

How Covid-19 Made Me Notice the Racism Around Me

When I first heard about the Black Lives Matter movement, I thought it meant that Black lives mattered more than other lives. However, as the movement progressed, this topic became very controversial. People may see the event of George Floyd's death as a racial issue, while others may see that it was because of crime. Either way, his death was not the answer to whatever crime he was accused of committing. This movement may be seen as a way for only Black people to be treated fairly or what others call absurd, but I believe it has shined a bright spotlight on the racism that people of all colors still have to experience everyday.

Ever since the coronavirus first hit the United States nine months ago, I have never felt so insecure about being Asian, or more detailed, Chinese. It all started in my social studies class, where my teacher brought up the topic during our morning news recap. All the other students kept on peeking at me and the other Chinese students. Naturally, I sunk down into a tiny ball in my chair and pulled up my hood, attempting to disappear from the eyes of all my classmates. Even before the coronavirus, at least one student at my school would mock Asians for our language, culture, food, and our physical appearance, every single day. They would pull back their eyes and yell, "ching chong," directly across the room. This became such a normal event at school that most Asians had adapted to it and learned to ignore the comments. As we got older, it got worse to the point where we were racist towards ourselves to fit in.

When I was younger, I told my parents I wanted to be "normal." Why? Because at home, I was pushed academically and put into the advanced math program from a very early age. When I got a good score, some people would say, "that's because you are Asian." Being good in math proved the reputation that the Asian race holds. In reality, I just studied hard every night. Race never defines how smart, hard-working, and how much effort you put into your studies, but everyone made it seem like it did.

I have always wished that I had bigger eyes and prominent double eyelids because people made fun of my eyes. Recently, the exposure of Asians to social media brought up another trend that most Asians would consider as racist and mockery. This trend is called the "Fox Eye Trend," it is directly defined as the pulling back of the eyes to make them smaller or more Asian like. Many people do not see this pose as offensive, but for the Asians who grew up being bullied for their eyes, it is absolutely disrespectful.

Everyone, not just people of color, face racism. Even though we look different on the outside, we bleed the same color. We are the same. Racism is people hurting other people. As the dominating species on the planet with very advanced technology, we should be making the Earth peaceful and a better place to be for all.

Covid-19's Impacts on Me and My Community

Covid-19 has brought many hardships to the world. They range from the smaller events like not being able to go to school to racism. The United States is currently the international laughing-stock because the coronavirus cases are continuing to progress in numbers, we can only hope that the vaccine will be available soon. I do not understand why people refuse to wear a mask, claiming that it is useless. All countries that have required facial coverings, isolation, and lockdowns since the beginning of the pandemic have slowed the spread significantly. Even after their peak in cases, most countries still require masks. In some countries, it is considered good manners to wear a mask.

I love how eager the president is to have students return to school, but it is still very risky to enforce. Although Covid-19 is more fatal to the elderly, students can still be a taxi for the virus, bringing the virus to their family and other fellow students. Now that schools have started and students have adopted virtual learning which will alleviate the pandemic. This is definitely not healthy for our minds and bodies, but it must be done for the benefit of our community.

Another part of our society that was seriously affected by the coronavirus is our economy. It includes businesses, jobs, imports, exports, etc. Many businesses, both big and small, had to close down their stores or services due to not being able to gain enough profit to continue. Those who worked under them may have lost their jobs or have their incomes cut. For example, restaurant owners have had the most difficult time since the Great Depression. Restaurants were not allowed to dine in and could only provide delivery and pick up services. This is a great sacrifice to protect the community and help with social distancing.

A community could be an area like Richmond and Virginia, or a people with the same interests as me. A community can be a city, state, country, or the whole world. Anyone can help improve their own community by participating in civic engagement, voting, or even just picking

up litter. These actions may seem insignificant, but they can help people get educated and help our community leaders understand what the people want for their community. Actively participating in community service would allow one to be a better citizen. Ignorance and conservativeness is not always safe. With our presidential election coming up very soon, it is even more important to learn about our candidates. Although each may have their own flaws, it is important to ignore fake news and learn straight from accurate unbiased news sites.

One day in the future, everything will be back to normal. Along this path, we may develop better technologies and habits. I am doing my part of social distancing, wearing a mask, and sanitizing myself everywhere I go. While there will be those people who do not follow these basic guidelines, I can still protect them and myself. Although we still have a long way to go, we should not give up. Just as Queen Elizabeth II said, *“We should take comfort that while we may have more still to endure, better days will return. We will be with our friends again; we will be with our families again; we will meet again.”*