

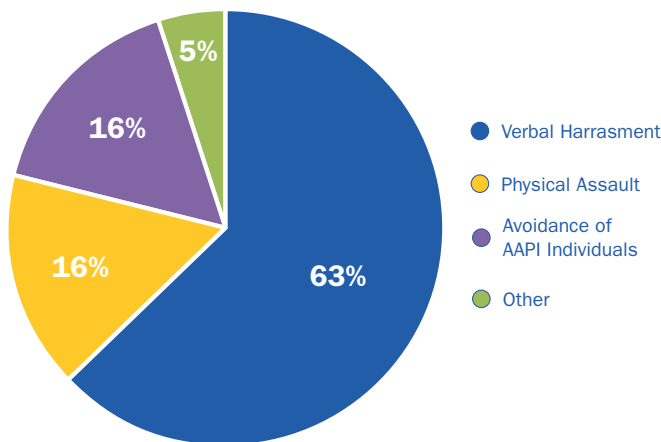
Rise of Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander Hate: Brief on Historical Trauma in AAPI Communities and How We Got Here



Anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) hate has played a role in the lives of those who identify as a part of the AAPI community since the 1800s in the United States (US). Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, acts of prejudice, hatred, and violence targeting members of the AAPI community have drastically risen, both in the US and around the globe. It has also been exacerbated by racially-charged speech and the media. A total of 10,905 hate incidents were reported to Stop AAPI Hate (March 2020 to December 2021):

AAPI is a vast diaspora with approximately 50 distinct ethnic groups.

AAPI REPORTED INCIDENTS (Mar.2020 to Dec. 2021)



- 62% of reports were by women.
- 49% of these reports occurred in public spaces (e.g., streets, transit, parks, and businesses).
- In 2020, anti-Asian hate crimes increased by 70%¹

These acts of race-based hate stem from xenophobia, and the model minority myth which does not protect the AAPI community from racism, but rather, further alienates its members from the rest of the population. This alienation may also create acts of hate and resentment from other minoritized groups. In addition to being the direct targets of racialized violence, AAPI individuals who witness other AAPI individuals being victimized can show symptoms of decreased psychological wellbeing and vulnerability to vicarious discrimination and traumatic stress.

Xenophobia: fear or hatred of foreigners, people from different cultures, or strangers.

Stress incurred by race-based hate and violence can have serious impacts on minoritized children and families, including but not limited to, increased risk for depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, and post-traumatic stress disorder. Studies suggest that there are ties between racial and ethnic instances of discrimination and depression as well as suicide related risk.² An additional study showed that one’s exposure to racial and ethnic discrimination, whether direct or indirect, was correlated with poorer physical health outcomes and an increased vulnerability to suicide-related risk among racial and ethnic minority youth and young adults.³ While these scientific findings are coming into view, there are also unique cultural considerations that make addressing racial acts of violence and hate even more challenging within the AAPI community.

The model minority myth pits people of color against one another and creates a hierarchy in which Asian people are often represented at the top.

This resource provides a brief overview of the historical events the AAPI community has experienced to provide understanding of how AAPI individuals are viewed in the US. These events have impacted and continue to impact the AAPI communities particularly the historical trauma that AAPI communities are impacted with today. For tips and strategies on how to talk to children and adolescents about AAPI hate, please visit (insert title of 2nd resource here).”

Historical Trauma: multi-generational trauma by a specific cultural, racial, or ethnic group.

How Did We Get Here?

Racism, prejudice, and acts of hate and violence towards the AAPI community have existed since members began immigrating to the US. This timeline highlights several historical events that shaped the history of the AAPI community in this country. Please note that this is not a comprehensive review and strongly encourage you to learn more about the experiences of the AAPI community through your own research.



PRESENT

Culmination of Historical Trauma on AAPI Communities
 An examination of all of these events taken together compounds into historical trauma. Historical trauma is the multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial, or ethnic group.

1850's

California Gold Rush and the first wave of Chinese immigrants who were mainly men

Negative tension began when local White men started getting upset and spreading the phrase that Chinese men were "taking all of their jobs and money" widely.



1875

Page Act

The Page Act prevented the immigration of women who were suspected of prostitution. This prevented Chinese men the ability to set up their family's lives. This showed that Chinese men are allowed to stay for their labor, not to build their lives in the US.



1882

Chinese Exclusion Act

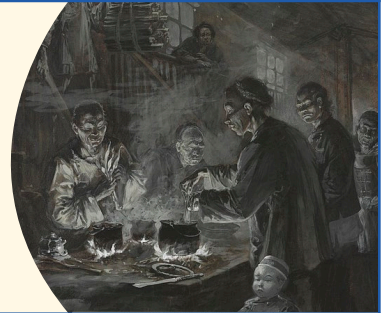
The Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited all immigration of Chinese laborers. This is the only discriminatory law of its kind that excludes an entire group of individuals based on race.



1889

Bubonic Plague Outbreak

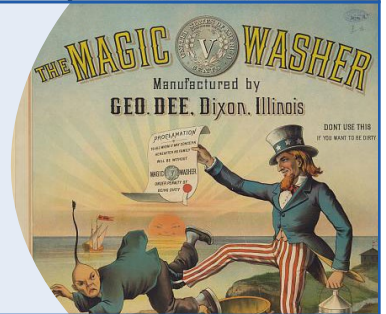
The outbreak in San Francisco was blamed on the Chinese in Chinatown. This blame spread throughout the US and in other Chinese-dense communities. Quarantines began to be enforced and imposed on AAPI communities resulting in their isolation.



1890's

Yellow Peril Narrative

The Yellow Peril Narrative was a derogatory metaphor that depicted people of East and Southeast Asia as dangers to the Western World. Exaggerated caricatures of Chinese men were drawn and distributed throughout the West, further pushing this narrative.



1893

Kingdom of Hawai'i Overthrown

American and foreign businessmen overthrew the Kingdom of Hawai'i for political and financial gain. Over 90% of Native Hawaiians' land was lost to foreigners who bartered and created Westernized systems and restrictions that Hawaiians could not meet. This resulted in declining health, higher death rates, language loss, land confiscation, racial segregation, and loss of identity.



1900's

Influx of immigration of Pacific Islanders to San Francisco

The US military recruited Pacific Islanders to serve during WWII which brought thousands of migrants from Samoa and Tonga to San Francisco for job opportunities. Today, Pacific Islanders experience poverty at disproportionately higher levels, and their population is dwindling at significant rates in the Bay area.



1910's

Fu Manchu Book Series

Author Sax Rohmer rose to fame creating this book series. The series depicted an evil, Chinese doctor in a dystopian world dominated by "evil Orientals." The series gained significant readership, and the character, Dr. Fu Manchu, was featured in media for over 90 years. Dr. Fu Manchu would be representative of one of the longest lasting negative stereotypes associated with Asian men.



1920's

Dragon Lady

"Why is it that the screen Chinese is always the villain-murderous, treacherous, a snake in the grass?" A question posed by Anna May Wong who was constantly cast as the "Oriental villain." In order to not perpetuate this stereotype.



1924

Immigration Exclusion Act

The Immigration Exclusion Act set a total immigration quota of 165,000 for countries outside the Western Hemisphere, an 80% reduction from average before World War I, and barred immigrants from Asia, including Japan.



1940-1971

Birth of "Model Minority Stereotype"

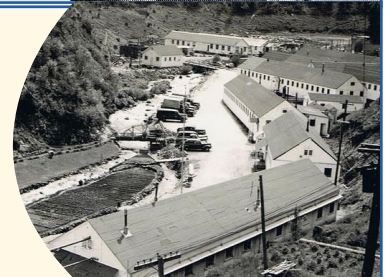
A wedge is slowly formed between AAPI and other minoritized populations as US News and World Report captures common sentiments such as, "You don't find any Chinese locked up for robbery, rape or vagrancy," and "At a time when Americans are awash in worry over the plight of racial minorities – one such minority, the nation's 300,000 Chinese-Americans, are winning wealth and respect by dint of its own hard work."



1941

Japanese Internment Camps during WWII

Over 110,000 Japanese Americans (over 66,000 being US citizens) were forced to stay for 4 years in internment camps due to suspected loyalty to Japan. About half of the people sent were children.



1946-1958

Micronesian islands Nuclear Testing

The US tested nuclear weapons at 39 sites across the Micronesian Islands. Immediate exposures for the population resulted in fatal acute myeloid leukemia, thyroid tumors, and uninhabitable homeland and property.



1982

**Murder of
Vincent Chin**

Vincent Chin is beaten to death by two White autoworkers in Detroit. The two men approached Vincent Chin and blamed him and his friends for being out of work because of car imports from Japan. The two men were sentenced to 3 years probation, a \$3,000 fine, and no jail time which led to outrage and protests across the Asian American community.



2020

**COVID-19
Pandemic**

This worldwide pandemic brought fear and outrage towards AAPI communities. There was a significant rise in race-based hate and violence towards AAPI populations. The media and others, including the US president used terms like “Kung-Flu Virus” and the “China Virus” fanning the flames and blame towards Chinese populations.



2021

**Atlanta Spa
Mass Shootings**

Eight people, majority being Asian women, were shot in a rampage at three spas. A police officer reported that the mass shooter was “having a bad day” and wanted to “eliminate his temptation due to his sexual addiction.”

The harmful image of AAPI women being seen as “sexual” and doing sexual acts in spas is perpetuated. Rather than seeing these women as individuals providing for their families in legitimate businesses, the news around the world again perpetuated this stereotype.



2023

**Mass shootings in
predominantly AAPI
California communities**

Mass shootings that took place in predominately AAPI California communities including Monterey Park, CA where 11 people were murdered and 9 were injured during a Lunar New Year celebration weekend. The shooter was of AAPI descent; and Half Moon Bay, CA where 7 individuals were murdered, all farmworkers. The mass shooter was of AAPI descent.

Both incidents occurred closely together prompting challenging conversations around the impact of the shooters being of AAPI descent. These events deepened the harm towards AAPI communities, the impact of internalized racism, the lack of mental health resources for AAPI communities, and lack of access particularly for the elderly.



While it is impossible to capture every significant historical event, this resource intends to demonstrate that race-based hate towards AAPI communities is unfortunately not new. There must be understanding and an acknowledgment of history in order to recognize that everything is connected. There must be a grappling with the past to learn from it, build awareness, and create a path towards collective healing for children and families.

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