

THE PORTRAYAL OF ASIAN AMERICANS IN ADVERTISEMENTS FROM 2011 TO 2020

by

DANA BERRY

KARLA GOWER, COMMITTEE CHAIR  
DIANNE BRAGG  
NANCY BRINSON

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts in the College of  
Communication and Information Sciences in the  
Graduate School of The University of Alabama

TUSCALOOSA, ALABAMA

2021



## ABSTRACT

When it comes to research on racial stereotyping in advertising, Asian Americans are often overlooked. Past studies found that stereotypes associated with this minority group were present throughout advertisements, creating a potentially harmful portrayal of Asian Americans along the way. This study explored whether Asian-American stereotypes are still prevalent in recent advertisements from 2011-2020, and if so, to what extent any portrayals have changed over the course of the past 10 years. This examination of the top 20 U.S. brands in terms of advertising budgets analyzed these advertisements through a content analysis, using several categories: Frequency, Setting, Product Category, and Prominence. The results found that advertisements still depicted Asian Americans by using many of the long-held stereotypes, but steps toward progression are being made. The study found Asian Americans were most likely to be featured in a business setting, as well as in advertisements for technology or business products, which are the stereotypes often associated with this group. Advertisements most frequently presented Asian Americans in an equal role, followed by minor and background roles, rather than a major role. The frequency of Asian Americans found in background roles has decreased notably since 2011, as have the number of advertisements where Asian Americans were not represented, indicating steps in a positive direction for advertisers.

## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to everyone who helped and supported me throughout this process, specifically my family, who is my unconditional support system, and my committee who has guided me in order to make this manuscript the best it can be.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am pleased to have this opportunity to thank the faculty who have helped me create this manuscript. I am immensely grateful for my committee chair, Dr. Karla Gower, who has met with me countless times and helped guide me throughout this process. I am also indebted to Dr. Nancy Brinson and Dr. Dianne Bragg, the other members of my committee who helped give me a vision and guide my work toward higher standards. I am also indebted to Professor Mark Barry, who shared the tools necessary to find advertisement archives with me. I would also like to thank my family, who believed in me and encouraged me throughout the year I worked on this thesis. Finally, I would like to thank The University of Alabama for giving me the opportunity to pursue a Master's degree and research this topic.

## CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	3
METHODOLOGY.....	17
RESULTS.....	21
DISCUSSION.....	30
REFERENCES.....	36
APPENDIX.....	41

## LIST OF TABLES

1. List of Top 20 Brands in 2020.....	17
2. Total Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Settings Over 10 Years.....	21
3. Total Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Roles Over 10 Years.....	22
4. Total Number of Asian Americans Present in Different Product Categories Over 10 Years.....	23
5. Asian American Representation in Advertisements Over 10 Years.....	24
6. Number of Asian Americans Represented in Different Settings Each Year.....	25
7. Number of Asian Americans Present in Different Product Categories Each Year.....	27
8. Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Roles Each Year.....	29

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Settings Over 10 Years.....	26
2. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Product Categories Over 10 Years.....	27
3. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Roles Over 10 Years.....	29



## INTRODUCTION

Racial stereotyping is prevalent in American society, and yet some forms of it are often overlooked (Jo & Mast, 1993; Monk-Turner, et al., 2010; Brezina & Winder, 2003; Leong, 2013). Specifically, when Americans think of racism, they often do not consider how Asian Americans are impacted, but this minority group has faced constant discrimination since they first began immigrating to the United States in the mid-1800s. From the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 to Japanese Americans being forced into internment camps in response to the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941 (Jo & Mast, 1993) to, more recently, Americans referring to COVID-19 as the “China Virus” (Bolder, 2020) and the racially-motivated attack on three businesses owned by Asian Americans in Atlanta (Fausset, McDonnell Nieto del Rio & Vigdor, 2021), racism against Asian Americans continues to plague the United States. In fact, according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism (2021) incidents of violence against Asian Americans increased 149% from 2019 to 2020. While the overall hate crime rate declined in the U.S., crimes against Asian Americans skyrocketed, especially in big cities, such as New York City and Los Angeles (Center for the Study of Hate, 2021).

While racism is typically demonstrated through interpersonal language and behavior, it is also perpetuated through advertisements. The existence and effects of stereotypical depictions of African Americans in advertising has received notable attention in the literature (e.g., Adams-Bass, Bentley-Edwards & Stevenson, 2014; Colfax & Sternberg, 1972; Shape & Curry, 1996), but scant research has considered advertising stereotypes of Asian Americans and their

effects on society. Past research examined Asian American stereotypes broadly, as well as how those stereotypes were evident in advertisements from many years ago (Yim, 1989; Taylor & Stern, 1997), but this phenomenon has not attracted much attention in recent years. This may be due to the perception of Asian Americans as the forgotten minority, because the stereotypes they face are not always considered negative (Taylor & Stern, 1997). However, even seemingly positive perceptions can have negative effects on Asian Americans (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997). Therefore, an updated examination of the current use of the stereotyping of Asian Americans in advertising, as well as its impact on society, is warranted.

This study addresses the question of Asian-American stereotyping in advertising by performing a content analysis of various forms of advertisements produced by the top 20 brands in the United States from 2011 to 2020. The brands chosen include the leading national advertisers for each year considered (Ad Age, 2020), meaning these advertisements are assumed to have been widely seen and disseminated due to the reported size of each brand's advertising budget. This allowed for a clearer picture of Asian American portrayals in advertisements in modern American society. The term "Asian American" is used here because the purpose of this study is to examine how Asian Americans as a racial group, rather than specific Asian ethnicities, have been portrayed in advertisements over the past 10 years, and whether this has had any societal impact.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Stereotypical Perceptions of Asian Americans**

Asians have had a long and complicated relationship with the United States. In the 19th century, the Chinese were banned from the country because they were viewed as evil (Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882) (Jo & Mast, 1993). Eventually, Chinese immigrants were allowed, but the U.S. government set a quota based on the belief that Chinese immigrants posed a threat to American jobs because they provided cheap labor. In the middle of the 20th century, the quota was dropped, but it was not until after World War II that American opinions of the Chinese began to improve. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Americans found a new Asian target to hate. The result was that American opinions of the Chinese became extremely favorable in comparison. The Chinese were then viewed as allies until the Cold War when opinions changed once more (Jo & Mast, 1993).

Japanese immigrants started coming to the United States in the 19th century, but it was between 1900 and 1924 that the majority of them entered the country (Jo & Mast, 1993). By 1924, Japanese immigrants comprised .021% of California and .0001% of the U.S. population. These numbers would have been even lower if Chinese immigrants had not been banned in 1882 (Jo & Mast, 1993). Because of the initially more accepting attitude toward Japanese immigrants, their numbers continued to rise, and Americans came to see them as a much larger threat than the Chinese. They became land holders and were more competitive in the job market, which led to resentment against them. After Pearl Harbor, Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps, and Japanese immigrants were seen as the enemy (Jo & Mast, 1993). The Immigration

Act of 1965 allowed all immigrants to enter the United States without a country quota. After this, the number of Asian Americans entering the country increased greatly, making them the fastest growing minority (Jo & Mast, 1993). Since then, hatred toward Asian Americans has decreased, although they are still viewed as competitors for American jobs and success, and stereotypes are still present (Jo & Mast, 1993; Kuo, Kraus, & Richeson, 2019; Barringer, Takeuchi & Xenos, 1990). In fact, hatred toward Asian Americans is again on the rise, as evidenced by the increase in crimes committed against them (Center for the Study of Hate, 2021; Jo & Mast, 1993).

The literature is clear that the stereotype of Asian Americans is that they are hard-working, self-disciplined, serious, and well-assimilated (Taylor & Lee, 1994; Yim, 1989; Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Paek & Shah, 2003). They are also presumed to excel in math and science (Taylor & Lee, 1994; Yim, 1989; Bowen & Schmid, 1997). Taylor and Stern (1997) found that Asian Americans were portrayed in the media as a “model minority,” meaning they are viewed as successful, intelligent individuals, who often hold managerial positions and excel at work. The idea of the model minority persists in advertising (Taylor, Landreth & Bang, 2005; Lee & Joo, 2005). As of 2003, they were still being presented as educated, affluent, and proficient in technology (Paek & Shah). At the same time, however, Asian Americans are also stereotyped as lacking sociability (Leslie, Constantine, & Fiske, 2001; Jackson et al., 1996).

Lin et al. (2005) argue that “one function of viewing them as competent yet unsociable is to justify a system whereby competence is rewarded but some competent groups are rejected on other grounds, such as lacking sociability” (p. 35). That is, Americans value competence, but highly competent Asians are seen as a threat to prejudiced individuals. Those individuals then justify their prejudice by claiming Asians are unsociable (Lin et al., 2005). Because Asian Americans are seen as both highly competent and unsociable, they are subject to racial prejudice

“tinged with envy and discomfort” (Lin et al., 2005, p. 35). There is a tendency to “disparage, fear, and discriminate against them,” which can lead to “grudging cooperation and active harm (attack)” (Lin et al., 2005, p. 35, citing Cuddy, Fiske & Glick, 2004).

The media play an active role in the reinforcement of these stereotypes. According to a study by Ramasubramanian (2011), television portrayals of Asian Americans caused viewers to have greater perceptions of Asian Americans as model minorities, which in turn led to more negative racial attitudes toward them. According to Yuen (2019), nonverbal features of people of color portrayed in media programming influence White viewers’ racial biases. She added that when there is a lack of interpersonal contact between groups, viewers rely on the media to formulate ideas about people outside of their own race. Such stereotypes have real world implications for Asian Americans. For example, Harvard University was accused of rating Asian-American applicants lower in the personality category when looking through applications, reinforcing the stereotype that Asian Americans are bookish, intelligent, and focused on school, although the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in Massachusetts later ruled there was no intentional discrimination on Harvard’s part (*Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College*, 2020).

Because Asian Americans are generally perceived to be intelligent and technologically savvy, it is assumed that Whites earn less than Asian Americans (Kuo, Kraus & Richeson, 2019). However, in reality, according to the United States Census Bureau (2013), Asian Americans made \$85 for every \$100 Whites made in 2013. And the level of education does not seem to make a difference. European Americans with a college degree earned an additional annual income of \$4,349 over their non-college-educated counterparts as of 1990. In comparison, Chinese Americans had an increase of \$1,936, and Asian Indian Americans, an increase of

\$1,297 (Barringer, Takeuchi and Xenos, 1990). An even more striking statistic is that nearly 40% of Hmong Americans, 38% of Laotian Americans, and 35% of Cambodian Americans drop out of high school (Kuo, Kraus & Richeson, 2019).

### **Representations in Advertisements Impact Our Sense of Self and Others**

A *Forbes* article found that in 2017, the average American was exposed to between 4,000 and 10,000 advertisements every day (Simpson, 2017). The Statista Global Consumer Survey (2020) asked those surveyed if they had encountered advertisements on television in the previous four weeks; 68% of Americans said they had, while 57% said they had seen advertisements on social media (Buchholz, 2020). Television is currently receiving the greatest investment of advertising dollars (Guttmann, 2020), with more advertisers trying to increase reach in recent years. According to Nielsen's Video Advertising Bureau, the estimated number of addressable television viewers in the United States increased 27% from 2016 to 2018, totaling 127.7 million in 2018 (Guttmann, 2019). This is noteworthy because the average American adult spends more than four hours each day watching television (Nielsen, 2018). This suggests commercials have a large reach and ability to influence viewers.

The influence of advertisements on viewers' perceptions of body image (Madden & Breny, 2016), gender (Baker, 2005), and race (Taylor & Lee, 1994) has been studied. In terms of body image, a study by Watson and Dejong (2011) examined the ethical responses to public allegations of skin tone manipulation in print advertisements. Low-prejudiced students had more ethical concerns after reading a fictitious news story about a Black woman having her skin retouched to appear lighter in a print advertisement than did the high-prejudiced students. Advertising has also been found to affect viewers' opinions of gender stereotypes. In 2019, the United Kingdom banned all advertisements "that are likely to cause harm, or serious widespread

offense” in relation to gender after the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) published a 64-page report stating that “gender stereotypes in ads can lead to unequal gender outcomes in public and private aspects of people’s lives” (2019; Tiffany, 2019). While this ban was implemented in the United Kingdom, and not in the United States, it demonstrates concerns over the impact of gender stereotypes in advertising.

In terms of race and Asian Americans, the majority (52%) of a sample of Asian American university students had negative reactions to their group being considered the “model minority.” Only 26% had positive reactions to this stereotype (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997). The reasons given for thinking negatively about this generalization were as follows: “The label is peripheralizing or marginalizing, it reduces opportunity,” and “Don’t like stereotypes, and this stereotype does not fit” (Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997, p. 446). This demonstrates that even seemingly positive stereotypes, such as being intelligent and career focused, can actually be perceived negatively by the minority group (Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Taylor & Lee, 1994).

### **Social Cognitive Theory**

While extant literature suggests that stereotypes in advertisements can impact viewers’ perceptions (Baker, 2005; Taylor & Lee, 1994; Dejong, 2011; Oyserman & Sakamoto, 1997), Social cognitive theory (SCT) helps explain *how* these stereotypes impact viewers’ opinions, including their sense of self and others (Bandura, 1986). SCT suggests that children form views about others through “models” presented to them through the media (television, magazines, newspapers, etc.) (Bandura, 1986). These models, in turn, impact children’s thoughts and actions. Bandura famously conducted an experiment using Bobo dolls (1961) in which children viewed adults acting aggressively toward a doll. After they viewed this behavior, the children

imitated the actions they had seen and acted aggressively toward the doll (Bandura, Ross & Ross, 1961).

In the 1960s, this theory was originally applied to educational settings and referred to as “social learning theory,” but Bandura expanded it into other contexts (such as media portrayals) in later years (Bandura, 1986). The central idea behind SCT is that learning occurs in a social context. While this learning is typically thought of as being behavioral, it can also be attitudinal. The theory is based on the concept of reciprocal determinism, which “refers to the dynamic and reciprocal interaction of a person, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 1986). This suggests that the portrayal of Asian Americans in advertisements is likely to affect those who view the advertisements, since the social context of the advertisements could be detrimental to the learned behavior and ideology that follows.

SCT suggests that in order for an individual to convert the input from the environment into a behavioral output, a mediational process, or mental event, must occur in between (Bandura, 1986). The four mediational processes Bandura proposed were attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, 1986). In order for the individual to imitate a behavior, the individual must pay attention to the input, retain the information given, be able to perform the behavior given, and have the will to perform the specific behavior. Testing this theory, a study at Purdue University (Merskin, 2008) found that of 381 advertisements on a children’s cartoon network, only one instance showed children of color depicted alone without being accompanied by at least one White child. In addition, minority children were more often shown in domestic settings. Merskin found that social learning theory predicted how early learning about race provides a foundation of stereotypes that persist throughout a lifetime (Merskin, 2008).



However, social cognitive theory does not merely focus on how the environment affects a person's behavior. It also takes into account how widespread behavior can impact the environment (Bandura, 1986). If society believes Asian Americans are academically driven and serious, then advertisements may take that into account when portraying them. Essentially, if a child frequently sees Asian Americans being represented in a certain way in advertisements, they grow to believe that Asian Americans are in fact that way, reinforcing the use of the stereotype by advertisers.

Social cognitive theory suggests that people create social systems, which organize and influence their lives (Bandura, 2006). Advertisers seek to connect with consumers based on those social systems and existing preconceptions of behavior, so as to not trigger reactance to unexpected portrayals (Pajares et al., 2009). Such reactance may be triggered visually, by presenting shocking or unexpected images, or verbally, through the use of persuasive or “controlling” language (Miller et al., 2007). The very stereotypes advertisements may use are present because of society's existing preconceptions of Asian Americans. Advertisements present Asian Americans then based on societal stereotypes (Bandura, 2006), in terms of the frequency with which individuals in the United States come in contact regularly with Asian Americans, the roles Asian Americans have in society, the product categories Asian Americans are perceived to be associated with, and the settings where Asian Americans would be expected to be present. Advertisements reflect the stereotypical preconceptions through their employment of frequency, roles, product categories, and settings. This study will consider the portrayal of racial stereotyping of Asian Americans in advertisements using social cognitive theory in an effort to understand and predict whether these portrayals will continue to be perpetuated.

### **Representations of African Americans in Advertisements**

As SCT purports, advertisements can influence viewers' perception of themselves and others. When those others are minorities, advertisements often play a role in reinforcing stereotypes of them (Colfax & Sternberg, 1972). In reviewing the literature into African-American portrayals in magazine advertisements, Hazell and Clarke (2008) found that until the 1980s, African Americans were underrepresented. When they did appear, it was in low-status positions, such as musicians or athletes, often taking on supporting roles, and rarely being seen in informal conversations with White individuals (Colfax & Sternberg, 1972). Sharpe and Curry (1996), however, hypothesized that as the size and wealth of the Black audience of these magazines increased, the portrayal of Blacks in these stereotypical roles would decrease. The results indicated that both the size and wealth of the Black audience were predictors of Black inclusion. However, when examining only the primarily White-audience magazines in the sample, it was the size of the Black audience that was a predictor of inclusion, not wealth. Additionally, when looking at primarily White-audience magazines, it was found that as the size and wealth of the Black audience increased, Blacks were more often represented in stereotypical roles, not less.

In the 1990s, the model role of Black males in primarily White-audience magazines was that of a professional athlete (Sharpe & Curry, 1996). In contrast, the model role of Black males in predominantly Black-audience magazines was that of a professional/worker. For both primarily White-audience and primarily Black-audience magazines, the model role of Black women was that of model/consumer, suggesting a rather traditional depiction of women. However, Black women were still more likely to be represented as professional athletes in predominantly White-audience magazines than they were in predominantly black-audience magazines (Sharpe & Curry, 1996).

While Hazell and Clarke (2008) found that African Americans were underrepresented in magazine advertisements up until the 1980s, Sharpe and Curry (1996) found that the 1980s saw a spike in African Americans represented as the primary individual in advertisements, as well as more multiracial advertisements and more varied representation of African Americans. Based on SCT, this shift suggests that the frequency and portrayal of African Americans in magazine advertisements may have adjusted based on societal changes in perception.

African Americans were seldom featured on the covers of these magazines, but when they were, they were again only shown as professional athletes or entertainers. In contrast, Asian Americans were often featured on business magazine covers, whereas Blacks were never shown in that context. The conclusion reached in the study was that African Americans were limited to stereotypical roles to be featured in primarily White magazines as a result of various factors, including the fear White Americans have of sharing power with other races. The study predicted that as the United States became increasingly diverse in the future, Black models in advertisements would be featured in less stereotypical roles. This study briefly covered the comparison of minority groups in their representation in magazines, which can be used as a touchpoint when conducting this research on how Asian stereotypes have changed over time (Sharpe & Curry, 1996).

Many consider 2020 to be a year of social unrest (Heaney, 2020). After George Floyd's death in May 2020, protests were held around the country to address police brutality and racism (Heaney, 2020). Several companies responded by removing African American mascots from brands. For example, PepsiCo's packaged food unit retired Aunt Jemima, the Black "mammie" face of the syrup brand for over a century and changed the brand's name to Pearl Milling Company (Vigdor, 2021). Similarly, Mars Food removed Uncle Ben, the Black butler, from the

rice brand's packaging and renamed the products Ben's Original (Vigdor, 2021). These actions (following decades of advertising featuring both of these controversial mascots) were viewed as crucial changes because "as mascots, they were designed to be perceived by those White people as nothing more — and to have wanted to be nothing more — than loyal servants, in a frightening time of growing Black equality and empowerment" (Twitty, 2020).

### **Representations of Hispanics in Advertisements**

African Americans are not the only minority group impacted by stereotypes in advertising. On its site, Race and Ethnicity in Advertising, the Association of National Advertisers' Educational Foundation illustrates how Hispanics have been portrayed in discriminatory fashion since the imperial days of the United States and Latin America (Latinos and Advertising, 2021). Some of the early advertisements featuring Hispanics showed them in a variety of stereotypical roles — males as bandits or criminals (e.g., Frito-Lay's Frito Bandito from the 1960s-70s), and females as sexual, lusty objects (e.g., Pan Am billboard from 1967). Recently, these portrayals have improved, featuring Hispanics as being very family oriented and patriotic. While these values are certainly an improvement, ultimately, stereotypes — even positive ones — place limitations on any minority group (Latinos and Advertising, 2021).

Although the stereotype of Hispanic women as harlots is no longer present in modern advertising, the overall representation remains stereotypical (Inglessis, McGavock & Korzenny, 2007). A content analysis of 369 TV commercials targeted to Hispanics found that most of the actors featured in the commercials were aged 20 to 29 and had unidentified social roles (Inglessis, McGavock & Korzenny, 2007). These authors also noted that ads featuring Hispanic/Latino models were primarily promoting fashion, grooming, retail and entertainment products and services; Hispanics were underrepresented in educational and professional settings.

Likewise, Seelig (2007) found that Hispanic models were rarely featured in advertisements promoting pharmaceuticals, financial services, travel, and technology, suggesting that Hispanics are interested in lifestyle products and services, but are not seen as part of the professional class. Taylor and Bang (1997) found similar results, concluding that Hispanics were over-represented in family settings, but under-represented in business settings, further promoting the stereotype of Hispanics being less educated and holding less prestigious jobs (Taylor & Bang, 1997).

### **Representations of Asian Americans in Advertisements**

Based on previous research (Taylor & Stern, 1997; Taylor & Lee, 1994; Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Yim, 1989; Taylor, Landreth & Bang, 2005), the following areas have been most frequently examined in the portrayal of Asian Americans in advertisements and will also be the focus of this study.

**Frequency.** SCT purports that the frequency of exposure to a media portrayal impacts the likelihood that the viewer will begin to accept that portrayal as a reflection of reality (Bandura, 1986). Taylor and Stern (1997) sought to explore if the proportion of television commercials portraying Asian-American men and women was higher or lower than the proportion of these groups in the U.S. population. They found that Asian Americans appeared in television advertisements 8.4% of the time, while only representing 3.6% of the overall population. According to two prior studies of representation of Asian Americans in magazine advertising (Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Taylor & Lee, 1994), Asian Americans were represented significantly less than 8.4% of the time. So, while Asian Americans — at least in 1997 — were technically overrepresented in television advertisements, they were not in magazine advertisements. Based on the findings of these previous studies, the first research question for this study is:

RQ1: How has the frequency of Asian American representation in advertisements changed (if at all) over the past 10 years?

**Settings.** Yim (1989) found that the majority of Asian Americans featured in advertising were portrayed in a work environment or business setting. Additionally, they are portrayed as coworkers, but rarely in any other sort of relationships. Similarly, Taylor and Stern (1997) found that the underrepresentation of Asian Americans in a home setting is more statistically significant than the overrepresentation of Asian Americans in a work setting. Only 15.4% of ads showed Asian Americans in a home setting. Taylor, Landreth and Bang (2005) found similar results, with Asian Americans being significantly more likely to be featured in business settings (34.3% of appearances) than home settings (6.4% of appearances) or social settings (5.7% of appearances). Since that study is 15 years old and likely not representative of the current situation, this study examined setting over the past 10 years more closely. Based on the previous research, this study proposes a related hypothesis and second research question:

H1. Asian Americans featured in various forms of advertising over the past 10 years will be more frequently portrayed in educational or business-related settings as compared to other settings.

RQ2: How has the setting in which Asian Americans are portrayed in advertisements changed (if at all) over the past 10 years?

**Prominence (major vs. minor role).** Taylor and Stern (1997) also examined whether Asian Americans appear most frequently in major roles, minor roles, or background roles when they are present in a television commercial. Their analysis found that Asian Americans are less frequently portrayed in a major role in television advertisements as compared to Whites. They also appear in the background more frequently than any other minority. Similarly, Taylor,

Landreth and Bang (2005) found that Asian Americans were featured in major roles less frequently than other minority groups. SCT would purport that since such stereotypical roles are well-ingrained in society, it is unlikely that advertisers would seek to step outside of this expected conceptualization due to fear that consumers would respond with reactance. However, given that this research is 15 years old (and no other studies have considered the roles Asian Americans are most likely to be depicted in, in advertising), this study proposes another related hypothesis and a related research question:

H2. Asian Americans featured in various forms of advertising over the past 10 years will more frequently hold background or minor roles in advertisements, as opposed to major roles.

RQ3: How have Asian American roles in advertisements changed (if at all) over the past 10 years?

**Product Categories.** The stereotype of Asian Americans most commonly being featured in a work environment or business role is further reinforced through ads featuring Asian Americans in product categories such as automobiles, electronics, computers and technology-based products, banking and financial services, and telecommunications and transportation services. Taylor and Lee (1994) found that ads in all other product categories portrayed Asian Americans less frequently. Taylor, Landreth and Bang (2005) found that Asian Americans were featured in ads for technology or business products 77.2% of the time, further reinforcing the stereotypes associated with Asian Americans. SCT would purport that since such product associations are well-established in society, it is unlikely that advertisers would want to trigger consumer reactance by deviating from this norm. That said, this research is dated (and no other studies have examined associations between Asian American models featured in

advertising for different product categories), this study proposes a final hypothesis and research question:

H3. Asian Americans featured in various forms of advertising over the past 10 years will be more frequently portrayed in advertisements for technology or business-related products as compared to other products.

RQ4: How have the product categories associated with Asian Americans in advertisements changed (if at all) over the past 10 years?



## METHODOLOGY

This study used a content analysis to test its research questions and hypotheses. It focused on the past 10 years (2011-2020) of advertisements from the top 20 leading national advertisers according to *Advertising Age*, the leading publisher in the advertising industry. These brands spent the most on advertising in 2020 and have been prominent in the media during the period examined (Ad Age, 2020). This study analyzed one ad per year for each of the 20 brands, for a total of 200 ads from a variety of media (including television, digital, and print) where an Asian American was visually present. For coding purposes, an Asian American subject was defined as any model with typical Asian qualities present, such as an oval, wider face with shorter vertical height, clear, unblemished, fair, and youthful skin, as well as a lack of brow, nasal, and chin projection (Liew S, et al., 2015).

**Table 1. List of top 20 brands in 2020**

Amazon	Comcast	AT&T	Procter & Gamble
Walt Disney	Alphabet (Google)	Verizon	Charter Comm.
American Express	General Motors	JPMorgan Chase	WalMart
L'Oreal	T-Mobile	Berkshire Hathaway	Nestle
Ford	Expedia	Capital One	Fiat Chrysler

In the content analysis, a form of open coding was used to analyze each advertisement. As outlined in the hypothesis development, the following categories were analyzed: Frequency, Setting, Product Category, and Prominence (major, minor or background roles). Frequency was determined by coding as follows: One Asian American present (1) more than one Asian American present (2) or no Asian Americans found to be present in advertisements this year (3). Setting was determined by coding as follows: Home (1), Work (2), Recreational (3), Luxury (4), Educational (5), In-Transit (6), Social Setting (7) and Undetermined (8). A home setting was one where the model was portrayed in the home, not performing business-related work. A work setting was one where the model was either in the office or working on business-related work at home. A recreational setting was one where the model was either playing a game, outdoors in any capacity, or featured in any casual, non-work-related setting. A luxury setting was one where the model appeared in an extravagant, non-work-related setting where one dresses up, such as a nightclub or nice restaurant. An educational setting was one where learning materials and/or tools were clearly present. A setting was coded in-transit if the Asian American was present in any form of transportation. This could include walking down a street, sitting on a subway, etc. A social setting was one where the model was with a group of people, not in a home, work, educational, recreational or luxury setting, seemingly having a good time. Examples of this would be hanging out with friends at a casual restaurant. If the setting could not be determined, Undetermined was selected.

The Product Category was coded as follows: Technology (1), Entertainment (2), Business (3), Domestic (4), Automotive (5), Personal Care (6), Leisure (7) and Miscellaneous (8). Technology products were those that are electronic in nature, such as cell phones, laptops, security systems, etc. For the purposes of this study, AT&T, Verizon, Alphabet (Google), Charter Communications, and T-Mobile were considered technology brands. Entertainment brands are

those used to create enjoyment, such as games and televisions with entertaining content present. Here Walt Disney and Comcast were considered entertainment brands for many advertisements. Business brands are those that are intended to aid with work or financial aspects of life, such as American Express, JPMorgan Chase and Capital One. Domestic brands are those that are used in the kitchen, for example, cleaning or general household needs. For this study, Nestlé was considered a domestic brand. Automotive brands are those that specialize in automotive vehicles and included Ford, General Motors, and Fiat Corp. Personal care brands specialize in products designed to help in personal upkeep, such as hygiene and beauty. L’Oreal falls into this category. Leisure brands are those related to travel and relaxing activities, such as hiking, camping, and exploring and included Expedia and Disney (for the majority of its advertisements). Miscellaneous brands are those that contain products from multiple different brands. These are larger companies that offer wide varieties of products. Amazon and Procter & Gamble were considered miscellaneous brands. Each of the 20 brands fell under one or more of these categories, with technology being the most common with five brands, followed by business with three brands.

Prominence was coded as follows: Major role (1), Minor role (2), Equal role (3) and Background role (4). Major role meant the model was either the main focus or the only model present in an advertisement. Minor role meant the model was not the main model present. Equal role meant the model was not represented more or less than any other model. Background role meant the model was only seen in the background and was not directly involved in the advertisement (background in a crowd, with a group of many other people, etc.)

Setting and product category had different total tallies (186 and 173). This was because advertisements that featured more than one Asian American often had the models in different settings within the same advertisement, resulting in multiple setting codes for the advertisement.

An example of this was an advertisement by Comcast in 2014, which featured two Asian Americans — one in a work setting and the other in a social setting. That advertisement was coded twice for setting but only once for product. Additionally, advertisements that did not have an Asian American present were only coded in two categories: frequency and product.

To establish coding reliability, a second coder coded the first year of data (2011) and intercoder reliability was examined. After training by the researcher, the second coder and the researcher each coded advertisements from that year and then compared results to ensure coding credibility. Valid intercoder reliability was reached.

Once the coding process was complete, the data were analyzed by year. A spreadsheet was used as tallies were counted, which showed how the data changed each year. From this, conclusions were drawn about the portrayal of Asian Americans in advertisements over the past 10 years.

## RESULTS

The first hypothesis proposed that Asian Americans featured in various forms of advertising over the past 10 years would be more frequently portrayed in educational or business-related settings as compared to other settings. The largest number of Asian Americans present in advertisements over the past 10 years were indeed in a work/business setting. However, an educational setting yielded the second lowest number of Asian Americans over the past 10 years. Recreational settings were actually the second most likely places for which Asian Americans models were present. Thus, H1 was only partially supported.

**Table 2. Total Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Settings Over 10 Years**

<b>Setting</b>	<b>Number of Asian Americans Portrayed (over 10 years)</b>	<b>% (n = 186)</b>
Work	50	26.89
Recreational	31	16.66
Undetermined/Other	27	14.52
Social	23	12.37
In-Transit	23	12.37
Home	18	9.67
Educational	9	4.83
Luxury	5	2.69

The second hypothesis proposed that Asian Americans would more frequently hold background or minor roles in advertisements, as opposed to equal or major roles. This study found this hypothesis to be partially supported, with Asian Americans being found more often in minor or background roles than in major roles. However, Asian Americans were notably more likely to be featured in an equal role in advertisements over the past 10 years.

**Table 3. Total Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Roles Over 10 Years**

Prominence	Number of Asian Americans (over the past 10 years)	% (n = 177)
Major Role	22	12.43
Minor Role	44	24.86
Equal Role	74	41.81
Background Role	37	20.90

The third hypothesis proposed that Asian Americans would be more frequently portrayed in advertisements for technology or business products as compared to other products. This hypothesis was supported. Technology products yielded the largest number of Asian American models over the past 10 years, followed by business products. The next product category Asian American models were featured most frequently in was automotive, with a large drop-off after that.

**Table 4. Total Number of Asian Americans Present in Different Product Categories Over 10 Years**

<b>Product Category</b>	<b>Number of Asian Americans Present (over the past 10 years)</b>	<b>% (n = 173)</b>
Technology	54	31.21
Business	32	18.497
Automotive	24	13.87
Miscellaneous	17	9.826
Personal Care	13	7.51
Leisure	13	7.51
Domestic	11	6.358
Entertainment	9	5.20

The first research question asked whether the frequency of Asian American representation in advertisements changed, if at all, over the past 10 years. To determine whether these changes were statistically significant, a chi-square test was performed for each year and over the course of 10 years using an alpha level of .05 and a p-value of 2. Over the course of 10 years, the number of advertisements featuring one Asian American and no Asian Americans were statistically significant, with the number of advertisements featuring one Asian American being higher than expected (127 observed, 66.667 expected), and the number of advertisements featuring no Asian Americans less than expected (23 observed and 66.667 expected).

Looking at the distribution year-by-year, this study found that the frequency of advertisements with one Asian American was statistically significant five of the 10 years (2012, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2019). No frequency of advertisements with more than one Asian

American present or no Asian Americans present were statistically significant in any of the 10 years.

**Table 5. Asian American Representation in Advertisements Over 10 Years**

<b>Year</b>	<b># of advertisements with one Asian American present (n=200)</b>	<b>% N=200</b>	<b># of advertisements with more than one Asian American present (n=200)</b>	<b>% N=200</b>	<b># of advertisements with no Asian American present (n=200)</b>	<b>% N=200</b>
2011	9	45.0	5	25.0	6	30.0
2012	13	65.0	5	25.0	2	10.0
2013	10	50.0	5	25.0	5	25.0
2014	14	70.0	4	20.0	2	10.0
2015	14	70.0	4	20.0	2	10.0
2016	16	80.0	3	15.0	1	5.0
2017	12	60.0	7	35.0	1	5.0
2018	12	60.0	6	30.0	2	10.0
2019	15	75.0	4	20.0	1	5.0
2020	12	60.0	7	35.0	1	5.0

The second research question asked whether the setting in which Asian Americans are portrayed in advertisements changed, if at all, over the past 10 years. The study found that these settings have generally not changed. Using a chi-square test with an alpha level of .05 and p-value of 7, this study found that for each year, no setting had statistically significant frequencies. Overall, the frequency of Asian Americans in both a work setting and a luxury setting was significant, with the frequency in a work setting being significantly higher than expected (50 observed, 23.25 expected), and the frequency in a luxury setting being significantly



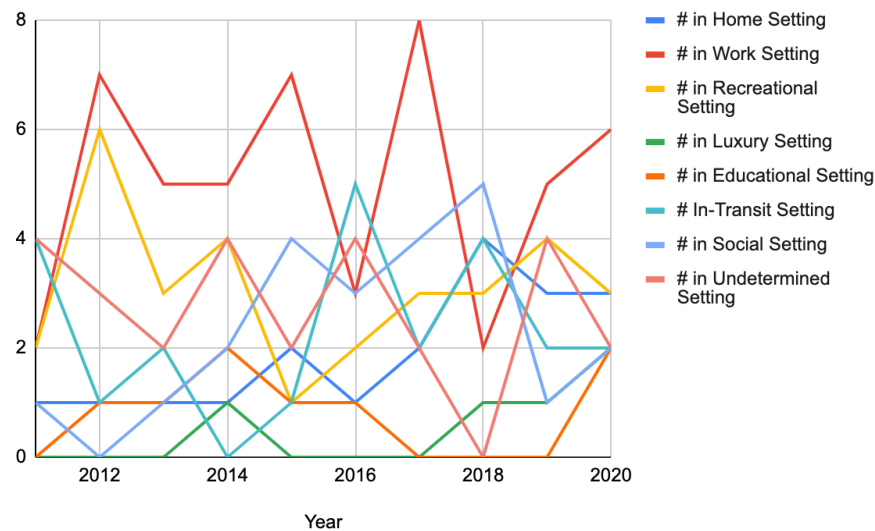
lower than expected (5 observed, 23.25 expected). This demonstrates that year-by-year, the frequency was not significant. However, the overall frequency is disproportionate in those two settings.

**Table 6. Number of Asian Americans Represented in Different Settings Each Year**

\*When no Asian Americans were present in an advertisement, that advertisement did not receive a code for setting. When more than one Asian American was present in an advertisement, each model's setting was coded. This resulted in 186 total coded models in this category.

<b>Year</b>	<b># in Home Setting</b>	<b># in Work Setting</b>	<b># in Recreational Setting</b>	<b># in Luxury Setting</b>	<b># in Educational Setting</b>	<b># In-Transit Setting</b>	<b># in Social Setting</b>	<b># in Undetermined Setting</b>	<b>Row Totals</b>
2011	1	2	2	0	0	4	1	4	<b>14</b>
2012	1	7	6	0	1	1	0	3	<b>19</b>
2013	1	5	3	0	1	2	1	2	<b>15</b>
2014	1	5	4	1	2	0	2	4	<b>19</b>
2015	2	7	1	0	1	1	4	2	<b>18</b>
2016	1	3	2	0	1	5	3	4	<b>19</b>
2017	2	8	3	0	0	2	4	2	<b>21</b>
2018	4	2	3	1	0	4	5	0	<b>19</b>
2019	3	5	4	1	0	2	1	4	<b>20</b>
2020	3	6	3	2	2	2	2	2	<b>22</b>
<b>Column Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>186</b>

**Figure 1. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Settings Over 10 Years**



The third research question asked whether the product categories associated with Asian Americans in advertisements changed, if at all, over the past 10 years. No notable changes in the product categories Asian Americans were found over the past decade.

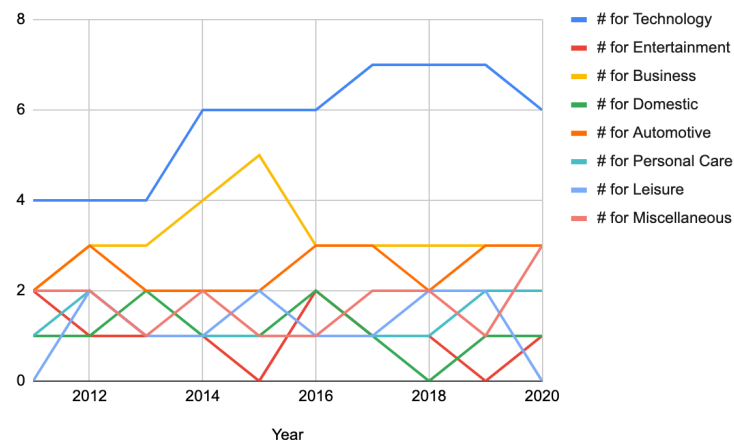
Using a chi-square test with an alpha level of .05 and a p-value of .7, this study found no statistically significant results year-by-year. However, technology products were overall statistically significant, with an expected overall frequency of 22.125 and an observed frequency of 57. This demonstrates that the frequency was not significant year-by-year, but the overall frequency of technology products was significant.

**Table 7. Number of Asian Americans Present in Different Product Categories Each Year**

\*When no Asian Americans were present in an advertisement, that advertisement did not receive a code for the product category, resulting in 177 total coded advertisements in this category.

Year	# for Technology	# for Entertainment	# for Business	# for Domestic	# for Automotive	# for Personal Care	# for Leisure	# for Miscellaneous	Row Totals
2011	4	2	2	1	2	1	0	2	14
2012	4	1	3	1	3	2	2	2	18
2013	4	1	3	2	2	1	1	1	15
2014	6	1	4	1	2	1	1	2	18
2015	6	0	5	1	2	1	2	1	18
2016	6	2	3	2	3	1	1	1	19
2017	7	1	3	1	3	1	1	2	19
2018	7	1	3	0	2	1	2	2	18
2019	7	0	3	1	3	2	2	1	19
2020	6	1	3	1	3	2	0	3	19
<b>Column Totals</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>177</b>

**Figure 2. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Product Categories Over 10 Years**



Research question four asked whether the roles portrayed by Asian Americans in advertisements have changed over the past 10 years. Another chi-square test was conducted in order to determine whether the results were statistically significant. The chi-square test was conducted with an alpha level of .05 and a p-value of 3. Over the course of 10 years, both the number of advertisements featuring Asian Americans in major roles and equal roles had statistically significant differences, with the number of advertisements featuring Asian Americans in major roles being lower than expected (22 observed, 44.25 expected), and the number of advertisements featuring Asian Americans in equal roles being higher than expected (74 observed, 44.25 expected).

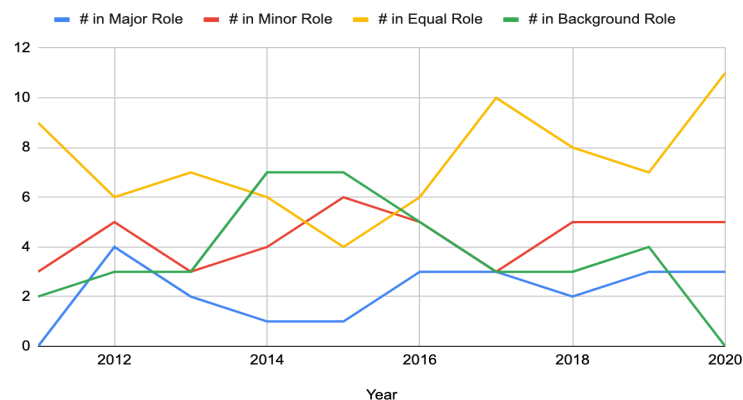
Going year-by-year, this study found only two occurrences of statistically significant differences. The number of advertisements with Asian Americans in an equal role was significantly higher than to be expected both in 2011 (9 observed, 3.5 expected) and 2020 (11 observed, 4.75 expected). Because of these results, this study found that Asian Americans roles in advertisements have not significantly changed over the past 10 years.

**Table 8. Number of Asian Americans Portrayed in Different Roles Each Year**

\*When no Asian Americans were present in an advertisement, that advertisement did not receive a code for role, resulting in 177 total coded advertisements in this category.

<b>Year</b>	<b># in major role</b>	<b># in minor role</b>	<b># in equal role</b>	<b># in background role</b>	<b>Row Totals</b>
2011	0	3	9	2	<b>14</b>
2012	4	5	6	3	<b>18</b>
2013	2	3	7	3	<b>15</b>
2014	1	4	6	7	<b>18</b>
2015	1	6	4	7	<b>18</b>
2016	3	5	6	5	<b>19</b>
2017	3	3	10	3	<b>19</b>
2018	2	5	8	3	<b>18</b>
2019	3	5	7	4	<b>19</b>
2020	3	5	11	0	<b>19</b>
<b>Column Totals</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>177</b>

**Figure 3. Changes in Number of Asian Americans in Different Roles Over 10 Years**



## DISCUSSION

This study aimed to examine the presence of Asian-American stereotyping in advertisements over the past 10 years via a content analysis. The study revealed that the stereotypes of Asian Americans that previous studies have found are generally still present, but there are indications of potential change in a positive direction moving forward.

Specifically, results showed that the most common setting in which Asian Americans were present in advertisements over the past 10 years was a business setting, a finding consistent with earlier studies and reinforcing the stereotype of Asian Americans as intelligent and hardworking individuals (Yim, 1989; Taylor & Stern, 1997). Asian Americans were featured in this setting in 26.89% of advertisements, a full 10% higher than the next most common setting (recreational). The frequency of Asian Americans in recreational settings seemingly contradicts the commonly held stereotype of Asian Americans lacking interpersonal skills (Taylor & Lee, 1994; Yim, 1989; Bowen & Schmid, 1997). Nonetheless, the frequency of Asian Americans in a business setting was significant, with a much higher frequency of Asian Americans portrayed as working than anything else. This was one of the leading stereotypes previous research had found (Yim, 1989; Taylor & Stern, 1997), indicating a continuance of Asian American stereotyping over time.

This study also found that, as predicted, the two most prominent product categories in which Asian Americans were featured in advertisements were technology and business products. The frequency of Asian Americans in technology products was found to be significantly higher as compared to other categories examined. This finding supports previous research indicating

that Asian Americans are generally depicted as intelligent and technologically savvy (Kuo, Kraus, & Richeson, 2019). Moreover, Asian Americans were very rarely portrayed in advertisements for entertainment-oriented products, reinforcing previous research that indicates they are typically depicted as serious and studious, suggesting they lack interpersonal skills (Taylor & Lee, 1994; Yim, 1989; Bowen & Schmid, 1997).

In terms of their prominence, results also indicate that Asian Americans are significantly most likely to be featured in an equal role within an advertisement, seen both alone and with groups of people, which is seemingly a step toward equal representation. However, Asian Americans were also twice as likely to be featured in minor and background roles than a major one. While the number of Asian Americans featured in background roles has decreased over the past 10 years, especially since 2015, the number of Asian Americans featured in major roles has not increased since 2011, indicating Asian Americans continue to be underrepresented as the main focus in advertisements.

Interestingly, the number of advertisements which featured no Asian Americans decreased notably over the past 10 years. This suggests that advertisers (or at least the top 20 brands) have made an effort to increase representation of Asian Americans, perhaps in part, due to changes in societal norms.

Additionally, the number of advertisements featuring just one Asian American and no Asian Americans both had significant differences, with the frequency of advertisements featuring one Asian American being higher than expected and the frequency of advertisements featuring no Asian Americans being lower than expected. The number of advertisements featuring more

than one Asian American was in the expected range, which was an interesting finding in terms of Asian American presence in advertisements since previous research (Taylor & Stern, 1997; Bowen & Schmid, 1997; Taylor & Lee, 1994) predicted more inconsistent frequencies.

In summary, the results indicate that the settings and product categories in which Asian Americans are featured in advertisements have not notably changed over the past 10 years. However, the frequency of Asian Americans in a work setting, and the frequency of Asian Americans featured in advertisements for technology products were both significantly higher than expected. These findings indicate that not only are long-held stereotypes still present but that the perception of Asian Americans as technologically savvy, hard workers is stronger than ever. These stereotypes were found to be true more than 20 years ago (Yim, 1989; Taylor & Stern, 1997), and there has been very little progression since then. With few to no changes being made to advertisers' portrayals of Asian Americans, advertisers should reexamine how these portrayals perpetuate stereotypes.

### ***Implications***

The findings of this study are important because they demonstrate that some aspects of Asian American portrayals in advertisements have changed over the past 10 years. Advertisers are seemingly taking small steps toward greater equality in representation of Asian Americans in their messaging, but long-held stereotypes are still present. Specifically, Asian Americans are still presented as highly competent and hard working. That focus on competence feeds the stereotype that they are socially awkward at the same time, fueling feelings of resentment and envy. As Lin et al. (2005) put it, Asian Americans are "grudgingly respected for their presumed competence but disliked for their alleged lack of sociability" (p. 44). At the same time, advertisers may be unwittingly creating greater interracial conflict. The continuation of presumed



high competence of Asian Americans within advertisements may cause some to compare other racial groups to them and wonder, if Asian Americans can be successful, why the same is not true for Blacks and Hispanics, for example (Lin et al., 2005).

While advertisers in the past (and present) have worried about triggering reactance, as suggested by SCT, the findings of this study indicate that advertisers would be wise to ignore stereotypes to help their advertising stand out from their competitors. For example, the Dove “Real Beauty” Campaign was one of the most successful advertising campaigns of the past 20 years because advertisers decided to challenge the dominant beauty script by taking a stance on the stereotyping of female beauty (Millard, 2009). There is a real opportunity for advertisers to make similar moves by taking a stance on the stereotyping of Asian Americans. It would be as simple as advertisers deciding they are going to continue those small steps toward greater equality in representation of Asian Americans in their messaging by portraying Asian Americans in different frequencies, settings, product categories, and roles equally moving forward. With younger generations ready to embrace fewer stereotypes (Parker & Igielnik, 2020), advertisers should make a conscious effort to break free of those stereotypes. If they were to do so, it most likely would result in their brands standing out from competitors and benefitting in the long run (Diversity In Advertising, 2019).

### ***Limitations***

As with any empirical research, this study has several limitations. For example, nine of the top 20 brands for advertising were primarily technology or business brands. For example, AT&T and T-Mobile were each coded as a technology product, while JPMorgan Chase and American Express were coded as a business product. While whether Asian Americans were featured in advertisements for these product types was relevant, the actual presence of certain

product types in the top 20 brands was outside of this study's control. Also, some brands may have featured Asian Americans, but they were not included in the sample provided by the Ad Age (2020) report. Future studies might consider a larger sample of advertisements to address these related limitations.

Finally, this study used the following descriptions to determine whether a model was Asian American: An Asian American subject was defined as any model with typical Asian qualities present, such as an oval, wider face with shorter vertical height, clear, unblemished, fair, and youthful skin, as well as a lack of brow, nasal, and chin projection (Liew S, et al., 2015). It is possible Asian American models were present and lacked these characteristics, making it difficult to determine whether they should be categorized as Asian American.

### ***Future Research Recommendations***

Future studies should continue to examine how the representation of Asian Americans in advertising progresses. This study found that the number of Asian Americans portrayed in background roles has been decreasing since 2015. Future studies should analyze the situation year-over-year in order to determine if this trend continues. The number of years where no Asian Americans can be found in advertisements for certain brands has also been decreasing. Future research can build from this to see if Asian Americans have a larger presence moving forward.

This study also found that Asian Americans are most likely to be featured in business settings. Future research should extend what this study found by comparing settings among multiple races in order to determine if Asian Americans are more likely to be featured in this setting than other races, or less likely to be featured in certain settings than other races.

A final recommendation would be for future studies to research the same topics as this study, but extend them to gender and age, as well, in order to determine if Asian American men

and women are portrayed differently, and if Asian American children, teenagers, younger adults and older adults experience equal portrayals.

## **Conclusions**

While this study demonstrated that progress has been made toward more frequent and equal representation of Asian Americans in advertising, there is still evidence that stereotypes, such as Asian Americans being intelligent and career-focused, exist. Even though these stereotypes may not seem negative because they depict Asian Americans as the “model minority” (Taylor & Stern, 1997), they can be detrimental because they perpetuate feelings of envy and promote disparagement. Asian American stereotypes have resulted in racially charged attacks recently (Fausset, McDonnell Nieto del Rio & Vigdor, 2021), as well as mixed messages about COVID-19’s origination, with posts on social media relating the pandemic to Asian cuisine or research labs (Chou, Gaysynsky & Vanderpool, 2021). These instances demonstrate that this minority group is still facing harmful stereotypes every day. As such, advertisers would be wise to consider less stereotypical representations of Asian Americans, as they have done with other minority groups like African Americans and Hispanic Americans, if they hope to better position themselves with consumers from all walks of life.

## REFERENCES

- Adams-Bass, V., Bentley-Edwards, K., & Stevenson, H. (2014). That's not me I see on TV . . . : African American youth interpret media images of Black females. *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, 2(1), 79-100.
- Adobe Digital Insights. (2019). *Diversity in advertising*.  
<https://www.slideshare.net/adobe/adobe-digital-insights-diversity-in-advertising-2019>
- Advertising Standards Authority | Committee of Advertising Practice. (February). ASA Gender Research. <https://www.asa.org.uk/genderresearch.html>
- Baker, C. N. (2005). Images of women's sexuality in advertisements: A content analysis of Black- and White-oriented women's and men's magazines. *Sex Roles*, 52, 13-27.
- Bandura, A., Ross, D., & Ross, S. A. (1961). Transmission of aggression through imitation of aggressive models. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 63(3), 575-582.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice- Hall, Inc.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Toward a psychology of human agency. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1(2), 164-180.
- Barringer, H., Takeuchi, D., & Xenos, P. (1990). Education, occupational prestige, and income of Asian Americans. *Sociology of Education*, 63(1), 27-43.
- Bolder, P. (2020). *COVID-19 and world peace: An overture to a new era or business as usual?* Hague Center for Strategic Studies. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep24189>
- Bowen, L., & Schmid, J. (1997). Minority presence and portrayal in mainstream magazine advertising: An update. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(1), 134-146.
- Brezina, T., & Winder, K. (2003). Economic disadvantage, status generalization, and negative racial stereotyping by White Americans. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 66(4), 402-418.
- Buchholz, K. (2020, September 18). TV still the top medium for ads in the U.S.

<https://www.statista.com/chart/22966/most-seen-types-of-ads-us/>

Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University. (2021). Fact sheet: Anti-Asian Prejudice March 2020. <https://www.csusb.edu/sites/default/files/FACT%20HEET-%20Anti-Asian%20Hate%202020%203.2.21.pdf>

Chou, W.-Y. S., Gaysynsky, A., & Vanderpool, R. C. (2021). The COVID-19 misinfodemic: moving beyond fact-checking. *Health Education & Behavior*, 48(1), 9–13.

Colfax, J. D., & Sterberg, S. F. (1972). The perpetuation of racial stereotypes: Blacks in mass circulation magazine advertisements. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 36, 8-18.

Cuddy, A. J. C., Fiske, S. T., & Glick, P. (2004). *The B.I.A.S. map: Behaviors from intergroup affect and stereotypes*. [Unpublished manuscript]. Princeton University.

Fausset, R., McDonnell Nieto del Rio, G., & Vigdor, N. (2021, March 26). 8 dead in Atlanta Spa Shootings, with fears of Anti-Asian Bias. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/03/17/us/shooting-atlanta-acworth>

Guttmann, A. (2019, September 3). Estimated number of addressable TV viewers in the United States in 2016 and 2018 (in millions). <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1042943/addressable-tv-viewers-us/>

Guttmann, A. (2020, September 10). Advertising spending vs. consumer time spent in the United States in 2018, by medium. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/237288/time-spent-with-media-vs-ad-spending-in-the-us/>

Hazell, V., & Clark, J. (2008). Race and gender in the media: A content analysis of advertisements in two mainstream Black magazines. *Journal of Black Studies*, 39(1), 5-21.

Heaney, M. (2020). Protest at the center of American politics. *Journal of International Affairs*, 73(2), 195-208.

Inglessis, M. G., McGavock, H., & Korzenny, F. (2007). *Advertising to Hispanics: What the ads say: A content analysis of portrayals, communication devices and execution* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Florida State University.

Jo, M., & Mast, D. (1993). Changing images of Asian Americans. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, 6(3), 417-441.

- Kuo, E., Kraus, M. W., & Richeson, J. (2019, January 3). High-status exemplars and the misperception of the Asian-White wealth gap. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/y6p3v>
- Latinos and advertising. (n.d.). Retrieved February 10, 2021, from <https://raceandethnicity.org/exhibits/show/latinos-and-advertising/latinos-and-advertising>
- Lee, K.-Y., & Joo, S.-H. (2005). The portrayal of Asian Americans in mainstream magazine ads: An update. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 82(3), 654–671.
- Leong, N. (2013). Racial Capitalism. *Harvard Law Review*, 126(8), 2151-2226.
- Leslie, L., Constantine, V., & Fiske, S. T. (2001). *The Princeton quartet: How are stereotypes changing?* [Unpublished manuscript]. Princeton University.
- Liew S, Wu WT, Chan HH, et al. (2015). Consensus on changing trends, attitudes, and concepts of Asian beauty. *Aesthetic Plast Surg*. 2016; 40:193–201.
- Lin, M. N., Kwan, V. S. Y., Cheung, A., & Fiske, S. T. (2005). Stereotype Content Model explains prejudice for an envied outgroup: Scale of Anti-Asian American stereotypes, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 31(1), 34-47.
- Madden, D., & Breny, J. (2016). “How should I be?” A photovoice exploration into body image messaging for young women across ethnicities and cultures. *Health Promotion Practice*, 17(3), 440-447.
- Merskin, D. (2008). Race and gender representations in advertising in cable cartoon programming. *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.7771/1481-4374.1356>
- Millard, J. (2009). Performing beauty: Dove's "Real Beauty" Campaign. *Symbolic Interaction*, 32(2), 146-168. <https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2009.32.2.146>
- Miller, C.H., Lane, L.T., Deatrck, L.M., Young, A.M. and Potts, K.A. (2007), Psychological reactance and promotional health messages: the effects of controlling language, lexical concreteness, and the restoration of freedom. *Human Communication Research*, 33(2), 219-240.
- Monk-Turner, E., Heiserman, M., Johnson, C., Cotton, V., & Jackson, M. (2010). The portrayal of racial minorities on prime time television: A replication of the Mastro and Greenberg study a decade later. *Studies in Popular Culture*, 32(2), 101-114.
- The Nielsen total AUDIENCE Report: 2018. (n.d.). <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2018/time-flies-us-adults-now-spend-nearly-half-a-day-interacting-with-media/>

- Oyserman, D., & Sakamoto, I. (1997). Being Asian American: Identity, cultural constructs, and stereotype perception. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 33, 435-453.
- Paek, H. J., & Shah, H. (2003). Racial ideology, model minorities, and the "not-so-silent partner:" Stereotyping of Asian Americans in U.S. magazine advertising. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 14(4), 225–243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/716100430>
- Pajares, F., Prestin, A., Chen, J. A., & Nabi, R. L. (2009). Social cognitive theory and mass media effects. In R. L. Nabi & M. B. Oliver (Eds.), *Handbook of media processes and effects* (pp. 283-298). Sage. <https://scholarworks.wm.edu/bookchapters/3>
- Parker, K., & Igielnik, R. (2020, May). *On the cusp of adulthood and facing an uncertain future: What we know about gen z so far*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2020/05/14/on-the-cusp-of-adulthood-and-facing-an-uncertain-future-what-we-know-about-gen-z-so-far-2/#fnref-28453-1>
- Ramasubramanian, S. (2011). Television exposure, model minority portrayals, and Asian-American stereotypes: An exploratory study. *Journal of Intercultural Communication*, 26, 4-4.
- Seelig, M. (2007). Stereotyping of Hispanic Americans in U.S. magazine advertising. *International Journal of Diversity in Organizations, Communities, and Nations: Annual Review*, 7(4), 69-82. <https://doi.org/10.18848/1447-9532/cgp/v07i04/39415>
- Sharpe, C., & Curry, T. J. (1996). Black Americans in popular magazines: The effects of audience characteristics and the persistence of stereotypes. *Sociological Focus*, 29(4), 311-324. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00380237.1996.10570648>
- Simpson, J. (2017, August 25). Finding brand success in the digital world. *Forbes*. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/08/25/finding-brand-success-in-the-digital-world/?sh=3470c1ba626e>
- Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard College, 19-2005. (1<sup>st</sup> Cir.) Nov. 12, 2020.
- Taylor, C. R. & Bang, H-K. (1997). Portrayals of Latinos in magazine advertising, *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 74(2), 285-303.
- Taylor, C. R., & Lee, J. Y. (1994). Not in vogue: Portrayals of Asian Americans in magazine advertising. *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 13(2), 239-245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/074391569401300205>
- Taylor, C. R., & Stern, B. B. (1997). Asian-Americans: Television advertising and the “model minority” stereotype. *Journal of Advertising*, 26(2), 47-61.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00913367.1997.10673522>

Taylor, C. R., Landreth, S., & Bang, H.-K. (2005). Asian Americans in magazine advertising: Portrayals of the “model minority.” *Journal of Macromarketing*, 25(2), 163–174.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146705280634>

Tiffany, K. (2019, June 18). Gender stereotypes have been banned from British ADS. What does that mean?  
<http://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/6/18/18684088/uk-gender-stereotype-ad-ban-sexism-advertising-history>

Twitty, M. (2020, June 21). Aunt Jemima and Uncle Ben deserve retirement. They're racist myths of happy Black servitude. NBC News.  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/aunt-jemima-uncle-ben-deserve-retirement-they-re-racist-myths-ncna1231623>

Vigdor, N. (2021, February 10). Aunt Jemima has a new name after 131 years: The Pearl Milling Company. New York Times.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/09/business/aunt-jemima-renamed-pearl-milling-company.html>

Watson, S., & DeJong, P. F. (2011). Ethical responses to public allegations of skin tone manipulation in print advertising: Consumer indifference or consumer concern? *Journal of Promotion Management*, 17(4), 396-406.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2011.620485>

United States Census Bureau. (2013). *Wealth, asset ownership, & debt of households detailed tables: 2013*.  
<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2013/demo/wealth/wealth-asset-ownership.html>

Yim, Yong Soon. (1989), “American Perceptions of Korean Americans” *Korea and World Affairs*, 13 (3), 519–42.

Yuen, N. W. (2019, June 4). How racial stereotypes in popular media affect people - and what Hollywood can do to become more inclusive.  
<https://scholars.org/contribution/how-racial-stereotypes-popular-media-affect-people-and-what-hollywood-can-do-become>



## APPENDIX: CODEBOOK

**Unit of Data Collection:** Portrayal of Asian Americans in advertisements from the top 20 brands (in terms of advertising budgets) from 2011 to 2020.

**Frequency ID:** Indicate how many Asian Americans are present in the advertisement.

Code ID	Code
1	One Asian American present
2	More than one Asian American present
3	No Asian Americans present

**Setting ID:** Indicate in which setting Asian American model(s) are present in the advertisement. If more than one Asian American is present in different settings, code settings multiple times, once for each model in a different setting. A home setting was one where the model was portrayed in the home, not performing business-related work. A work setting was one where the model was either in the office or working on business-related work at home. A recreational setting was one where the model was either playing a game, outdoors in any capacity, or featured in any casual, non-work-related setting. A luxury setting was one where the model appeared in an extravagant, non-work-related setting where one dresses up, such as a nightclub or nice restaurant. An educational setting was one where learning materials and/or tools were clearly present. A setting was coded in-transit if the Asian American was present in any form of transportation. This could include walking down a street, sitting on a subway, etc. A social setting was one where the model was with a group of people, not in a home, work, educational, recreational or luxury setting, seemingly having a good time. Examples of this would be hanging out with friends at a casual restaurant. If the setting could not be determined, Undetermined was selected.

Code ID	Code
1	Home
2	Work
3	Recreational
4	Luxury
5	Educational
6	In-Transit
7	Social Setting
8	Undetermined

**Product Category ID:** Indicate which category of product the advertisement is associated with. Technology products were those that are electronic in nature, such as cell phones, laptops, security systems, etc. For the purposes of this study, AT&T, Verizon, Alphabet (Google), Charter Communications and T-Mobile were largely considered technology brands. Entertainment brands are those used to create enjoyment, such as games and televisions with entertaining content present. Here Walt Disney and Comcast were considered entertainment brands for many advertisements. Business brands are those that are intended to aid with work or financial aspects of life, such as American Express, JPMorgan Chase and Capital One. Domestic brands are those that are used in the kitchen, for example, cleaning or general household needs. For this study, Nestlé was considered a domestic brand. Automotive brands are those that specialize in automotive vehicles and included Ford, General Motors, and Fiat Corp. Personal care brands specialize in products designed to help in personal upkeep, such as hygiene and beauty. L’Oreal falls into this category. Leisure brands are those related to travel and relaxing activities, such as hiking, camping, and exploring and included Expedia and Disney (for the majority of advertisements). Miscellaneous brands are those that contain products from multiple different brands. These are larger companies that offer wide varieties of products. Amazon and Procter & Gamble were considered miscellaneous brands.

Code ID	Code
1	Technology
2	Entertainment
3	Business
4	Domestic

5	Automotive
6	Personal Care
7	Leisure
8	Miscellaneous

**Prominence ID:** Indicate which role any Asian American(s) played in the advertisement. If more than one Asian American is present and portrayed in different roles, code prominence multiple times, once for each model with a different role. Major role meant the model was either the main focus or the only model present in an advertisement. Minor role meant the model was not the main model present. Equal role meant the model was not represented more or less than any other model. Background role meant the model was only seen in the background and was not directly involved in the advertisement (background in a crowd, with a group of many other people, etc.).

Code ID	Code
1	Major Role
2	Minor Role
3	Equal Role
4	Background Role

**Representation:** For coding purposes, an Asian American subject was defined as any model with typical Asian qualities present, such as an oval, wider face with shorter vertical height, clear, unblemished, fair, and youthful skin, as well as a lack of brow, nasal, and chin projection (Liew S, et al., 2015).