About the Author:

Since it’s my first time in the US, I felt a little nervous to the entirely new environment. And I am going through the shock of cultural and the difference in living, studying.

I am from China, living in a coastal city which is close to Shanghai. My hometown is a place of interest and history. There’s an old saying in China: The natural environment goes into the making of a people’s character. As an advantage of living near the coast, there’s always varieties of seafood all the year round. The jumping shrimps, different kinds of crabs, hairtail, salmon, cods, yellow-fin tuna, octopus, sleeve-fish are available at local markets. We love seafood, and we have an unique way to enjoy these delicious seafood: we eat them in raw. Take portunid for example. They are put in the salt water for 2-3 days in order to kill the bacteria inside the portunid. After that, we can enjoy it directly (still raw!). Sounds a little nasty, but I really love its taste. And the nutrition inside is well conserved. Due to the fact that we have an abundant resource of seafood. Our cooking style is basically centered with braise. And they are exclusively delicious!

My hometown also played an important role in ancient wars. In the 19th century when China is attacked by many countries. Many marines fight for the sovereignty of China along the coast of China. There are still lots of emplacements standing, pointing in the direction to the sea. The dark red rust covers all over the emplacement, silently telling its glorious history to the people.

That’s the place where I grow up. Giving me the characteristic of self-reliant and integrity.

Keywords: stereotypes segregations Chinese students

Abstract:
Research plan and proposal

Proposal:

I am an international student from China, since I came here, I find that in the University of Illinois at Urbana Champion, different races are separated. This isn’t what I wish to see. I want to study the stereotype of Chinese international students, and hoping to find how US students formed certain stereotype and how it affected the segregation of Chinese students and other student groups. Below is the questions I want to answer:

What is the stereotype of Chinese students? What causes the US students to form that stereotype and what breaks down that communication between different races?

Plan:

After 2 months of study, I began to understand the stereotype of the Chinese international students. People who meet me, always talk about their impression of what an Chinese is supposed to be. And one question that I brought up as my topic of the research is what is the stereotype of Chinese international students? And what contributes to the formation of this stereotype?

The first step of my research is to look up relevant information or research on IDEALS. Recently I have been reading a lot of research carried out by other students. Their interview in their research report really interests me. These interviews showed their stories, their opinion about race, they understanding of stereotype. And these materials are very helpful for me to conduct further research. Such as the technique for conducting a successful and enjoyable interview.

The next step will be the observation of Chinese students in UIUC. I will especially concentrate on how Chinese international students act when they are attending different kinds of activities. For example, how do they act when attending fraternity party? How do they act in classroom? How do they act in library? Do they fit the stereotype that I found on the IDEALS? And thus make the foundation for my last step, interviewing people.

As I have mentioned, my last step will be a form of interview. I will talk to my floor RA, about the stereotype of Chinese students in his eye, because RAs are communicating with many students everyday, they can give me an objective point of view. And I will also talk to my roommate, the guys on my floor. In order to find out how they view Chinese students. How did they form the stereotype of Chinese
Initial Exercises:

Question:

It's been 3 months since I came to the US, and I found that in the University of Illinois, at the very beginning of this semester, I went to the QUAD DAY, and what I saw surprised me:

The ethnic background of the students in U of I is so rich, and when I recall the scenario today, I realized that I saw Native Americans, African Americans, Latino Americans, Asian Americans and Caucasians, etc.

Upon seeing that scenario, firstly I was impressed by the diversity of races in U of I, but later on, I was astonished about the separation between different races, in my impression, the US is a country that accepts and welcomes any races. What I saw disappointed me and add to my concern that I might not easily get adapt to the life in US University.

As a freshmen and an international student, I feel very nervous about the unfamiliar environment, also, considering the fact that different races are separated in U of I, I want to research into how Chinese international students faces this racial problems. Specifically, I want to study the common stereotype of Chinese students, what causes these stereotypes and segregation of Chinese students.

My goal by doing this research is to have a better understanding of race situations in UIUC. What's more, I want to find out why the separation between different races occurs, especially the self-segregation of Chinese students. Also I hope to figure out a way for me to deal with it.

Plan:

Research plan:
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My last step will be a form of interview. I will talk to my floor RA, about the stereotype of Chinese students in his eye. And I will also talk to my roommate, the guys on my floor. In order to find out how they view Chinese students. How did they think of the stereotype of Chinese students?

Data:

Discuss:

Discussion:

According to my research, I found some interesting facts that somewhat prevented me from doing further research: most white student and black student cannot easily distinguish Chinese students from Asians, while Indians have already been categorized out of Asians, and the so called Asians are most probably referred to Chinese and Koreans. Maybe that's because there are such a big percentage of Chinese and Koreans in this university. Actually according to the data I collected, in 1998, 17 percent of incoming freshmen surveyed (almost one in six) reported speaking a language other than English at home. More than half of those freshmen spoke one of three languages: Spanish (24 percent), Chinese (16 percent), or Korean (14 percent).[1] So at that time, Korean and Chinese students have already made up a great consistency of the whole population on campus. So the great percentage of Chinese students made me excited but many students inability to tell Chinese and Koreans apart makes my research more difficult.
So firstly, what is the stereotype of Chinese students?

According to my research report, in appendix 1, annotated bibliography, Stereotypes of Asian American Students. ERIC Digest, the author introduced some common stereotype of Asian students, especially Korean and Chinese:

Some of the educational stereotypes identify Asian Americans as "geniuses," "overachievers," "4.0 GPAs "nerdy," "great in math or science," "competitive," "uninterested in fun," and, etc. and when referring to characteristic: in interview#1 the interviewee said: they are quiet, but surprisingly, when they are with other Asians, they are likely to be talkative.

In interview #4: my RA talked about gender rules, Asian women are more submissive to men, and female are more reserve to men, Asian women seldom open themselves and talk to guys, what s more, female believe males are superior to them.

In interview #6, Billy mentioned that Asians are thought as people that care a lot of money, frugal. They usually own Laundromats and restaurants.

Different interviewees all mentioned the academic success that a Chinese student shall achieve. And they all pointed out that Asians, tend not to hang out with white or black. They tend to hang out only with students of the same ethnic background.

What causes the formation of these stereotypes?

Taking all the materials and data I have, I found that the media, radio or TV shows play an important rule in shaping the stereotype. In interview[iii] #2, the interviewee formed the stereotype Chinese girls love money, and tend to hook up with rich guys. The stereotype came from TV drama, he explained. And according to an interview mentioned in annotated bibliography #1, an American born Chinese once felt angry being recognized as Chinese. He explained that it s because there is a famous TV show, called MAD TV, always makes fun of stereotype of Asians. He doesn t want to be laughed at. So these two examples shows some of the stereotype displayed on TV, or maybe on other forms of media, might have a distortion or exaggeration in the figure of Asians. And these stereotypes somewhat not that good, sometimes make Asian kids feel bad of being an Asian. So the media really plays an important role in the formation of stereotypes in kids. Because kids watched TV a lot, and these kids are
told by the TV what other races are like though diverted program, at an early age. But, unfortunately, some of these stereotypes are not that accurate.

And there is another possible cause of the formation of stereotype. That is the self-segregation of Chinese students. Actually self-segregation is somewhat common within every race. According to my observation in the Union café area, not only the Asians, but other races like to stay with the students of the same ethnic background. When a race tends to segregate itself out of other race, that cuts off the way of communication. So the stereotype is formed as time goes by. And no correction is made because there s no communication.

In interview #3 and #4, both interviewees state clearly that they get to know most of their friends in class, or through friends. But in the lecture room of U of I, students don t have much chance to discuss in class, and almost all of them are rushing after class, trying to get to the next classroom. So the way we go to classes in UIUC might have some negative effect on making new friends, there are only few places that different races are likely to interact. And 2 of the interviewees said there aren t adequate places on campus for socializing.

Another possible cause can be: there are so many Asians. Why can that be a cause? It is because students feel comfortable when staying with others of the same ethnicity. (According to annotated bibliography, #3, comfort zone ) in UIUC, the percentage of Chinese students is relatively big, that means a Chinese student can easily find another Chinese student to socialize, so they tend not to contact other races. So, as a result, Asian students hang out in huge groups. And it fits perfectly to my observation. But this self-segregation adds to the separation between races. Just imagine a group of Chinese students, sitting around a table in the Union café area, and there is a black guy who is interested in Ancient East Culture sitting at the next table. He wants to get to know some Chinese student, but the whole group of student makes him feel nervous. So he chose not to socialize with them in the end. This example indicates how self-segregation prevents students from communicating.

But paradoxically, in interview #1, #3, both of them compared U of I to their high school, saying that there high school, the Chinese or Koreans are well mixed with other students. In their high school, there are only few Asians. The Asians students in their high school cannot easily find other Asians easily, so these Asian students break the boundary and get to know Caucasians and blacks, surprisingly, these Asians students are better off than Chinese international students in UIUC, apparently they look happier and have more friends. So it s
surprising that the great percentage of Asian students somewhat adds to their self-segregation.

As a conclusion, all the things stated above showed that: In U of I, the way we go to classes, the huge percentage of Chinese students, the lack of places for socialize contributes to the segregation of difference races on campus. So the atmosphere on this campus probably contributes to segregation of Chinese students, also it helps to create the formation of stereotype due to the lack of communication.

And the last but most important reason that causes the segregation is the language problem. In interview #1, the interviewee remarked his roommate as quiet, in interview #4, my RA told me that Asian students are likely to use simple oral English, and they sometimes only say yes or no. When they are speaking their mother tongue, they tend to be much more talkative. And according to my observation in many areas on campus, Chinese students are not that willing to use English, but American born Chinese are fluent in English. Also, in interview #6, it shows that Chinese students that get along well with Caucasians or blacks are fluent in oral English. Language really played an important rule in communication, and a lot of my Chinese have talked about their concern for their relatively inferior English. Clearly, if the tool of communication breaks down, the communication cannot be successful.

Conclusion:

The media helps to shape the public’s view of stereotype of Chinese. And sometimes these stereotypes indicated on the TV show aren’t all correct. What’s more, the way we have classes, the lack of interacting area, the self-segregating of each race, contribute to the formation of stereotype of each race. And the huge percentage of Asians surprisingly has a negative effect that stops Asians students to socialize with other races. But it’s not the university’s fault to have such a high percentage.

To some extent, the atmosphere in UIUC contributes to the segregation of Chinese students, and these stereotypes, specifically some of the stereotype of Chinese students, make Chinese students unhappy and distressed. This happens when a Chinese student fail to achieve academic success as he is expected to or he feels being segregated.

And this situation have bad effect on Chinese students life on campus: the more friends that students have of their own ethnicity at the end of the freshmen year, the more they will perceive discrimination against
themselves and other members of their ethnic group during their sophomore and junior year[^iv]. This vicious circle could cause psychological problems in some students who fail to stand these stress generated by the segregation.

What can Chinese students deal about the problem? Bravely stepping out of a person’s own ethnic group is very helpful in mutual understanding between races. Actually there is always a way out: We need to understand that there are still quite a lot of Chinese students who get on well with Americans. They hang out together, have fun together, and study together. Bravely stepping out to other races and getting to know them is an exciting thing to do, but it calls for a lot of courage and effort.

Last but not least, according to my interview, every one showed that they are willing to communicate with Chinese students, and most of the white people are not racist, they just treat Asians, blacks, or other people the same as they treat whites. But if you want a white or black people to greet you, and wait for them to get to know you, it’s not that likely to happen. Actually, simply saying ‘hi’, you can break the wall what blocks communication.

If I were to do further research to this topic, I would look into how these stereotypes affect the students’ way of living and learning. Such that to obtain a more comprehensive view of the topic.

And I would to research on how international students react to the pressure caused by stereotypes. Sometimes international students are very sensitive and fragile, because they came from a different country, a different cultural background. For international students, the first year is always tough and suffering. And I hope further study into how they get adapted into the new society can help the other international students that plan to study in the US next year.

[^i] Melissa Mitchell, A.B. ’80, English, Fall 2001

Embracing diversity leads to growth of "heritage" language courses

http://www.las.uiuc.edu/alumni/magazine/articles/2001/multicultural/

[^ii] - See appendix 3
[iii] - See appendix 3


EUI Links:

**Annotated bibliography**

#1 AAS199 07-5, Chinese American Students at UIUC: Acquiring a Second Language,

IDEALS [http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/8697](http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/8697)

In this research on IDEALS, the author focuses on second language acquisition of Asian-American Students at the University of Illinois Campus. His research purpose is to find out how students act to the person that speaks the same mother tongue. In his interview with American born Chinese and Chinese international students, he revealed several important factors that cause the segregation between students (especially between Chinese students and other students). As is pointed out in his research, learning to speak a language helps to develop a sense of belonging to the culture. He also asked the interviewees about how they feel to be a bilingual person, most of them are proud of being able to speak two languages. And one of the interviewee showed anger of being recognized as Chinese, though he is an ABC.

Some interview in his research really helps me, the MAD TV, mentioned in his interview #3, a comedy show that makes fun of Average Asian, showed the stereotype of Asian people, especially Chinese.

#2 Hibbler, Sharrell, In which university spaces are students more likely to interact across racial/ethnic lines?

IDEALS [https://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/1900](https://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/1900)

The author wants to find out the place on UIUC where people from diverse races and cultural backgrounds are most likely to socialize. He asked an impressive question: has the university’s place been racialized? the fact that many of the university’s place has been hijacked by black or Latino and Asian. This self-segregation has
set up a barrier for communication. Suppose a white wants to get to know some Asians, but what will he feel when he enters a room filled with Asians? This might give him a lot of pressure. A place where different races are well mixed can be a good place to socialize, such as cafeteria or Pub. The best way to destroy stereotype is to communicate. But students don't have that much chance. There are places where races are well mixed, but the quantity is very limited on uiuc.

#3 Rhet104C-02, Segregation in International Students, IDEALS http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/8730

In this research, the author studied the segregation between international students and US students. He stated that the segregation among international students is based on nation. He interviewed a lot of international students to find out the reason why they always choose to stay with people from the same country. Chinese like to stay with Chinese, so does Korean, Indian, and other Asian students. He tried to find out the reason that causes the segregation:

1.-Language and Cultural Background-
When speaking the same language, people tend to be more friendly and comfortable with the people they just met

2.-Comfort zone-
When there are many people who are the same as the person is, the person would likely feel more comfortable

3.-Options-
When there are fewer students in a university, there would likely be fewer international students. If they don't have many choices on friends, they would break the nation boundary and step out to the color segregation part.


The text mainly talk about the effect that stereotype bring to Asian kids. He described the common stereotype of Asians: Some of the educational stereotypes identify Asian Americans as "geniuses," "overachievers," "nerdy," "great in math or science," "competitive,"
"uninterested in fun," and "4.0 GPAs, etc.

And he continued to argue that these stereotypes put stress on some of the Asian kids, cause them to be depressed when failing to achieve a Common Asian, it causes a negative effect like not doing well in the course, being isolated with classmates. This stereotype is something needs attention, because it neglect the difference in individual

And the he also mentioned some possible reason why Asian students get separated with other races, so this article helps me a lot in doing my research.

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#5 Jean Yonemura Wing, Beyond Black and White: The Model Minority Myth and the Invisibility of Asian American Students.

In this journal, the writer talked about the model minority image became embedded in US culture. The author quote in the 1850s to the post world war 2 decade, Asians in the US were dehumanized as an unsavory foreign contaminant-portrayed as uncivilized, sinister, heathen, filthy, yellow hordes that threatened to invade U.S and mongrelize the white race. What s more, Chinese were viewed as the Yellow Peril . (Lee, 1999: Miller, 1969)

And later, in mid-1960s, the widespread emergence of success story about Japanese Americans caught public s attention. And another article focusing on Chinese Americans depicts the success of this small group of people. So this new stereotype of Asians emerged during that time.

But at the same time, as the immigration policies opened doors to Asians, there re also stereotype depicting Asians as overachievers and overrun the nation s top universities.

There are some useful information that helps me with my research, I acknowledged that the stereotype of Asians changes during the past 40 years. And media played an important rule in shaping the view of public. The stereotype itself isn t that bad, there re good points about Asian people.

#6 Shana Levin, Colette Van Laar, Ethnic Segregation and Perceived
the study examined relationships among same-ethnic friendship, perceptions of ethnic discrimination, and social and academic adjustment in college using a large longitudinal sample.

And the article also brought up a hypothesis: the more friends that students have of their own ethnicity at the end of the freshmen year, the more they will perceive discrimination against themselves and other member of their ethnic group during their sophomore and junior year. This might be an interesting reason of the self-segregation of the Asian students. It can be a vicious circle: the more segregated, the more isolated, the more isolated cause these ethnic group to be further separated.