

Dear Asians,

**What's wrong
with “good”
stereotypes?**

**EXPLAINING THE
MODEL MINORITY MYTH**

WHAT IS IT?

The model minority myth consists of stereotypes that label Asians as:

LAW-ABIDING

INTELLIGENT

POLITE

in comparison to other identity groups. In general, it is the concept that we are the "ideal" minority.

CONTEXT

The Model Minority Myth originates from exceptionalism. The “success” of Asian immigrants was guaranteed prior to their arrival to their country, as the **Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965** prioritized factors such as:

SPOUSES AND UNMARRIED CHILDREN OF PERMANENT RESIDENTS

PROFESSIONALS, SCIENTISTS, AND ARTISTS “OF EXCEPTIONAL ABILITY”

In the midst of the Civil Rights movement, the media used the successes of Asians to their advantage as a way to **demonize** the Black community. By using Confucianist and Meiji values of patience, discipline, and obedience, **Asian-American “willingness to accommodate”** was a supposed “success story”.

WHY IS IT HARMFUL?

The Model Minority Myth in itself is anti-Black and is not meant to be viewed positively.

Rather, it is a tool to force Asians into submission and drive a wedge between minorities by creating a hierarchy.

This myth is used to prove that America is not anti-Black due to the success of a minority group and shows that you can “overcome” racism with hard work.

However, it invalidates the work of other minority groups when there have been racial roadblocks preventing them from achieving it.

DISPEL THE MYTH

Understanding that **we do not exist to appeal to white people** is the first step to overcoming anti-black sentiment.

We must also become aware of and unlearn our **implicit biases** to better attend the needs of our Black and Brown counterparts.

*We are **tolerated** by White America, not accepted. They simply do not hate us because we are not Black.*

Realizing that the Model Minority Myth only serves to pit BIPOC against each other will help us all unite in fighting white supremacy!

SOURCES

C.N. Le's "The 1965 Immigration Act" on *Asian Nation*

Chenyu Wang's "Harvard University and the myth of the model minority" published Dec. 11, 2018 on *Washington Post*

Kat Chow's "'Model Minority' Myth Again Used As A Racial Wedge Between Asians And Blacks" published Apr. 19, 2017 on *NPR*

Mary Mei's "The Model Minority Myth Reborn in the 1980s"

Sapna Cheryan and Galen V Bodenhausen's "Model Minority" in *Routledge Companion to Race & Ethnicity*

William Petersen's "Success Story, Japanese American Style" published 1966 in *the New York Times*

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

We have compiled a Google Doc for additional information about the Model Minority Myth!

To read it, go to

bit.ly/daimodelminority

or use the QR code below!

