SURPRISE
Some of the biggest surprises I found in today’s reading were in Won Moo Hurh’s chapter on Korean American family life. I had no idea that 72% of marriages in Korea (as of 1998) were still being arranged by parents, relatives, or matchmakers. While I did know that male children are favored in Korean society as they are in many Asian societies, I did not know that some women selectively terminated pregnancies upon finding out that their fetus was a female.

CONFIRM
Hurh’s section on the “Social and Psychological Costs of Being Model Minority Kids” confirmed much of what I already knew about the negative affects of the model minority stereotype on Asian American students. In addition to placing undue stress on students to succeed, this belief also creates unrealistic expectations of Asian Students held by teachers.

CURIOUS
I’m curious to see how statistics have changed since Hurh’s piece was published in 1998. Are the majority of marriages in Korea still arranged today?

HELP
While I have no problem understanding the ideas presented in Hurh’s “Social and Psychological Costs of Being Model Minority Kids,” I must critique Hurh for the way in which he presented it. Although Hurh criticizes the model minority stereotype for its negative affects on Asian America, he also paradoxically perpetuates it with comments like, “It seems that Asian American students have thus become a model for all young American minorities, particularly in scholarly achievement” and referring to Asian-Americans as “‘Whiz Kids’ [who have] achieved an impressive level of academic
success.” Furthermore, nowhere in Hurh’s piece does he ever bring attention to the minority groups for which Asian Americans are suppose to serve as a model. I simply don’t understand how or why Hurh could miss or avoid such important point. The title of Hurh’s section contains the words social and psychological cost in it, yet he fails to acknowledge the social and psychological cost of Asians being portrayed as superior in intellect and used as a weapon towards other persons of color.

CONFUSE

RELATE

I really enjoyed all of the short stories we read for today’s class. Suh’s “How to Live. What to Do.,” Lee’s “My Mom Across America,” and Chang-Rae Lee’s excerpt from The Native Speaker all reminded me in one way or another of some of my own experiences that I have shared with my parents and family. While the readings focused on (I’m assuming) second generation Korean American children’s relationships with their parents having grown up in the US, I wonder how experiences might differ based on location, time, and generation? At this time, I think I’d like to explore how this campus affects the creation of a Korean American identity as well as the notion of a Korean American identity itself.