

Consumption

I'm A okay ♡



Reading Response 5

Kong's chapter changed my view of the of UCSD. One interview in particular caught my attention. On page 93, Kong describes a UCSD student whose legitimate concerns about his education were overlooked due to the professor's belief that an Asian student would be able to excel in any circumstances. I had not known that the model minority myth could affect Asian students to such an extent. Before coming to UCSD, the model minority was just a name for a trend that minorly and universally affected the Asian students I knew. UCSD's more diverse student body makes the effects of the model minority myth more visible.

The main way I see the model minority myth affect Asian students at UCSD is how it presents any struggles in academics as the failings of an individual. Other reasons why an Asian student may be struggling are ignored. Asian excellence is normalized so much that the idea that Asian mediocrity is seen as a mark of shame. My best example of the myth in play is from when I personally witnessed a group of Asian students betting on who could get the nearest to perfect exam scores. Underlying this a light hearted game is two major problems: an implicit belief that all the Asians have the same academic standing and competitive ranking among Asians. The model minority myth flattens out the dimensions of a student so that they can only be perceived as the excellent Asian. I've seen other students hold themselves to the same standards as students with better resources outside of school, believing that they should naturally perform the just as well because they are both Asian. The model minority erases other

factors affecting a person's education such as socioeconomic status. This imbalance among Asian students creates a skewed competition. Asians students look to each other as measures of academic success, so disadvantaged students will feel as though they are underperforming even if they are doing well relative to their circumstances. The inability to match the model minority myth's expectation that all Asians are equally successful sows constant anxiety and low self esteem. Overall, the combined academic competition and normalization of excellence cause a toxic environment in which self-evaluation is based on an unbalanced comparison.

Kong, Angela Wai-Yin. *Re-examining Diversity Policy at University of California, San Diego: The Racial Politics of Asian Americans*. University of California San Diego, 2014. Web.