMA

*SHIRLEY ANN HIGUCHI, J.D.*

**Soon after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, rumors spread that some of the Japanese American residents of Hawaii had blocked the path of emergency vehicles heading to the naval base to put out fires and save lives.** Such incidents showed that the nation's Japanese American community cloaked a secret army of saboteurs and spies who would undermine the budding U.S. war effort and had to be isolated

from the rest of the country.

By Feb. 19, 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt had signed Executive Order 9066, which granted the fear mongers' wishes by authorizing the forced removal of 120,000 innocent people (two-thirds U.S. citizens) from their West Coast homes and put them in concentration camps from California to Arkansas.

The people in the best position to know about the alleged roadblocks in Hawaii, the territory's police and military leaders, said Japanese Americans never blocked the roads. "There was no deliberate blocking of the traffic during December 7 by unauthorized persons," Honolulu Police Chief W.A. Gabrielson said.

By the time the truth from the experts reached Congress, it was too late. A mass forced removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast was already underway. Businesses closed or were sold for a pittance. Crops rotted in farms owned by Japanese American farmers. Students were torn from their schools and forced in the grandstands of racetracks used as temporary assembly centers.

Once again, we're seeing a similar undermining of expertise, this time in the face of the COVID-19 virus. In this White House, as during World War II, knowledge and expertise are being pushed aside by ignorance and intolerance. Some officials have insisted on calling it the "Chinese virus" despite evidence that such claims

fuel race-based reprisals against people of Asian descent, whether they are Chinese or not.

In the early days of World War II, officials who should have known better, such as California's then attorney general Earl Warren, claimed that the absence of any evidence showing sabotage or espionage by Japanese Americans did not mean the threat didn't exist. It just meant, Warren said, that there was no evidence.

In April 1943, evidence that showed that most Japanese Americans posed no security threat on the West Coast meant nothing to Lt. Gen. John DeWitt, leader of the Western Defense Command. "A Jap's a Jap," he told a congressional committee. "He is still a Japanese, and you can't change him."



### **Shirley Ann Higuchi, JD**

*is a Senior Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs for the American Psychological Association and past president of the District of Columbia Bar. She also chairs the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation ([www.heartmountain.org](http://www.heartmountain.org)), which runs an interpretive center at the site of the camp where her parents were imprisoned. Her forthcoming book about her family and several key incarcerated, *Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration* is due out this year by University of Wisconsin Press. Follow her on Twitter at @HiguchiJD*

Evidence or expertise be damned, DeWitt was playing to the emotions, hysteria and racism of the masses. He got away with it long enough to destroy once-thriving neighborhoods of Japanese Americans that could have boosted the war effort. In times of crisis, so many things resemble the events of late 1941 and 1942, the peak months of the anti-Japanese American inquisition, because that is the standard for how bad things can get for the abuse of government power. Lives were destroyed not through expertise or knowledge but through racism and fear.

As I researched my upcoming book, *Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration*, I was struck by how often expertise was ignored in favor of racist stereotypes and fear. That fear hit my

Today, without any evidence, racists have physically and verbally abused people of Asian descent around the country, blaming them for bringing the virus, which originated in China, or demanding they go back where they came from. It hasn't mattered if they were from China or were born in the United States; all it takes is having a face that looks different to come under attack.

My grandmother and 120,000 other Japanese Americans realized that danger 78 years ago. My family members, including the former incarcerated who are still alive, are still coping with the mental health trauma from that time.

In many ways, we are creating another generation of traumatized Americans who are wondering about their place in society and whether they will be attacked. Some, like former Democratic

*"...all it takes is having a face that looks different to come under attack."*

mother's family immediately after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, as my grandmother gathered my mother, who was 10, and her two brothers to go from San Francisco to Oakland to rescue my grandfather who was working at his store.

My grandmother reasoned that an angry mob would not attack a family with young children, even if they did look like America's new enemy. Now we're seeing how my grandmother's fears in 1942 are being revived by many Asian Americans, who fear they will be targeted for abuse because of how they look.

presidential candidate Andrew Yang, are urging that Asian Americans display more patriotism to prove their worth in society. That way of seeking the approval of racists didn't work during World War II and it led instead to decades of division within the Japanese American community that has not healed.

But reflexive attacks on Yang as a sellout don't work, either. The government was able to get away with much of what it did to Japanese Americans during World War II, because the community was divided and fighting among itself. One segment wanted to cater to the racists

that imprisoned them, while another fought and resisted the draft. It has taken decades for them to realize they were both victims of an oppressive system.

As I work with other Asian Americans to sort out what happened in the 1940s and what is happening now, I realize we are never truly free of the trauma that attaches to people of color during times of crisis. Too often, racism flourishes amid fear, and people of Asian descent again feel the stigma that started soon after our ancestors started arriving here more than 170 years ago. As Asian American psychologists we have the expertise to help change negative

behavior and show how racism and discrimination erode society. I am proud to work for an organization that seeks to set an example of what our world should be. As behavioral change experts, psychologists should continue to help shape the hearts and minds of our communities to create a better America.



# REMEMBERING A HERO ALWAYS WITHIN US: JEAN LAU CHIN, ED.D., PSYCHOLOGIST AND CHAMPION

*MATTHEW R. MOCK, PH.D.*

**I have been fortunate to know Jean Lau Chin, EdD, across decades.** I was certainly aware of her work and contributions to psychology long before she knew of mine. When I was an undergraduate psychology student at Brown University forging my early commitment to diversity and social justice in community mental health, I recall being inspired when I heard about her leadership at South Cove in Boston. I recall reading about her early ideas in the Chinese American community and mental health that would influence the blossoming of my own.

Returning to the Bay Area of California to pursue my doctoral studies at the California School of Professional Psychology, Berkeley in the 1980s, Dr. Chin's work along with that of several other prominent Asian American psychologists, impressed me for their strong Asian American presence not just for their contributions in the

early psychology literature but also for their advocacy and activism. Dr. Chin's feminist perspectives clinically and professionally enriched my ideas and early work. She shared key psychological insights while also sharing her own intersecting, personal experiences as a woman with rich Chinese roots. As for many of us, finding my voice and place in psychology would be an important process. The influence of those wise does not leave us but only germinate for our contributions later on.

I do not recall the exact time when I met Dr. Chin. As for many of us, it was likely at the APA convention or perhaps our own, invaluable AAPA conference. What I can attest to is that after first meeting Jean, I instantly felt seen, heard, validated, and valued. While her "tower" of knowledge and experience in the field might intimidate some, her ease of genuinely connecting and gently reaching out, put me at quick ease. I understand that this experience of Dr. Chin is shared by many of us. I was delighted when she decided to temporarily leave her home in the New York area to assume a heavy, leadership role for the CSPP system in California. I was delighted that she was "in the same neighborhood" so to speak.

Mid-summer of 2019, Dr. Chin put out a call via AAPA for someone to write a specific chapter for an upcoming "Psychology of Inequities", a three-volume co-edited set of books. She had noticed that an author had not yet risen to focus on inequalities confronted by Asian Americans. Leave it to Jean to always be sensitively aware of our inclusion. While she had reached out to some of our prominent colleagues with a background in addressing Asian and Asian American inequities, the timing was off in terms of their availability. I shared my interest with her. Always the consummate communicator even when busy teaching, writing, advocating, or traveling to do her work in international contexts, Dr. Chin wrote back to me in short order.

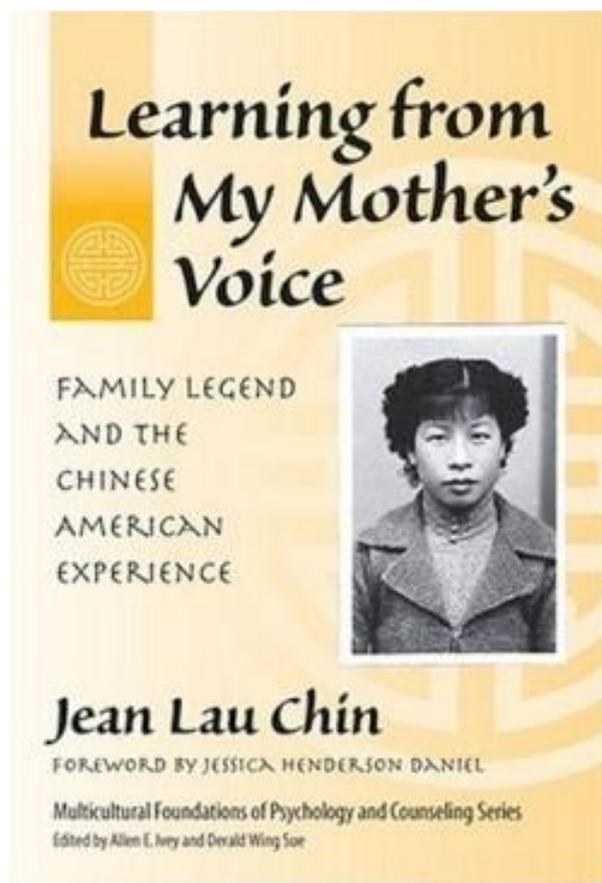
Given life cycle events in my personal life, I was not sure if this was something I wanted or should take on given the likely "heavy lifting" that would be entailed. Responding positively with the potential, Dr. Chin wrote back to me with confidence for my authoring such a valuable chapter. She wrote back with ideas of her own that she thought should be included. As she shared her ideas I automatically reflected and wrote mine, not so much on paper or my laptop, but "in my head" almost as though Jean and I were "in conversation" about a topic for which we each are passionate. For me, the process with Jean felt easy, comfortable, and rewarding. It was like a shared conversation in our living rooms, albeit an academic one. I have special gratitude for this, as, for some, this is not always the experience with other prominent editors.

I was able to finally write the chapter on "Asian Americans Rising Up and Speaking Out for Greater Equity" to confront Asian American inequities past, present, and future. In honesty, I had to push through my process of needing to say the "definitive" word for such a personally and professionally significant subject. Unlike the experience others may have with publication editors, I did not experience a sense of intimidation but more of mutually respectful consideration from Dr. Chin. I shared with her that I was able to finish the chapter by strategically speaking about a

personal family “hero” in my life that I draw upon now for inspiration. I do so when I experience challenges such as loss or injustice. In kind, Jean personally shared hers, openly and freely with both unconditional support and compassion. With her editorial shepherding, my book chapter that she edited is moving forward for publication at the end of 2020 by Praeger. Jean gently, collaboratively, and heroically helped me to get there.

We are fortunate to meet the giants in our field who have not only been role models but also pillars of doing this, often challenging, work together. In mid-March, Dr. Chin wrote her article titled "Global & Culturally Diverse Leadership in the 21st Century: Crisis Leadership During the Coronavirus Pandemic and Xenophobia," published by the International Leadership Association (ILA). In it, she shares

perspectives on the mistreatment of people of Asian descent attributed to the recent coronavirus. Reading her words and ideas, it is clear to me that Jean could have written the chapter on standing up for Asian inequities herself. But much like Dr. Chin, she made “a place at the table” for me to have our ideas come together as one, a louder voice. **I am grateful to Dr. Jean Lau Chin, EdD, for not only being a remarkable psychologist but a hero and champion for us all. Her strength, spirit, and inspirations will always be within me and countless others.**



*Respectfully submitted:*

**Matthew R. Mock, PhD**

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& Independent Practice: 2714 Telegraph Avenue, #3, Berkeley, CA 94705  
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# IN LOVING MEMORY

*Remembering Dr. Jean Lau Chin, Ed.D.*

**"Jean, your passion, dedication, ambition, and work ethic helped us all dream bigger and bolder. I hope the realizing of these dreams will be a legacy that would have made you proud. We will miss you dearly."**

*– Meiyang Liu Kadaba, Psy.D.*

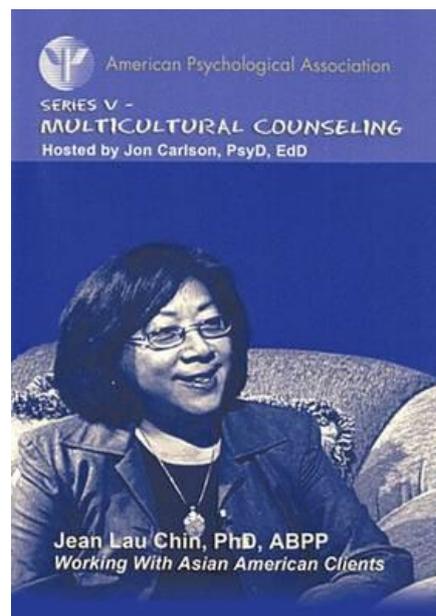


**"A great personal and professional loss of an individual who rose from humble beginnings to become one of the very best."**

*– Stanley Sue, Ph.D.*

**"Dr. Jean Lau Chin will always continue to lead me and others, and help find our ways uniting to fight for social justice and more!"**

*– Matthew R. Mock, PhD*



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## AAPA AD POSTING GUIDELINES

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Asian American Psychologist, the official newsletter of the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA), is published 3 times yearly (Fall, Spring, Summer) and distributed to over 1,000 members of AAPA. For information on specific publication dates and advertising submission deadlines for upcoming issues, please contact the editor. AAPA is a federally recognized non-profit organization.

### **Advertising Rates and Typesetting**

Typical display advertising rates are based on column length (see below). Each advertising column is approximately 2 & 1/4 inches wide. There are 3 columns per newsletter page. The advertising rates are:

3-inch column ad = \$60.00

6-inch column ad = \$90.00

9-inch column ad = \$120.00

Requests for alternative typesetting for an ad can most often be accommodated at no extra cost. The rate billed will be based on the page area covered that corresponds to the advertising rates shown above.

### **Submission of Ads**

It is recommended that text-only ads be submitted via email Microsoft Word format to the advertising editor (see below). If special graphics are desired to appear in the ad, submission of camera ready copy which conforms to the ad sizes described above is required. The name and complete mailing address of the person or institution to be billed must accompany the submission of the ad.

Submit ads by email to: Yun Garrison at [ygarriso@bates.edu](mailto:ygarriso@bates.edu).

### **Billing**

A billing statement will be sent after an ad is successfully submitted. It is the policy of AAPA that in the event there is a delay in the publication of the newsletter such that your application deadline is missed, you will not be charged or we will fully refund your payment. Payment must be a check or money order made payable to "AAPA" (we cannot process credit card payments)

# AAPA NEWSLETTER TEAM



## ***Yunkyong Garrison***

*Editor-in-Chief*

*She, her, hers*

I am a first-generation Korean immigrant who volitionally landed in the US in 2013 to become a psychologist. I am finishing my Ph.D. degree in Counseling Psychology at the University of Iowa and soon to be an Assistant Professor in Psychology at Bates College as well as a practitioner at Psychology Specialists of Maine. My research and practice focus on community engagement, social class/classism, and mental health/career issues among underserved communities. In my free time, I enjoy staying connected with my family, friends, mentors, and mentees virtually or in person, having meals with them, reading people's stories, hiking, and

meditation. I am excited to work with you as Editor-in-Chief and hope our newsletter continues to serve as one of the amplifiers for the AAPA community.



## ***Darcy Ing***

*Columnist and Copy Editor*

*She, her, hers*

I am a licensed clinical psychologist working with adults, couples, and families at Waimanalo Health Center, an integrated health clinic. I have also been with Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii since 2010. I have expertise in clergy psychological assessment, counseling and continuing education for Buddhist and Christian clergy, and I give talks on various mental health topics for faith communities and the general public. I have an

ecumenical, holistic view of religion and spirituality and am comfortable integrating both with psychotherapy.



## ***Michael Huynh***

*Columnist/Reporter & Copy Editor*

*He, him, his*

I am a project manager/research analyst at the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. My training includes quantitative research on mental health service utilization and previous volunteer experience as a crisis line counselor at the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center. I completed my Master of Public Health (MPH) degree in Epidemiology/Biostatistics at UC Berkeley and will be an incoming student pursuing a PhD in

Public Health at UC Irvine. As a Vietnamese American from Little Saigon, Orange County, I have research interests in coping mechanisms for distress, dietary patterns, structural discrimination, and social determinants of mental health among immigrant populations. Outside of academia, I enjoy traveling, playing the piano, lettering, and finding anything that is related to Harry Potter, Studio Ghibli, or Disney!



***Portia Chan***

*Columnist/Reporter & Copy Editor*

*She, her, hers*

I manage the development program and write grants for the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Virginia (NAMI Virginia). I have studied both art history and psychology from a feminist perspective for almost 30 years. These two disciplines merged when I studied with Vicki Noble to

become a certified Motherpeace reader. I blend this healing modality with my peer recovery specialist training to use a strengths-based approach in my sessions with clients. I am also a research assistant in Dr. Fantasy Lozada's SHIELD Lab in developmental psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University.



***Nina Billingsley***

*Copy Editor*

*She, her, hers*

I'm a Southern-California-based freelance writer. I cover topics on mental health, personal finance, and health & wellness. My work has been published by Thrive Global, and HuffPost, among others. I'm a strong proponent of therapy and self-development, so much that it inspired my new career as a marriage and family therapist. I believe positive relationships foster resilience and overall well-

being. In my free time, I enjoy hiking, floral design, and live music.



***Mele Kramer***

*Columnist/Reporter*

*She/her/hers*

Mele Kramer, M.S. I am a fourth-year doctoral student at Walden University completing my Ph.D. in I/O Consultation Psychology. My M.S. is in Organizational Psychology and my B.S. is from New York University where I studied Art Therapy and Art Education. I enjoyed the honor of being a past V.P. of the Arizona Health Sector Management Association and former Director of the Arizona Asian American Arts Association. My doctoral studies focus on Asian American Leadership and I work with organizations in multicultural awareness and leadership diversity development.



***Maica Porcadas***

*Columnist/Reporter*  
*She/Her/Hers*

I am a coordinator for the Office of Student Equity at City College of San Francisco, and I teach Asian American Studies: Filipina/o American Experiences through Pin@y Educational Partnerships (PEP). I recently received my MA in Educational Equity and Social Justice at San Francisco State University. My passions are an intersection of Ethnic Studies, Filipino/a/x -/ American mental health, identity construction, and teaching. Outside of academia, I enjoy traveling, exploring new cuisine, and trying out extreme sports (i.e. scuba diving, jet skiing, etc.). I aspire to one day pursue my doctoral studies in Clinical-Community Psychology at the University of Alaska, Anchorage.



***Ivy Tran***

*Layout Editor*  
*She, her, hers*

I am a third year doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at Hofstra University. My research and clinical interests include motivation and reward in psychosis and exploring transdiagnostic tools for early detection of psychosis, especially mechanisms of learning. I love hot sauce, plants, and baking.



***Lisa N. Cruz***

*Columnist/Reporter & Copy Editor*

*She/her/hers*

I am a 4th-year Clinical Psychology PhD student at Yeshiva University, Albert Einstein College of Medicine. I received my MA from Harvard University and my BA from Stony Brook University. My broad interests include cross-cultural neuropsychology in HIV, smoking, and neurodevelopmental disorders (autism, psychosis). Outside of work, I enjoy traveling, hiking, yoga, photography, and spending time with my fur babies.

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The AAPA newsletter, Asian American Psychologist, is the official publication for the membership of the Asian American Psychological Association and is published three times a year electronically: Spring, Summer, and Fall. The views expressed in this newsletter publication do not necessarily represent the policies of the AAPA.