1,000 Marchers Rally Against Asian Hate in AsiaTown Cleveland

In the past year, there has been a significant rise in anti-Asian hate and violence. Despite decades of progress towards acceptance and equality, in recent years, racism in America has escalated at an alarming rate. Over a year ago, when COVID-19 was just starting, the Asian and Pacific Islander community suffered not just the pandemic but that of targeted discrimination and hatred. Inexplicably, customers stopped eating and shopping at favorite Asian businesses due to illogical wrong association with the virus. Further, in the last year since the pandemic started, 3800 anti-Asian incidents have been logged, a significant increase, the majority against women according to http://aapihatecrimes.org.

Several weeks ago, the incidents finally grabbed national media attention when eight people, including six Asian women, were murdered at several locations in Atlanta. This latest racist hate-fueled violence spurred rallies of solidarity nation-wide. In Cleveland, outraged by how Asian Pacific Americans are treated in their own country, several Asian women activists and

leaders organized a peaceful #StopAsianHate rally and march through the AsiaTown neighborhood on March 28. They wanted to provide an opportunity for the community to grieve for the lives lost, draw attention to the escalation of anti-Asian hate everywhere including our own city, and to show solidarity with our allies and support to the residents and businesses in AsiaTown.

The rally and march attracted about 1,000 supporters. The event started with a rally featuring 12 speakers, mostly women, providing moving and powerful speeches about how they, their family, and their friends have had to suffer racial discrimination and hate. The event was trilingual in English, Mandarin (with a splash of Cantonese), and sign language. Regardless if the listener understood the language or not -- the passion of the speakers was clear as they communicated their outrage. An outrage and sadness

that transcends language barriers. The speakers also talked about how they too-often endured discrimination in the past in silence. But the group vowed to be silent "No More." This is America, this is our home.

After the speeches, the group marched in solidarity throughout the AsiaTown neighborhood. On the route, the marchers were greeted with applause and smiles of thankful Asian business-owners and the residents including some of the most vulnerable, the Asian elderly in the community. After the march, attendees were encouraged to support the Asian businesses.

The event was organized by AsiaTown Cleveland, OCA Asian Pacific American Advocates - Greater Cleveland Chapter, OPAWL, Asian Services In Action, and MotivAsians and was supported by dozens of other organizations, partners, and allies. While the event drew attention to the growing anti-Asian hate, the organizers and other community leaders are working on next steps.

夫婦並肩服務社區

Wayne Wong 和 Lisa Wong 是一對爲克利夫蘭亞裔社區做出杰出貢獻的夫妻，他們 10 多年來服務亞裔社團，他們是創辦者也是社區的組織者。

2010 年,克利夫蘭亞洲藝術節隆重推出並一炮打響,這是展示克利夫蘭亞裔社區文化的一個標誌性活動,他們夫婦都是創始人和主要組織者之一,這是一年一度的盛會,去年由於疫情沒有舉辦。該活動在每年 5 月慶祝亞太裔美國人活動月的同時,彰顯了亞洲文化,也顯示了克利夫蘭文化的豐富多樣性。

Wayne Wong 和 Lisa Wong 都是老華僑的後代，他們對中國城有他們獨特的愛,記得 Lisa 曾經對我說,她的母親是伊利華報的忠實讀者,她也希望報紙能有一點英文,這樣可以擁有更多讀者。Lisa 還擔任克利夫蘭美華協會的主席。

Wayne Wong 在 NASA 工作,工作的責任重大,他還抽出時間服務社區,Wayne Wong 常常寫好文給伊利華報，每次收到他的稿件都是凌晨。這對夫婦熱情,有責任有能力,克利夫蘭藝術節燈展等活動都有他們一家人舞龍的風采。

他們是一對齊心協力,共同打造克利夫蘭亞裔社區的伉儷。他們爲社區爭取權利,同時也有廣泛的愛好,與 John Wu 一起拍電影。克利夫蘭亞洲社團的春天就要來了!

美國的美麗是因爲人民

2020 年疫情給全球人帶來了災難，我先生的公司將一個組的人員都裁員,2020 年在他生日的那天丟了工作,6 個月待在家里。2021 年 3 月,我兒子感染了新冠病毒。過去我也許就知道一些關於疫情皮毛的知識,對這場無煙的戰爭,我花了幾個小時聽專家聽醫生講解,並且對自己身體做一點研究,疫情 2020 改變了我們所有人的生活。

近日我聽到新聞,外州有一個九歲的小孩報警說,她的父親打死了她的母親和她的兩個阿姨,最後父親自殺,如果她沒有躲在衣櫃里也許她也沒有命，查出說小女孩的父親有憂鬱症。還有另外一家人,兩兄弟看他家人生活在疫情的恐懼之中，殺了家族六個人並自殺。亞特蘭大的 Spa 死了 6 人,這一幕幕的悲劇讓人難以接受，不敢相信這就是現在的不太平的世界。

我們都知道生老病死是自然規律,這場無煙的疫情帶給人恐懼驚慌。我的兒子感染以後,他沒有失去嗅覺,他難受了兩天。人的身體自身就有一個非常強的免疫系統，醫生還說人身體是可以製造 z 藥物的系統,看那些健康活到 100 歲的人,他們健康長壽是因爲他們心態健康,而現在環境與人心情一樣不安定，很多事情必須思考,疫情讓世界停下了腳步。

4 月 7 日,Kent 大學舉辦了 Stop Asian Hate 活動。校園里，學生教授聆聽發言人的傾述,有人很激動,我看到三歲的 Lennox 拿着牌子 Hate has no home here! 我也採訪了 3 歲在江西被收養的女學生,她手里拿着 Peace Love.No Hate!在大學停車場看到警察,他們和黎華趙親切打招呼,警察常常把沒有車的黎華趙送回家。

Stop Asian Hate,還有種族歧視,大家都知道叫喊 100 年了，非裔也出現一個了不起的 Martin Luther King Jr. (馬丁·路德·金),文明的開拓者。時代在發展,世界萬物難不開情字，我們唯一改變自己的想法,歧視那里都有,就像人愛與恨是天性。

我問了我認識的和不認識的朋友對於歧視看法:

Joseph Michael Gyulay (白人)告訴我:他從來沒有恨過亞裔,在他的眼里亞裔,尤其華人勤勞努力刻苦,亞裔爲美國做出杰出貢獻。他說他自己 40 年前,24 歲時就賺了許多錢,銀行沒用任何理由就把他賬號關了,稅務局查他,還有一大堆機構找他麻煩,當時他的工廠做 Lavender,說這草藥是毒品,最後還發現他多交了稅。

我無意在 Facebook 上聯繫了意大利著名雕塑家 Dionisio Cimarelli，他熱愛中國,1986 年第一次到中國,他說 2013 年後再也沒有回中國,下個星期他就回意大利 2 個月準備作品，也許 10 月再次準備去北京。他的作品是雕塑 Matteo Ricci (1610 年第一位到中國的歐洲人意大利人,他給我一些他的視頻以及他在意大利駐中國大使館爲他舉辦的展覽,我想起了鄭和下西洋。500 年前,人就把文明,藝術美傳遞,開始走近大同世界,我對 Dionisio 說，我們要傳播文化和愛和停止恨,他說中國人太了不起了。

克利夫蘭有一家希臘人開的餐廳 George kitchen，我走近這家餐廳見到 George 坐在第一個座位上,我開始採訪他。1955 年他的叔叔給了他一張到美國的船票,坐船 13 天到紐約,在紐約獄一天就到克利夫蘭,他告訴我,他原本就不喜歡讀書,到美國後 5 年開了第一家餐廳,後來連續開了許多家,今天這家是 1980 年開的。他有 3 個女兒,2 個現在幫助他開店。我問他疫情對您有沒有損失,他回答說:沒有。 有沒有人歧視您,沒有。那么您認爲美國最好的地方是什么?是人,善良大度的人,他到美國一句英文都不會,是這里的人給予他幫助....美國的美麗是因爲人民。

生活在美國的亞裔

亞洲行動協會創始人之一的 May Chen 告訴我:Akron 居住許多亞裔,基本都是難民來到美國。我花了一周走訪了不少在 Akron 地區的亞裔,4 月 14 日下午，採訪了忙于學習工作 Hsa Myint Win,他今年 21 歲,在他 11 歲那年,他和他的媽媽妹妹也從泰國到美國，他熱情服務于公益,他心靈手巧,能做衣物能教跳舞,他一步步走進他的美國夢想，今天他介紹給我二棟在居民區里的建築:社區活動中心和一棟女人教育學習中心。

就在 Akron 靠近 Elam St，這方圓 10 多英里有近 10 家小超市,餐廳,金店和服裝店,這里的人很多是來自尼泊爾,泰國,緬甸,柬埔寨,越南,印度 Hamed 等國家的難民,他們有他們的社區居民。我到了幾家超市,雖然規模不大,但整整齊齊,有亞洲食物,包括他們從自己國家帶來的各色服裝,24k 金項鏈等等，還有現在還沒有完成的室外活動中心,有舞臺有野餐的地方,女人教育文化中心有專業老師教她們手工,幫助找工作。

我在一家尼泊爾的超市見到店主 Hem,他 2008 年從尼泊爾以難民身份來到美國,4 年後的 2012 年自己與 3 個兒子開了這家商店,2 年前把這棟樓購買下來,自己很滿意現在的安定生活,他的太太在工廠工作。他說自己國家很窮,現在他的全家人努力,日子很好過,他實現了他的美國夢。尼泊爾很大,佔地面積有 2 個朝鮮,因爲很窮沒人問。他全家人喜歡美國。

更讓人感動的是 Hsa Myint Win,11 歲那年在沒有任何文化或語言知識的情況下來到美國,他對我說:他儘管到達美國後,幾乎對美國一無所知,但他每天都懷着新的目標和夢想,每天醒來,就是學習工作的開始,他堅持到現在。他告訴我,他在 Amazon 工作，因爲上晚班,工資每小時$16,他們全家人到美國的原因有很多:主要是爲了找到更好的生活,有意義的職業以及靠自己辛勤工作可以改變的人生。

到美國後他徹底改變了生活,在他生命的頭 11 年中,他和他的家人住在泰國的一個難民營中,沒有工作機會。他不得不和母親一起工作,來幫助母親在稻田和玉米田里工作。難民營擁擠,沒有醫療保健,沒有教育和就職機會,連一個打電話回家的地方都沒有。

Hsa Myint Win 一家三人每個月收到相當于 30 美元的款項。配給大米,豆類,油,鹽,煤和清水。母親僅靠有限的收入每月只能買一次魚,鷄肉或豬肉。隨着難民營的擴大,糧食供應大大減少。他們被迫在叢林和河流中尋找食物。因爲很窮,所以母親決定讓他和祖母一起離開，以便她可以在曼谷市(泰國首都)做管家,當母親在曼谷市的時候,他蒐尋金屬碎片和空瓶子。他還不得不幫助祖母賣麵條湯而不是上學，因爲他們一家人負擔不起教育費用。難民營中的每個人都不能免費接受教育。他聰明常常在叢林中搜索笋,然後在市場上出售。

"一天好運降臨到我們的頭上:國際移民組織(IOM)讓我們申請來美國。終于,一年後,我們被告知我們將能夠來美國。我們要到美國去了"一邊是興奮喜悅,一邊是難捨難分,跟我的祖母和所有幫助撫養我的人們說再見是如此難過的事情,我擔心祖母的健康,至今仍然擔心她的健康。

Hsa Myint Win 繼續說道:在泰國,他從來沒有做過夢。他是家庭中第一個從高中畢業的人 (美國阿克倫)。他于 2018 年畢業,2018 年秋季至 2019 年春季就讀于阿克倫大學。主修生物學。當時他考慮從事醫學領域的職業。因爲大學與高中完全不同。在上課的頭幾天,學習工作讓他感到非常有壓力,不知所措。他必須找到一種新的方法來學習如何明智地管理時間。他鼓勵自己:我在這里學習,成長和成功。我知道只要我按照大學的規定去做並不斷努力,就會成功,機會總是給積極努力的人準備的。

Hsa Myint Win 21 歲的年輕人,我們期待他的夢想變成現實。

Too Chinese for the US, too American for China. Where can Asian Americans like me call home?

Opinion by Selina Wang, CNN

Last summer, a Chinese man approached me on a crowded Beijing street and asked me in Mandarin if I was Chinese American. It seemed innocent enough, as I was speaking English with expat friends.

But after I nodded, he switched to English and bellowed "go back to where you f**king came from".

These stinging words are familiar for Asian Americans living in the United States. But it was jarring to hear the phrase shouted at me in China.

In the moment, I let out a laugh: As a Chinese American, I have now been told to get out of each country for the other. It was a moment of realization that regardless of where I go, I will always be a foreigner.

I was born and raised in America, but over the past few years, I've lived in Beijing, Hong Kong and now Japan -- where the majority of people I'm surrounded by look like me and assume I'm a native. At first, that gave me an inexplicable -- albeit superficial -- sense of belonging that I never felt in America.

In the US, my answer to the constant question "where are you from?" is never enough. When I say America, it's almost always followed by: "But where are you really from?" Countless times I've been asked why I can speak English "without an accent." And Asian American women's experiences of racism are inextricably linked to misogyny. We've had nearly every part of our bodies (eyes, hair, feet, mouths, skin, and even private parts) appraised on the basis of our race. Our personalities are assumed by strangers to be subservient.

Recently, as US-China tensions have ratcheted up, with rhetoric from both sides turning toxic, I've also faced animosity in China for being American. Chinese state media has fueled anti-American nationalism, calling the US the "enemy of the world" at the height of the US-China trade war. Meanwhile, in America, roughly nine-in-10 adults consider China a competitor or enemy, according to a Pew survey.

"There's this consistent theme that when there are tensions with an Asian country, people who are Asian American or who look Asian American are often scapegoated," Christopher Lu, former Cabinet Secretary to Barack Obama, said on CNN.

The irony is that often Asian Americans have a traumatic, complex, or even non-existent relationship with the distant country they're held accountable for.

This American life

My parents immigrated from China to the US for graduate studies before I was born.

Later, my grandparents, who had been farmers in China, came to America to help care for my sister and me. They weaved pieces of their Chinese lifestyle into the fabric of our suburban American home, doing what felt most familiar to them. They turned our yard into a vegetable garden, using the produce for dumplings and other Chinese comfort foods.

My grandparents never had the opportunity to go to school. They taught themselves how to read and write Chinese, and proudly passed their knowledge to their grandchildren. Chinese became my first language.

I could barely speak English when I started pre-school. My mother became concerned about my thick Chinese accent, so we started to speak English more at home. From there, I only became more self-conscious of my "Chinese-ness."

By elementary school, I asked my parents to stop packing Chinese food for lunch. I only wanted PB&Js after getting teased for bringing brown-colored tea eggs -- one of my favorite foods -- to class. The other kids thought they were rotten eggs. Moments like these made me long to be seen as the American that I am. My family, their traditions, and those of other Asian Americans in my community were part of the America I knew -- a melting pot of cultures.

In fact, it was China that felt foreign. During each annual summer trip there, I felt like a tourist, and deep down, I wanted to be treated as such. I was so proud to be an American.

But with each visit, I'd learn more about my family history and witness China's rapid development.

First, we would visit my father's village in the countryside, and he'd show my sister and me the mud hut he had once called home. He would often remind us that during the Cultural Revolution, my grandmother had to water down a single portion of porridge every day to feed six people.

Then we would visit my mother's family in Hubei province. More than a dozen of us would cram around a tiny table, eating bowls of sesame noodles, while her family would recount different memories of trauma, fraught with political persecution and suicide.

My family told stories of poverty and oppression as though they were simple childhood memories. For my sister and me, they were allegories with a single lesson: we should be grateful to be born in the US -- a free, tolerant, and wealthy society. As immigrants, they would say, upward mobility can only come by putting your head down and outworking the rest.

Throughout the years, however, I began to notice the gap narrow between my relatives' lives in China and mine in the US. Villagers in my father's countryside town slowly gained electricity, running water, cars, and phones. My cousins in the city no longer wanted clothes from America as gifts -- they liked the styles in China more.

In fact, there was almost no material possession we could bring from America they couldn't already find in China. Yet as their physical quality of life improved, their access to information worsened, as the Chinese government tightened internet controls and censorship.

And as the pandemic spread around the world, the news they read differed more and more from mine.

A landmark moment

I was living in Beijing when the coronavirus outbreak began, reporting on cases of a mysterious new pneumonia in Hubei province in December 2019.

My cousin, a nurse, was working on the front lines at ground zero of the pandemic near Wuhan. We stayed in contact, as she worked long shifts without enough protective equipment, feeling the angst of being separated from her newborn son and family. My other relatives were under strict lockdown for months, facing pandemic-induced fear and anxiety. The same stress we all now know.

When the pandemic reached the US, my mother called me to say she desperately wanted to wear a mask outside. One of our close family friends had died of Covid-19 in Wuhan early in the pandemic, and my mother was certain the virus was far deadlier than most believed at the time.

But she feared being discriminated against as "the Chinese lady who has Covid-19." At the same time, my Asian American friends were telling me they had been spat on, yelled at in the street, and even verbally attacked in restaurants for "bringing the virus to America."

Meanwhile, China and America engaged in a war of words over the pandemic. Then US President Donald Trump routinely called Covid-19 the "China virus" and "kung flu", fanning racism and hatred that fueled attacks on Asian Americans.

The Stop AAPI Hate advocacy group has tallied more than 3,795 reported incidents of hate against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the US during the pandemic, including the killings of six women of Asian descent at Atlanta spas, which triggered rallies across the country.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said China represents America's "biggest geopolitical test of the 21st century," as the only country with enough power to challenge the current international system. Meanwhile, since 2010, China has been calling for a "new model of major-power relations."

The difficult question for America's leadership now is how to effectively confront Beijing, without worsening discrimination at home against people who look Chinese. That means making clear distinctions -- for the public -- between the Chinese Communist Party, the 1.4 billion people in China, and millions around the world of Chinese heritage.

"For as long as Asian Americans have been in this country, we've been treated as outsiders, as people who can't be trusted," said Lu, the former Cabinet Secretary. "You can go all the way back to the 1800s with Chinese railroad workers, to Japanese American internment during World War II, to the Korean and Vietnam Wars and to rising trade tensions with Japan in the 1980s."

As I see conversations between leaders of the world's two largest economies descend into childish bickering, I can't help but think about all the Asian American lives uprooted or lost as a result of geopolitical disputes that are out of their control.

I also think about the younger me, who just wanted to be accepted as American, and how hopeless she'd feel to know that, even today, she would be seen as the "other" -- no matter where she goes.

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