



Asian Pride & Prejudice:

The Relationship between Ethnic
Identity and Mental Illness Stigma

Presented by Shawn Fang

don't embarrass
your family

Keep quiet

pretend
you are happy

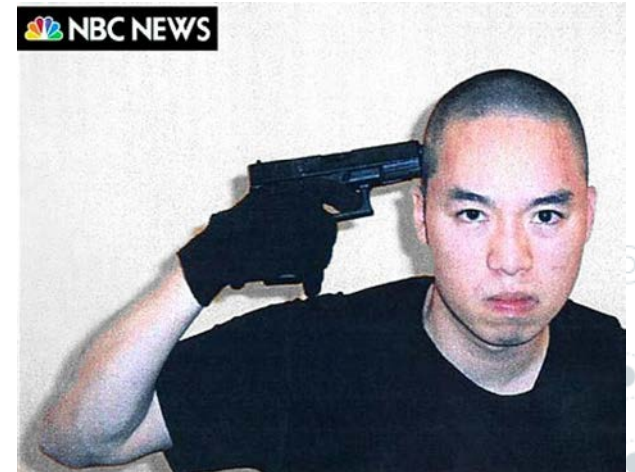
don't embarrass
yourself



deal with it

On April 16, 2007, Seung Hui Cho,

*an angry and
disturbed student,
shot to death 32
students and faculty
of Virginia Tech,
wounded 17 more, and
then killed himself.*



Both the family and the schools recognized that Cho's problem was **not merely introversion** and that Cho needed therapy to help with:

- extreme social anxiety
- selective mutism
- acculturation
- communication

On April 14, 2000, Elizabeth Shin

died after a fire in her dormitory room, after attempting suicide the night before and struggling with her mental health since she began school two years ago at MIT.



- ❑ “.admitted to psychiatrists that she cut her wrists very superficially after she was bumped from valedictorian to salutatorian of West Orange High School.”
- ❑ “She was **objectively** doing well at M.I.T. in almost every regard, academically, socially, athletically and musically, but was nonetheless **overwhelmed** by feelings of inadequacy.”

- ❑ Elizabeth specifically asked that her parents **not** be contacted, M.I.T. officials have said.
- ❑ Her friends told me that they never would have considered calling the Shins, either, because, Cain said, "getting them involved wouldn't have helped, by our estimation."

Acculturative stress

- ❑ Also known as “culture shock”
- ❑ Definition: culture change which results from continuous, first hand contact between two distinct cultural groups
- ❑ Accompanying stress behaviors:
 - lowered mental health status (specifically confusion, anxiety, depression)
 - feelings of marginality and alienation

Model Minority

Education, prevention and treatment within the community ..is further exacerbated by the stereotype of the 'model minority.'

- Highly successful
- Well-educated
- Upwardly mobile
- High standards of success in all areas



*U.S.-born Asian-American women had a higher lifetime rate of suicidal thoughts (**15.9 percent**) than that of the general U.S. population (**13.5 percent**).*

Archives of Suicide Research, 2009



Asian-American college students were more likely than White American students to have had suicidal thoughts and to attempt suicide.

Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 2000

Stigma

- ❑ Definition: the threats of diminished self-esteem and of public identification when labeled “mentally ill.”
- ❑ Diminishes self-esteem and robs people of social opportunities.



Mental Illness Stigma

- Shame, silence, fear, loss of “face”
- Believed to reflect poorly on family lineage
- **Mental Illness Clinicians Attitudes Scale, 2010**



If I had a mental illness, I would never admit this to any of my friends because I would fear being treated differently.

Strongly agree

Agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

I feel as comfortable talking to a person with a mental illness as I do talking to a person with a physical illness.

Strongly agree

Agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree



General practitioners should not be expected to complete a thorough assessment for people with psychiatric practitioner because they can be referred to a psychiatrist.

Strongly agree

Agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

If a person with a mental illness complained of physical symptoms (such as chest pain), I would attribute it to their mental illness.

Strongly agree

Agree

Somewhat agree

Somewhat disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree



Ethnic Pride

- Patriarchal beliefs, ancestral values, language, sense of belonging
- “Whitewashing,” rejection
- **East Asian Ethnic Identity Scale, 2002**



Yale SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Psychiatry

Being Asian is an important part of who I am.

Strongly agree Agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

I am proud to be able to speak an Asian language.

Strongly agree Agree Somewhat agree Somewhat disagree Disagree Strongly disagree



When a stranger asks me where I am from, I am proud to tell him/her that I am Asian.

Strongly agree



Agree



Somewhat agree



Somewhat disagree



Disagree



Strongly disagree



If I were to be born again, I would not wish to be born Asian.

Strongly agree



Agree



Somewhat agree



Somewhat disagree



Disagree



Strongly disagree





Please select the Asian ethnic groups which apply to you.

More than one ethnic group may be applicable.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino | <input type="checkbox"/> Burmese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> Indonesian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Nepalese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korean | <input type="checkbox"/> Sri Lankan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Japanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Malaysian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani | <input type="checkbox"/> Bhutanese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian | <input type="checkbox"/> Desi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hmong | <input type="checkbox"/> Arab |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thai | <input type="checkbox"/> Punjabi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laotian | <input type="checkbox"/> Okinawan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taiwanese | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
-

Are you adopted?

- Yes
 - Maybe
 - No
-

Were you ever a foreign exchange and/or hosted student?

- Yes, foreign exchange
 - Yes, hosted
 - No
-

During elementary, middle, and high school, were a majority of your friends Asian?

If so, please indicate "Yes" and describe if your friends shared your ethnic background (for example: "I am Korean and most of my friends are also Korean", or "I am Pakistani and only a few of my friends are also Pakistani").

Did/do you go to a university for undergraduate studies where Asians are considered to be an ethnic majority?

Specifically, consider the noticeable presence of Asians in your classes and around campus.



Personal history

Do you personally know anyone who currently has or used to have a mental illness?

- Yes
 - Maybe
 - No
-

Who do you seek help or advice from when you experience stress, anxiety, and/or sadness?

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet (self-help sites, forums, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Siblings | <input type="checkbox"/> Social media |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |



Would you have been more trusting of your counselor/therapist if he/she was Asian?

- Yes
 - Maybe
 - No
-
-

Would you consider seeking counseling and/or therapy after reading peer-reviewed articles from respected academic journals about high improvement rates and successful treatment outcomes?

- Yes
 - Maybe
 - No
-


A decorative network diagram in the top right corner, consisting of various sized grey circles connected by thin grey lines, some solid and some dashed, creating a web-like structure.

Acknowledgements

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Research and Scholarship

A decorative network diagram in the bottom left corner, similar to the one in the top right, with grey circles of different sizes connected by thin grey lines, some solid and some dashed.