



# breaking away from Asian stereotypes

By Eric Au

Do piles of shoes in your house make it difficult for you to open front, back, and side doors?

Is fried rice or curry the main staple of your diet? Do people constantly try to wake you up since your small eyes give the impression that you are in deep slumber?

Stereotypes surround us all. We all give in to some of them... Guys don't ever cry, girls only want to shop, asians are good in math, blacks are good in sports... the list goes on.

It's the wide world of stereotypes. So what are some of the more popular stereotypes that plague us whom bear the Asiatic name? Tragically, somehow many of these stereotypes are usually contrived from habits perpetuated by us ourselves. Allow me to embellish:

When traveling in areas of high Asian population densities, you may notice numerous Accords or Integras sliding by in consistent five minute intervals. With hardly a glance, you know that the car is most likely labeled ARI (Asian Riding Inside). This is merely inferred of course, since the dark tint only reveals your own reflection when you try to peer in their car. The fact that the car is plastered with stickers of a racing motif and every inch of it is modified only enforces your conclusion with hard evidence.

Another amazing sight you can also see is the asian girl who dons accessories of Sanrio paraphernalia. This phenomenon permanently escalates into a nauseating obsession. The malady begins innocuously with stuffed animals, maybe a few stickers. But then, overnight: wallets, key-chains, backpacks, bags, pencil cases, stationary, and screen savers spring out of nowhere. But one thing about keroppi, hello kitty, pekkle, picke bicke, and my personal favorite, pochacco — they don't even look like animals! They look like something some kid drew. So, do girls sport Sanrio to look stylish? Is pleasure really derived from owning a Tamagotchi? I don't think so. The fad survives and thrives merely since everyone else is doing it.

Hmm... so where to go to find some asians? The local pool hall

should be well stocked.

If it's too crowded to see, then the Karaoke bar should have plenty of reserves.

But wait. Enough of the playful persona. It is not all fun and games, let me warn you. The world of stereotypes has a much deeper, darker side.

Stereotypes can hurt too. uh huh. \*nod\*. I know this first hand. I have hurt plenty of people. Hmmm, the truth always hurts.

Non-Asians all know that Asians are going to be doctors and engineers. We will all be successful, constitute the top 5% of income earners, and retire on the West Coast by the time we are 50.

Well, of course we will. All asians are smart. We always break the class curve. Didn't you know? When the professor said only one person got a 100 in the class... yeah that was me.

um.. I'm just kidding.

Non-Asians label us passive, submissive, and unspoken. This is probably because they don't talk to us that often. And if they have ever met our loud parents in the supermarket or restaurant, they should know that this far from fact.

Next. They say we are emotionless. I don't know about this. I get mad. I can be happy.

And the names... how come they always think we all have the same name? Chinks, gooks, fobs, boombai's... or maybe they actually think we are the same person. All asians look alike anyway right. So who are the ones to break the stereotypes?

Whoever wants to... You can be the Asian who is outgoing and friendly - the Asian super model - the non-gangsta/non-intellectual Asian... Be whoever you want to be. But the most important thing of all is not to inflict the same stereotype harassment on others and contribute to the ignorance.

And that's all it's about. Originate / innovate. Have pride in who you are and don't let anyone play you down.

The world is yours. Well and uh... everyone else's that you have to share it with too.

being asian is more than driving an accord, toting a Sanrio backpack, acing math tests, singing bad karaoke

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asian is being the good, the bad, the ugly - the individual