

The Smart Asian



Collage created with images of Asian characters depicted with the “nerdy” or intelligent stereotype with a couple of stereotypical Asian memes.

Reading Response 5

The collage shows how media has constantly depicted Asian Americans with the stereotype of being smart. This was the main stereotype I grew up with and college was no different. When I came to UCSD, this “smart Asian” mentality was evident by the intelligent Asian memes that scoured the internet and Facebook pages, and I wasn’t surprised to see the large population of Asian American students on campus. This is a vast contrast to the less than 2% population of blacks (Kong 97)

The distinction and divide between the Asian Americans and blacks on campus after the Compton Cookout events brought up the differences in experience between the two minorities. Kong explains this divide as “the hypervisibilities of Asian Americans as extraordinary students and black students as in need of academic support” (96). When experiences between two minority races are so different, it became difficult during the Compton Cookout aftermath to fully discuss and reform diversity policy to meet the needs of all students of color as some Asian students struggled to understand what the event meant. Many students even felt conflicted in trying to support the black students targeted by the event and also improve conditions for Asian students (95, 101).

Through Kong’s article, I moved from viewing the minority groups on campus as one coalition of people to seeing that minority groups are different and distinct with their own needs shaped by unique experiences. The Compton Cookout events revealed Asian Americans as a group different from other minorities as many organizations focused on social and cultural aspects rather than the political and the difficulty in rallying them together to fight for the cause. This separation from other minority groups, the large population of Asian Americans, and the “positive” stereotype of intelligence has started to push Asians away as a minority and consequently becoming much more difficult to see the distinct needs that these students have.

Works Cited

Kong, Angela. "Voices of Asian American Students and the Politics of Diversity Policy." Re-Examining Diversity Policy at UCSD. N.p.: n.p., 2014. 82-109. Web.