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INCLUSIVE INTERNET MEDIA AND BRIEF INTERVENTIONS: AN

EXAMINATION OF TARGET AND DOMINANT GROUP PERSPECTIVES

A Dissertation in

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by

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ABSTRACT

Entertainment-education (E-E; media that conveys prosocial messages) is a brief intervention strategy that can reduce dominant group viewers' prejudice towards minority groups through video exposure to positive minority depictions (Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa, Greg, & Hewes, 2005). However, we know little about E-E's potential to improve outcomes for minority groups, despite the fact minority group members are also exposed to media stereotypes about their group. In Study 1, I examined whether an E-E intervention using popular online media could improve outcomes for Asian Americans—one of several groups who lack positive representations in media. Specifically, I exposed Asian American participants (N=259) to videos featuring either ingroup members with a Culturally-Specific narrative (i.e., relevant to Asian American identity), ingroup and outgroup members with a Universal narrative (i.e., culturally-irrelevant), and no ingroup members as a Control (i.e., featuring only White Americans). Further, videos either displayed low or high virality metrics (i.e., views, likes, and comments). After video exposure, participants rated their perceptions of the videos (identification with the featured individuals, videos' societal impact), identity self-perceptions (ethnic self-esteem, metacognitive bicultural identity integration [BII], national belonging), and civic outcomes (agency and behavior). I found that participants reported greater identification with the Culturally-Specific videos compared to the Universal and Control videos. Further, contrary to predictions, participants perceived the Culturally-Specific *and* Control videos as having greater societal impact than the Universal videos, and the Control videos elicited the greatest feelings of civic agency. I discuss potential factors of influence including media prototypicality and minority identity salience. In Study 2, I exposed White undergraduate participants (N=269) to the same video conditions to examine whether the E-E intervention could improve White viewers' perceptions of the videos (reactance, videos' societal impact), their attitudes toward Asian Americans (prejudice, Asian American BII,

identification with Asian Americans, perceived heterogeneity, perceived knowledgeability about Asian Americans), and pro-Asian American civic behavior. I found that the Culturally-Specific videos elicited the greatest warmth/liking toward Asian Americans compared to the Universal and Control videos, and the Universal videos elicited greater reactance within the low virality conditions. Further, participants who watched the Culturally-Specific videos reported greater knowledgeability about Asian Americans compared to those in the Control condition. Overall, findings suggest that the E-E intervention was more effective in improving White viewers' attitudes towards Asian Americans (Study 2) than it was in improving Asian American viewers' identity perceptions and political outcomes (Study 1), and I discuss the implications of these findings as well as limitations and future research directions.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Western media industries continue to be scrutinized for their slow-to-improve representations of diverse U.S. populations. Reports identify significant disparities in on- and off-screen representations of various minority groups in popular film and television (USC Annenberg Diversity Initiative, 2016, 2018). Researchers found that stereotype-consistent media portrayals of minority groups can increase stereotypic beliefs and negative evaluations among dominant group (i.e., White, heterosexual, male) viewers, providing empirical evidence that media representations can affect social perceptions (e.g., Mastro & Tropp, 2004; Ramasubramanian, 2011; Ward & Freeman, 2006). However, media portrayals can also *improve* dominant group perceptions of outgroups via entertainment-education (E-E), broadly defined as media that communicates educational messages to the public for positive social change (i.e., non-stereotypical and relatable portrayals of outgroup members; Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa, Greg, & Hewes, 2005). Still, the literature lacks investigations of target group perspectives by focusing on the effects of media—positive and negative—on dominant group attitudes. Hence, effects on minority group viewers are unknown.

In my two dissertation studies, I draw from experimental social psychology and feminist theory to address this gap. In Study 1, I examined the effects of a brief E-E intervention on Asian American viewers' identity perceptions and civic outcomes. As one of several groups still poorly represented in U.S. media, Asian Americans continue to navigate stereotype-ridden media portrayals and general media invisibility. Thus, in Study 1 I examined whether exposure to inclusive media could improve their perceptions of the videos (i.e., identification, video impact), identity perceptions (i.e., ethnic self-esteem, metacognitive bicultural identity integration), national belonging (i.e., feelings of belonging within the U.S.), civic agency (i.e., beliefs about

their political influence), and civic behavior (i.e., petition-signing). Further, I examined whether effects depended on a) the cultural specificity of videos (i.e., extent to which the video content specifically addressed Asian American experiences) and b) the media virality of videos (i.e., visible number of views, likes, and comments; low vs. high). Drawing from feminist theories on epistemology (e.g., Fricker, 2007; Harding, 2002) as well as Chicana/diaspora feminist perspectives (Anzaldúa, 1987; Lugones, 1987), I sought to contribute non-dominant perspectives to social psychological theory in exploring outcomes specific to U.S. diaspora identity. Then in Study 2, I examined whether the E-E intervention from Study 1 could improve White viewers' attitudes toward Asian Americans (i.e., prejudice/stereotypes, identification, perceived knowledgeability, perceived heterogeneity), and pro-Asian American civic behavior (i.e., petition-signing), given that scholars have previously demonstrated that E-E could improve White viewers' perceptions of groups like Muslim Americans and LGBTQ people (Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa, Greg, & Hewes, 2005).

In the following sections, I begin by briefly reviewing research on both the negative and positive effects of popular media portrayals on dominant group attitudes. In doing so, I highlight the emerging literature on media interventions for prejudice reduction (i.e., entertainment-education) and articulate the need for experimental investigations of target group perspectives. I then review research on diaspora group outcomes pertaining to bicultural identity integration (i.e., the perceived overlap between one's ethnic and national identities), as well as issues of national belonging and civic outcomes. Last, I discuss factors that may influence viewers' perceptions of E-E media, including the cultural specificity and perceived virality of media messages.

Media Stereotypes and Interventions

Asian Americans are the fastest-growing, and soon-to-be largest, immigrant group in the United States (Lopez, Ruiz, & Patten, 2017), yet cultural institutions like the media still perpetuate messages—both overt and subtle—branding immigrant/diaspora groups as inassimilable "foreign invaders" (Cacho, 2012; Ramasubramanian, 2011). Popular film and television in the United States has historically excluded and/or misrepresented non-dominant groups (e.g., portraying black/yellowface; whitewashing characters; Anderson, 2017), and Asian Americans continue to face media invisibility today. A report on popular films from 2017 revealed that only 6.3% of all characters were of Asian descent, and these percentages have not changed since 2007 (USC Annenberg Diversity Initiative, 2018). Further, existing media portrayals are often tokenizing and rife with racial stereotypes (e.g., heavy accents; social deviance; illegality; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Ramasubramanian, 2011; USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center, 2018; Zhang, 2010). Thus, negligible progress has been made toward increasing the quality of representation for Asian Americans across the past decade.

Feminist perspectives on epistemology have illuminated how Western knowledge practices are rooted in biased conceptions of who qualifies as a rational knowing subject, and whose interests are deemed worthy of shaping knowledge production (Tuana, 2017). In identifying the social systems that produce and maintain racism, Mills' (1997) conception of *epistemologies of ignorance* describes an active "production and preservation of ignorance by those in privileged positions" to continue observing the world in a way that serves their own ends and maintains their privilege, otherwise known as "willful ignorance" (as cited in Tuana 2016). Indeed, Fricker (2006) labels these areas of social life obscured by dominant groups as "hermeneutical hotspots," in which dominant groups maintain "misinterpretations" about the less powerful to avoid truths that may challenge their current status. Fricker (2007) clarifies that this

act of hermeneutical injustice prevents society from gaining a collective understanding of particular social groups' experiences due to the privileging of knowledge stemming from those who hold power.

As a demonstration of how misinterpretations about social groups can be culturally sustained, stereotype-consistent media portrayals of minority groups can increase stereotypic beliefs among dominant group viewers. For example, exposing White viewers to stereotypical portrayals of African Americans and Latina/o Americans led to higher endorsement of racial stereotypes and more negative evaluations (Mastro, 2003; Mastro & Tropp, 2004; Ramasubramanian, 2011a). Further, general media consumption was correlated with more stereotypical perceptions of Asian Americans (i.e., model minority stereotypes, lack of social/language skills) and more negative personality evaluations of Asian Americans along Big Five traits (Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt, & Carlson, 2009; Ramasubramanian, 2011b). Cultivation Theory posits that repeated and enduring exposure to media can have "cumulative effects that distort social reality perceptions and increase stereotypical beliefs" (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shanahan, 2002; Ramasubramanian & Murphy, 2014, p. 387). Hence, media representations can increase and perpetuate existing minority group stereotypes in mainstream culture.

Notably, popular media consumption is not exclusively tied to negative outcomes. Media can improve intergroup perceptions through entertainment-education (E-E), which uses media to communicate prosocial messages to the public. Forms of E-E can vary widely in terms of their target audience (e.g., global; local audiences), their media format (e.g., television sitcoms, health promotion videos, radio shows), and their educational themes (e.g., HIV prevention, political awareness, domestic violence prevention; Moyer-Guse, 2008; Singhal, 2002). To date, most E-E studies explored the benefits of E-E for health-education purposes. For example, E-E can increase knowledge of health issues (i.e., disease symptoms, coping strategies), increase self-efficacy for

seeking health treatment, and increase preventative behaviors (i.e., using condoms for HIV prevention; Hernandez & Organista, 2013; Sharf, Freimuth, Greenspon, & Plotnick, 1996; Vaughan, Rogers, Singhal, & Swalehe, 2000). Thus, E-E can convey important health messages and even promote health-promoting behaviors among viewers.

Scholars have minimally applied E-E to issues of intergroup prejudice. Drawing from Allport's (1954) original intergroup contact theory, Schiappa, Greg and Hewes (2005) proposed the parasocial contact hypothesis (PCH) based on communication's "parasocial interaction," that is, media's ability to provide viewers with a mediated, but "apparently intimate, face-to-face association with a performer" (Horton & Wohl, 1956, p. 228). Using this theoretical framework, Schiappa, Greg, and Hewes (2005) found that undergraduate students shown several episodes of HBO's *Six Feet Under* (Study 1) and the popular reality makeover show *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (Study 2) reported significantly lower post-experiment levels of sexual prejudice toward gay men compared to pre-experiment levels. Further, they found that decreases in prejudice were associated with interpersonal attraction measures like social attraction (e.g., "I could be friends with X") and perceived homophily (e.g., "X is similar to me"). In other experiments, video clips directly portraying positive cross-group interactions improved viewers' attitudes towards various outgroups (i.e., German students' attitudes toward Chinese students, White students' attitudes toward Black students; Mallett & Wilson, 2010; Mazziotta, Mummendey, & Wright, 2011). Findings suggest that exposure to outgroups through digital media can deliver some of the benefits of face-to-face contact, which provides new avenues for prejudice intervention research in the context of our technology-immersed society. Given that opportunities for cross-group interactions in the U.S. are quite limited due to geographic arrangements, digital media may be a tool for overcoming this barrier to provide outgroup exposure using existing popular technology platforms.

Murrar and Brauer (2017) examined the effectiveness of two different media formats in improving White viewers' attitudes toward Arabs/Muslims. They found that television sitcom episodes (Study 1) and a 4-minute music video (Study 2) were both effective in reducing White participants' prejudice toward Arabs/Muslims, and the effects of the music video outperformed other well-established prejudice reduction methods (i.e., imagined contact; group malleability). Specifically, participants who were exposed to a brief music video featuring counter-stereotypical statements about Muslim Americans reported greater liking and warm feelings towards Muslim Americans, greater identification with Muslim Americans (i.e., "They are similar to me"), and greater perceptions of Arabs/Muslims as a heterogeneous group compared to those in the other intervention conditions. Further, participants' identification with Muslim Americans significantly explained their reduction in prejudice. These findings provide initial evidence that exposure to brief E-E media—a strategy that is accessible and easy-to-implement—can significantly improve intergroup perceptions. Thus, for my E-E intervention videos, I utilized videos created by popular company Buzzfeed that are marketed as having explicit prosocial goals. Specifically, Buzzfeed asserts that "diversity and representation have always been a priority" in their media content, and that "everyone deserves to be seen and represented" (Gant, 2018). Videos from Buzzfeed often feature a variety of social groups, and video topics frequently address issues pertaining to minority identities and experiences. By using these videos, I examined their effectiveness in positively influencing viewers' social perceptions as they are advertised.

Target Perspectives on Media Interventions

Although dominant group viewers are negatively affected by stereotypic portrayals of minority groups, minority (i.e., target) group viewers consume the same mischaracterizations about their own group, and this consequence is under-recognized in the media stereotypes

literature. In her discussion of hermeneutical injustice, Fricker (2007) emphasizes that the obscuring of knowledge about marginalized groups by dominant groups (e.g., through academic and/or cultural institutions) prevents members of marginalized groups from making sense of their own experiences. In internalizing negative images of themselves, marginalized groups are "unable to dissent from distorted understandings of their social experiences" (p. 96). Given that E-E scholars have predominantly focused on dominant group outcomes, we know little about whether E-E can be an intervention for minority groups as well. In critiquing the academy's privileging of dominant group perspectives, Harding (2006) argues for the importance of starting knowledge production from marginalized standpoints, and asserts that those who are marginalized can "use their oppressed social position as a source of insight about how social relations work—insight unavailable or at least hard to come by within the conceptual frameworks of dominant institutions, including research disciplines" (p. 25). Indeed, Collins (1986) further argues that those who occupy the "outsider within status" in academia (i.e., those who exist outside of dominant conceptions of the "knowing subject") are essential in identifying and labeling patterns unable to be seen by "insiders." Ultimately, non-dominant perspectives are "essential to the creative development of academic disciplines themselves" (Mannheim, 1936, as cited by Collins, 1986, p. 515).

One study that examined the effects of E-E on target group perspectives suggests that minority groups may benefit from this intervention. Specifically, Gillig and Murphy (2016) found that exposure to a storyline featuring young boys navigating their gay identities (i.e., clips of the ABC drama *The Fosters*) increased LGBTQ viewers' identification with the characters and improved their attitudes toward LGBTQ people, which suggests that inclusive media portrayals can be beneficial for underrepresented group members' attitudes toward their own identities. Thus, in Study 1, I examined whether an E-E intervention could improve Asian American

viewers' identity perceptions along several dimensions, and I discuss these identity dimensions below.

Bicultural Identity Integration

Although U.S.-born Asian Americans are stereotyped as foreign within U.S. contexts (Cacho, 2012; Mohanty, 2003), they are perceived as outsiders to their countries of origin. Thus, they occupy a unique identity position (i.e., fitting in "neither here nor there") that can produce identity conflict. In her borderlands theory, Anzaldúa (1987) conceptualizes this experience by describing diaspora identity as consisting of multiple, ambiguous, and conflicting subjectivities. In specifically addressing Chicana/o identity, Anzaldúa (1987) calls for the adoption of a "mestiza consciousness" among diaspora individuals—a survival strategy that involves developing "a tolerance for ambiguity" (p. 79). Her writings reflect a push for intersectional frameworks that not only recognize multiple dimensions of identity, but the contradictions inherent to certain identity positions in the United States (Jiminez, 2014). In line with this concept, Lugones (1987) articulates that those who are outsiders to mainstream White/Anglo U.S. culture are forced to be "world travelers," which she describes as an identity position requiring one to flexibly shift from one identity/world (i.e., "How I see myself") to another identity/world (i.e., "How the dominant group sees me"). Lugones (1987) asserts that "inhabiting more than one 'world' at the same time and 'traveling' between 'worlds' is part and parcel of our experience and our situation," and that "much of our traveling is done unwilfully to hostile White/Anglo 'worlds'" (pgs. 3, 11).

Researchers in social psychology have engaged with this identity concept among diaspora populations through measures of bicultural identity integration (BII), or the perceived overlap between one's ethnic and national identity/cultures (e.g., Vietnamese + American). For

example, higher levels of BII indicate a perception of greater congruence between one's ethnic and national identities, whereas lower levels of BII indicate a perception of lower congruence between one's ethnic and national identities. Scholars found that lower levels of BII among diaspora group members are associated with worse social adjustment, greater rates of depression, and perceptions of greater differences between themselves and White Americans (e.g., de Domanico, Crawford, & De Wolfe, 1994; Huyhn, Nguyen, & Benet-Martinez, 2011; Miramontez, Benet-Martinez, & Nguyen, 2008). Thus, greater perceived incongruity between one's ethnic and national identity can be detrimental for well-being and experiences of social belonging. As one of my dependent measures in Study 1, I examined whether the E-E intervention could influence Asian American viewers' *metacognitive* BII, or how they think White Americans view the overlap between Asian and American identities/cultures. In doing so, I assessed Asian Americans' perceptions of stereotyping from dominant group members (i.e., perceived foreignness), and whether this perception could be influenced by inclusive media exposure. Further, in Study 2, I measured White participants' actual perceptions of Asian Americans' BII to examine whether the intervention could reduce this racial stereotype among dominant group viewers.

Belonging and Civic Outcomes

Unique to diaspora communities, groups like Asian and Latina/o Americans consistently exhibit low civic participation relative to White and African Americans on both local and national levels as indicated by election voter turnout polls and community surveys (Foster-Bey, 2008; Krogstad & Lopez, 2017). Belongingness is a key predictor of civic participation, in that feelings of local community belonging and place attachment (i.e., emotional bonds formed with places) are positively correlated with civic engagement behaviors such as attending community meetings,

participating in political activities, and volunteering (Albanesi, Cicognani, & Zani, 2007; Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Stefaniak, Bilewicz, & Lewicka, 2017). Thus, minority group disparities in civic participation may be indicative of issues of belonging, and these disparities hinder the extent to which voices from these groups can shape political outcomes. Further, greater perceptions of racial discrimination among groups like Asian and Latina/o Americans are correlated with lower feelings of community belonging, lower civic participation, and lower trust in the fairness of society (Ballard, 2016; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Schildkraut, 2005). In Study 1, I examined whether the E-E intervention could improve Asian American viewers' perceptions of national belonging, or their feelings of inclusion and visibility within the larger U.S. context. In prior work, sense of belonging has typically been operationalized as belongingness to local community spaces (e.g., "my neighbors," "this town"; Miranti & Evans, 2018; Stefaniak, Bilewicz, & Lewicka, 2017). However, I examined feelings of national belonging given that immigrant stereotypes often pertain to their "un-Americanness" on a national scale.

Additionally, I examined whether the intervention could also improve Asian American viewers' civic outcomes (i.e., agency and behavior). Civic engagement is often measured using participants' self-reported civic behaviors (e.g., voting behaviors; Albanesi, Cicognani, & Zani, 2007), but for populations who report infrequent civic behaviors, this method can fail to capture cultural mechanisms acting as potential barriers (e.g., beliefs about voting). Thus, to assess the attitudinal dimension of civic engagement, I examined the intervention's effects on feelings of civic agency, or participants' beliefs about their ability to be a driver of change in society (e.g., "It is worth my efforts to vote in elections"). I also examined participants' immediate decision to sign an online petition after the intervention to observe whether the videos can influence viewers' political behavior.

The Role of Cultural Specificity and Media Virality

"Inclusive" media typically refers to media that depict social groups along various identity dimensions (e.g., race, class, age, sexual orientation), and media industries have been under greater pressure to create inclusive stories that reflect underrepresented experiences. However, inclusion on its own may not be the sole driver of viewers' attitude changes. Although Gillig and Murphy (2016) found benefits of their E-E intervention portraying LGBTQ youth on LGBTQ viewers' self-perceptions, they also found that the same intervention backfired for heterosexual viewers who reported lower identification and more negative attitudes toward LGBTQ people. This finding contradicts prior research that successfully used sitcom exposure to reduce heterosexual viewers' sexual prejudice (i.e., Schiappa et al., 2005), and suggests that the specific nature of these inclusive portrayals may matter. In other words, the success of E-E interventions may not solely rely on the visibility of minority group characters alone, but it may also be influenced by the way minority characters are presented within the narratives. Media scholars have demonstrated that factors like narrative genres, affective mechanisms, and viewers' prior experiences can shape viewers' perceptions of media (Ellithorpe, Ewoldsen, & Porreca, 2015; Oliver et al., 2015; Schiappa et al., 2005). In my studies, I examined the influence of two factors that are particularly relevant to the specific domains of minority portrayals and internet media—the cultural specificity and perceived virality of media messages. These factors have yet to be explored in the context of E-E, and I discuss them in the following sections.

Cultural Specificity of Media Narratives

Contemporary critics continue to debate about *how* media should portray minority groups given that inclusive portrayals can vary according to the degree that minority experiences are

directly addressed within the stories (White, 2017). Specifically, a social group may be presented in a way that is informed by their identity (which I refer to throughout my dissertation as Culturally-Specific media), or in a way that is irrelevant to their identity (which I refer to as Universal media). For example, a video clip may depict young Asian Americans sharing about their struggles with communicating with their parents in their parents' native language (Culturally-Specific), which is qualitatively different from a video depicting them (and other non-Asians) sharing about their frustrations with waiting long hours at the DMV (Universal). In this example, replacing the Asians in the latter video with other White individuals would not meaningfully change the video. Scholars have yet to explicate how differences in the degree to which popular media messages feature culturally-specific content may influence viewers' perceptions of media messages.

In the context of health advertising, culturally-targeted ads (i.e., ads espousing culturally-specific values, traditions, or use of multi-lingual messaging) were successful in increasing health-promoting behaviors like HIV prevention and smoking cessation within the targeted communities (e.g., Gould et al., 2013; Ma, Fleisher, Gonzalez, & Edwards, 2004; Romer et al., 2009). For example, Indigenous viewers of anti-tobacco ads preferred informational websites that displayed Native visual designs (Gould et al., 2013). Additionally, African Americans indicated a preference for ethnically-specific health statements (i.e., "Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among African Americans") due to increased feelings of personal relevance (Sanders Thompson et al., 2007, p. 554). To my knowledge, little to no published work examines cultural specificity as a factor of influence in non-advertising media contexts. Given that personal identification with media characters (i.e., X is similar to me) is a mechanism of prejudice reduction in E-E studies (e.g., Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa et al., 2005), I sought to clarify whether identification is contingent on the mere visibility of target group members in media, or if it can vary depending on the extent to which media messages specifically address

target group issues and experiences. To examine this across my studies, my experimental video conditions included Culturally-Specific videos (featuring narratives specific to the Asian American experience), Universal videos (featuring Asian Americans in culturally-irrelevant contexts), and Control videos (featuring only White Americans).

Media Virality and Bandwagon Effects

Popular websites like YouTube and Facebook commonly display virality metrics (i.e., "like" and "share" numbers) that indicate levels of popularity and viewer engagement. These media virality metrics can affect the way media messages are received. For example, participants who saw online health information (i.e., cancer risk factors) accompanied by high virality metrics (i.e., thousands of shares and comments), versus low virality metrics, perceived the health post to have greater influence on the self and others, and reported greater intentions to engage in preventative behaviors (Kim, 2018a; Stavrositu & Kim, 2014). Based on the bandwagon effect (Cialdini, 1993), virality metrics function as social persuasion cues that provide viewers with an indicator of what is popular and normative in society, that is, "if everyone thinks these stories are interesting and newsworthy, they must be" (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Sundar & Nass, 2001, p. 68). Thus, media accompanied by signals of high virality communicates injunctive norms about what is widely approved and endorsed by the public (Cialdini, Reno, & Kallgren, 1990). Moreover, Chung (2017) found that the presence of high virality metrics was particularly influential in improving perceptions of an online news story from a low-credibility organization compared to a high-credibility organization, illustrating that cues of public approval can be particularly important for media that is lacking in reputation or power. Given that virality metrics can affect perceptions of media's social influence, I examined whether media virality (low vs. high) could facilitate or hinder the effects of the intervention videos in Studies 1 and 2.

The Current Studies

Broadly, I sought to accomplish three goals with my dissertation studies. First, I wanted to investigate whether the benefits of E-E could be demonstrated through the use of contemporary prosocial internet media for high ecological validity. Using popular internet videos (i.e., Buzzfeed videos) as E-E stimuli would clarify whether they can beneficially affect viewers as advertised. Second, I wanted to examine how perceptions of media messages may be influenced by cultural specificity and media virality, neither of which have been examined in E-E contexts. By investigating these potential factors of influence, I sought to elaborate on existing E-E theory to identify the specific conditions under which the intervention can most successfully influence viewers' attitudes. Last, I wanted to examine whether E-E videos could benefit target group viewers, given that target group perspectives are underexplored. Thus, I examined whether popular internet videos that varied in degrees of Asian American representation and media virality could provide positive benefits to Asian American viewers' identity-related and civic outcomes (Study 1), as well as to White American viewers' prejudice and political support for Asian Americans (Study 2).

Chapter 2

Study 1

I conducted a 3 (Media representation: Culturally-specific, Universal, Control) X 2 (Media virality: low, high) between-subjects experiment to examine how inclusive prosocial internet videos affect Asian American viewers' perceptions of the videos, identity perceptions, and civic outcomes. My intervention stimuli were selected based on their similarity to Murrar and Brauer's (2017) stimulus video, which was a four-minute music video featuring a montage of various Arab/Muslim individuals holding up written signs with messages such as, "I, too, shop at Victoria's Secret," and, "I hope Justin Timberlake is in heaven." For high ecological validity, I used popular YouTube videos created by Buzzfeed—a media company with several million subscribers that, in 2017, was estimated as reaching 83% of all millennial internet users (Fuller, 2018). The videos address a variety of lifestyle topics and feature the same interview montage format depicted in Murrar & Brauer's (2017) music video (details about the videos in each experimental condition are provided in the Materials section).

Specifically, I examined the effects of the videos on Asian American participants' perceptions of the videos (i.e., identification with the featured individuals, videos' societal impact), identity self-perceptions (i.e., ethnic self-esteem, metacognitive BII, national belonging), and civic outcomes (i.e., civic agency, petition-signing behavior). My hypotheses are outlined below:

H1: Given that culturally-specific media presents target viewers with representations of their own ingroup experiences, I predicted that if Asian American participants viewed the Culturally-Specific videos, then they would report more positive perceptions of the videos, identity perceptions, and civic attitudes/behavior compared to those in the other video conditions.

H2: Given that high media virality signals public acceptance of media messages (i.e., bandwagon effects), I predicted an interaction between media representation and virality, such that if participants viewed the Culturally-Specific/high virality videos, then they would report the most positive perceptions of the videos, identity perceptions, and civic attitudes/behavior compared to those in the other conditions.

H3: Given that feelings of community belonging have been shown to predict civic engagement in prior work (e.g., Albanesi, Cicognani, & Zani, 2007), I predicted a moderated parallel mediation model, such that metacognitive BII, national belonging, and civic agency would explain the relationship between media representation (moderated by virality) and civic behavior (i.e., petition-signing).

Method

Participants

According to an a priori power analysis conducted in G*Power, 327 U.S.-born Asian Americans aged 18 to 35 were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and Prime Panels services to aim for a final sample of 251 participants for 95% power at a medium effect size (f=.25). Participants were excluded for failing a video content recall question (i.e., "Select the two statements that best describe what each video was about") and an attention check question (i.e., "Please select 'disagree' for this question"). After participant exclusions, the final sample included 259 participants (131 women), and there were no statistical differences between participants from the two online recruitment services (all p-values > .32). Participants were 48% East Asian, 31% Southeast Asian, 15% South Asian, and 5% mixed race. Participants were predominantly second-generation Americans (83%; i.e., born to immigrant parents; 17% were

third-generation) and had a mean age of 25.9 (*SD*=4.54). Participants also resided in various

regions of the United States (44% in the West, 20% in the South, 16% in the Midwest, 20% in the

Northeast). Participants from MTurk were compensated $1.00 for a 10-minute survey, while

participants from Prime Panels were compensated through the Prime Panels service.

Materials

Participants viewed two brief videos (counterbalanced within conditions; approximately

5-7 minutes of content total) in each of the three video conditions. All videos were publicly-

available YouTube videos created by Buzzfeed, and they were edited to remove mentions of the

Buzzfeed brand. In the Control condition, participants viewed "Kids tell their parents their

biggest secrets" and "Hotel employees reveal secrets about hotels" which featured only White

Americans. In the Universal condition, participants viewed "People try 'the world's spiciest

popcorn'" and "Can you guess the prices of these shoes?" which featured a racially diverse group

of people (including Asian Americans). In the Culturally-Specific condition, participants viewed

"Things our Asian moms say" and "The hardest Asian food 'Would you rather'" which featured

only Asian Americans. All videos featuring Asian Americans were selected based on their

depiction of a diverse range of Asian ethnicities (i.e., East, Southeast, and South Asian

ethnicities). The videos were pilot-tested with Asian American MTurk participants (*n*=53) to

ensure that there were no significant differences in how participants perceived the videos'

production quality (*p*=.22) and level of entertainment (*p*=.15), or their felt happiness (*p*=.43) and

sadness (*p*=.11) in response to the videos. Participants were also presented with screenshots of the

videos' YouTube streaming pages, and these screenshots were edited to display either low or high

numbers of views, likes, and comments to manipulate virality metrics (see Appendix A for

images). The specific numbers for low and high views, likes, and comments were chosen based on actual numbers displayed on Buzzfeed videos with low and high popularity.

Procedure

Participants signed up for a Qualtrics survey advertised as examining short-term memory of internet media. Upon consenting to participate, participants were informed that they would be randomly assigned to view two internet videos from a larger pool of videos and answer questions about their perceptions of them. Participants were then presented with two videos from either the Control, Universal, or Culturally-Specific conditions, and also viewed screenshots of the video webpages depicting either low or high virality metrics. After viewing the videos and screenshots, participants first responded to a video content recall question as well as the perceived virality manipulation check question (i.e., "The videos had a large number of views"). Then, participants were asked about their general thoughts and impressions of the videos by responding to the identification, perceived video impact, and video familiarity measures. Next, participants were informed that they were entering the second part of the study involving perceptions of their own identity, and responded to the ethnic self-esteem, metacognitive BII, national belonging, and civic agency measures (in a counterbalanced order). Last, participants were presented with a fictitious online petition regarding the TSA's unwarranted phone and tablet searches during domestic and international travel, and participants indicated whether or not they would anonymously sign the petition. Participants responded to demographic questions and received the study debriefing before exiting the survey.

Dependent Measures and Manipulation Check

Perceived virality manipulation check

Participants indicated their agreement with three items about the number of views, likes, and comments on the videos, specifically: "The videos had a large amount of views", "The videos had a large number of likes," and "The videos had a large number of comments." These items were adapted from prior work (Stavrositu & Kim, 2014). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.95).

Video familiarity covariate

Participants responded to a single item regarding their familiarity with the videos on a 5-point Likert scale (i.e., "How familiar are you with the videos?"; 1=Not at all, 5=A great deal).

Perceived video impact

Participants responded to a 4-item original scale assessing perceptions of the videos' societal impact (e.g., "The videos influence what people in society think," and "The videos shape public opinions"). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.74).

Identification

Participants indicated how much they identified with the people featured in the videos through an adapted 5-item scale assessing how much they identify with, understand, know, see themselves in, and feel similar to the people in the videos (Murrar & Brauer, 2017). Responses were made on sliding scales ranging from 0 to 100 (0=Not at all, 100=Very much), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.92).

Ethnic self-esteem

Participants reported attitudes about their state ethnic self-esteem through an adapted version of the 4-item private self-esteem subscale from the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (e.g., "I feel glad to be a member of my racial/ethnic group," and "I feel good about the race/ethnicity I belong to"; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). Participants were asked to respond to the items according to how they felt in the current moment to assess state perceptions. Participants rated their agreement with the statements on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.78).

Metacognitive bicultural identity integration (BII)

As a measure of perceived foreignness stereotypes, I used an adapted version of the Self/Other Inclusion scale (Aron, Aron, & Smollan, 1992) to present participants with seven images depicting gradually overlapping circles labeled "Asian" and "American." Participants were given the following instructions:

> The following two circles are visual representations of "Asian identity/culture"
> and "American identity/culture" very broadly. Based on how you feel in this
> moment, choose the image that best reflects how you think White Americans

perceive the connection/compatibility between these two identities/cultures. For example, less overlap between the circles indicates that White Americans view Asian identity/culture as being disconnected/incompatible with American identity/culture. Greater overlap indicates that White Americans view the two identities/cultures as being more connected/compatible with each other. Remember to respond according to how you think <u>White Americans</u> view the two identities/cultures.

National belonging

Participants indicated perceptions of their national belonging through a 6-item scale combining two items adapted from the Brief Sense of Community Scale (BSCS; "This country cares about my needs," and "This country makes me feel like I belong;" Peterson, Speer, & McMillan, 2007), and four original items (e.g., "I feel visible in this country," "I don't feel included by other Americans [R]"). Participants were asked to respond to the items according to how they felt in the current moment to assess state perceptions. Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.90).

Civic agency

Participants indicated their feelings of civic agency through a 5-item original scale (e.g., "I feel like I can contribute to change in society" and "My voice has political power"). Participants were asked to respond to the items according to how they felt in the current moment to assess state perceptions. Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.77).

Civic behavior

Toward the end of the survey, participants were presented with the following message:

As part of our research lab's Social Impact Initiative, we have collaborated with Change.org to conclude each of our surveys with an online petition for a social cause. On the next page, please read through the petition and indicate if you would like to optionally contribute your anonymous support for the petition's cause.

Participants were then presented with a brief petition titled "Protect U.S. Citizens' Rights to Privacy" (see full petition in Appendix B). The petition description was created using text from the ACLU's formal complaint to the TSA regarding unwarranted phone and tablet searches conducted on U.S. citizens during domestic and international air travel, as well as from a related news article ("ACLU," 2018; McGinnis, 2018). Although the petition itself is fictional, this topic was chosen due to its status as an ongoing U.S. issue, and its relevance to issues of U.S. citizenship/rights. Participants were presented with the option to add their anonymous electronic signature to support the petition. Responses were recorded as a dichotomous measure ("Yes, I would like to add my anonymous signature; No, I would not like to add my anonymous signature").

Past voting behavior

For descriptive purposes, participants were asked in the demographics portion of the survey whether or not they voted in the past presidential (November 2016) and midterm elections (November 2018). Participants responded about both elections by answering "Yes," "No," or "I don't remember."

Study 1 Results

Correlations between all primary dependent measures are presented in Table 1-1.

Table **1-1**: Correlations between primary dependent measures (across conditions).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Perceived virality manip. check	--							
2. Perceived video impact	.05	--						
3. Identification	.19**	.29**	--					
4. Ethnic self-esteem	-.01	-.01	-.002	--				
5. Metacog. BII	.03	.02	.09	-.03	--			
6. National belonging	-.004	.10	.08	.24**	.34**	--		
7. Civic agency	.04	.03	.07	.22**	.12*	.39**	--	
8. Civic behavior[a]	.03	.07	.12	.03	-.15*	-.07	.01	--

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. [a]Civic behavior was a dichotomous measure analyzed using point-biserial correlations

I conducted a series of ANCOVA analyses to examine main effects and interactions of media representation and virality on the dependent measures, controlling for participants' familiarity with the videos (*M*=2.29, *SD*=1.26) as a covariate. The adjusted means and standard errors for all primary dependent measures are listed in Table 2-1.

Table **2**-1: Adjusted means (standard errors) for primary dependent measures.

| Scale/Items | Adjusted Mean (SE) Ratings | | | | | |
| | Low Virality | | | High Virality | | |
	Control	Universal	Culturally -Specific	Control	Universal	Culturally -Specific
Perceived virality manip. check	3.35 (0.21)$_{ad}$	3.94 (0.22)$_{ac}$	4.42 (0.22)$_{ac}$	5.06 (0.21)$_{bd}$	5.77 (0.24)$_{bc}$	5.30 (0.21)$_{bc}$
Perceived video impact	4.87 (0.16)$_a$	4.36 (0.16)$_b$	4.83 (0.16)$_a$	4.78 (0.15)$_a$	4.52 (0.17)$_b$	4.88 (0.16)$_a$
Identification	47.52 (3.40)$_b$	44.82 (3.61)$_b$	70.64 (3.53)$_a$	49.75 (3.34)$_b$	54.03 (3.77)$_b$	66.30 (3.40)$_a$
Ethnic self-esteem	5.91 (0.16)	5.76 (0.16)	6.03 (0.16)	5.78 (0.15)	6.08 (0.17)	5.98 (0.15)
Metacognitive BII	2.93 (0.26)	3.02 (0.27)	3.67 (0.27)	3.18 (0.26)	3.26 (0.29)	3.26 (0.26)
National belonging	4.62 (0.19)	4.38 (0.20)	4.41 (0.20)	4.31 (0.19)	4.65 (0.21)	4.63 (0.19)
Civic agency	4.52 (0.17)$_a$	4.15 (0.18)$_b$	4.25 (0.18)	4.60 (0.17)$_a$	4.08 (0.19)$_b$	4.38 (0.17)
Civic behavior*	53%	63%	57%	53%	57%	51%

Note. N = 259; Control/Low virality = 45, Control/High virality = 47, Universal/Low virality = 41, Universal/High virality = 37, Culturally-Specific/Low virality = 42, Culturally-Specific/High virality = 47). Subscripts indicate instances in which *a* differs from *b* and *c* differs from *d* at $p < .05$. *Civic behavior values represent percentages of people in each condition who signed the petition.

Perceptions of the Videos

Perceived virality manipulation check

There was a significant main effect of virality condition on perceived virality, such that participants in the high virality conditions reported greater perceived virality ($M=5.38$, $SE=.13$) compared to those in the low virality conditions ($M=3.90$, $SE=.13$), $F(1, 252)=68.99$, $p<.001$,

$\eta_p{}^2$=.22, 90% CI [0.12, 0.35]. There was also an unexpected significant main effect of media representation on perceived virality, $F(2, 252)$=6.19, p=.002, $\eta_p{}^2$=.05, 90% CI [0.01, 0.05]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Universal condition reported greater perceived virality (M=4.86, SE=.16) than those in the Control condition (M=4.20, SE=.15, p=.01), and those in the Culturally-Specific condition also reported greater perceived virality (M=4.86, SE=.15) than those in the Control condition (p=.01). The interaction between media representation and virality condition was not significant, $F(2, 252)$=2.90, p=.06, $\eta_p{}^2$=.02, 90% CI [0.01, 0.02].

Identification

There was a significant main effect of media representation on participants' identification with the people featured in the videos, $F(2, 251)$=20.10, p<.001, $\eta_p{}^2$=.14, 90% CI [0.04, 0.14]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Culturally-Specific condition indicated greater identification with the people in the videos (M=68.47, SE=2.47) compared to those in the Control (M=48.64, SE=2.39, p<.001) and Universal (M=49.42, SE=2.62, p<.001) conditions. There was no main effect of virality condition and no interaction between media representation and virality condition on identification (all p-values>.17).

Perceived video impact

There was a significant main effect of media representation on perceptions of the videos' societal impact, $F(2, 252)$=3.88, p=.02, $\eta_p{}^2$=.03, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Control condition reported greater perceived video impact (M=4.82, SE=.11) compared to those in the Universal condition (M=4.44, SE=.12, p=.05), and

those in the Culturally-Specific condition also reported greater perceived video impact (M=4.85, SE=.11) than those in the Universal condition (p=.04). There was no main effect of virality condition and no interaction between media representation and virality condition on perceived video impact (all p-values>.74).

Identify Perceptions

Ethnic self-esteem

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' ethnic self-esteem (all p-values > .32).

Metacognitive BII

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' metacognitive BII (all p-values > .28).

National belonging

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' national belonging (all p-values > .25).

Political Attitudes and Behavior

Civic agency

There was a significant main effect of media representation on participants' civic agency, $F(2, 252)=3.20$, $p=.04$, $\eta_p^2=.03$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.02]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Control condition indicated greater civic agency ($M=4.56$, $SE=.12$) compared to those in the Universal condition ($M=4.12$, $SE=.13$, $p=.04$). There was no main effect of virality condition and no interaction between media representation and virality condition on civic agency (all p-values>.75).

Civic behavior

I conducted a logistic regression to examine the role of media representation and virality condition in affecting participants' decision to sign an online petition. There were no main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' petition signing behavior (all p-values > .43).

Participants' Voting Behavior

To gather descriptive information about participants' previous voting behavior, participants responded to two questions asking about whether they voted in recent elections. Among those who responded to these items (78% of all participants), 60% of participants indicated that they voted in the 2016 presidential election (37% did not vote, 3% did not remember), and 56% indicated that they voted in the 2018 midterm election (42% did not vote, 2% did not remember). I conducted an exploratory analysis to see whether participants' responses

on the dependent measures differed between voters and non-voters. I defined voters as participants who indicated that they voted in at least one of the two previous elections. Among the primary dependent measures, there was a difference in civic agency between voters and non-voters, such that voters reported higher civic agency (M=4.60, SD=1.00) than non-voters (M=3.99, SD=1.21), $F(1, 200)$=14.17, p<.001, η_p^2=.07, 90% CI [0.03, 0.12]. There were no differences between voters and non-voters on the other dependent measures (all p-values > .32).

Mediation Analyses

I conducted a logistic regression mediation analysis (MacKinnon & Dwyer, 1993) to examine the indirect effect of media representation (moderated by virality condition) on civic behavior (as a dichotomous outcome) through metacognitive BII, national belonging, and civic agency as parallel mediators, controlling for participants' video familiarity. Using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2012; Hayes & Preacher, 2013), I performed a moderated parallel mediation analyses using Model 7 with 5000 bootstrap samples, and I examined media representation as a multicategorical variable (Hayes & Preacher, 2014). *Figure* 1-1 presents the model comparing the effects of the Control videos to Universal videos, and *Figure* 2-1 presents the model comparing the effects of the Control videos to Culturally-Specific videos. I interpreted the significance of indirect effects based on whether or not obtained confidence intervals excluded 0. In the Control vs. Universal video comparison, the indirect effects of media representation on civic behavior through metacognitive BII ($b_{indirect}$ = -0.004, SE = 0.10, CI_{95} = -0.21 to 0.20), national belonging ($b_{indirect}$ = -0.04, SE = 0.09, CI_{95} = -0.24 to 0.12), and civic agency ($b_{indirect}$ = -0.01, SE = 0.06, CI_{95} = -0.17 to 0.10) were not significant (*Figure* 1-1). Likewise, in the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison, the indirect effects of media representation on civic behavior through metacognitive BII ($b_{indirect}$ = 0.11, SE = 0.11, CI_{95} = -0.07

to 0.38), national belonging ($b_{indirect}$ = -0.03, SE = 0.08, CI$_{95}$ = -0.24 to 0.10), and civic agency

($b_{indirect}$ = 0.004, SE = 0.05, CI$_{95}$ = -0.10 to 0.12) were also not significant (*Figure* 2-1).
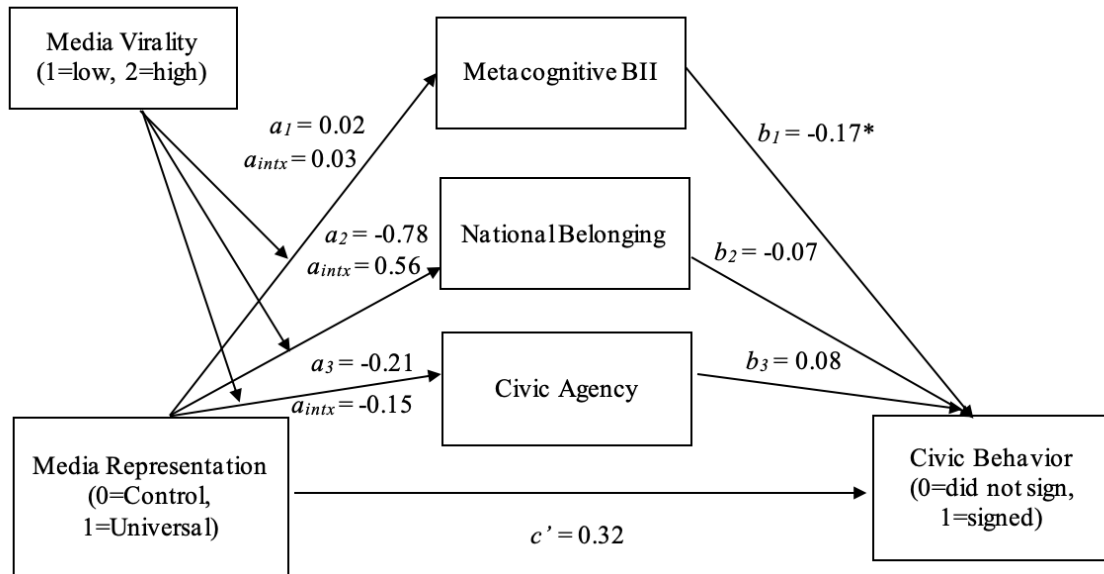

Figure **1-1**: The predicted moderated parallel mediation model comparing Control vs. Universal videos.

Note. N = 258. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. *p < .05.
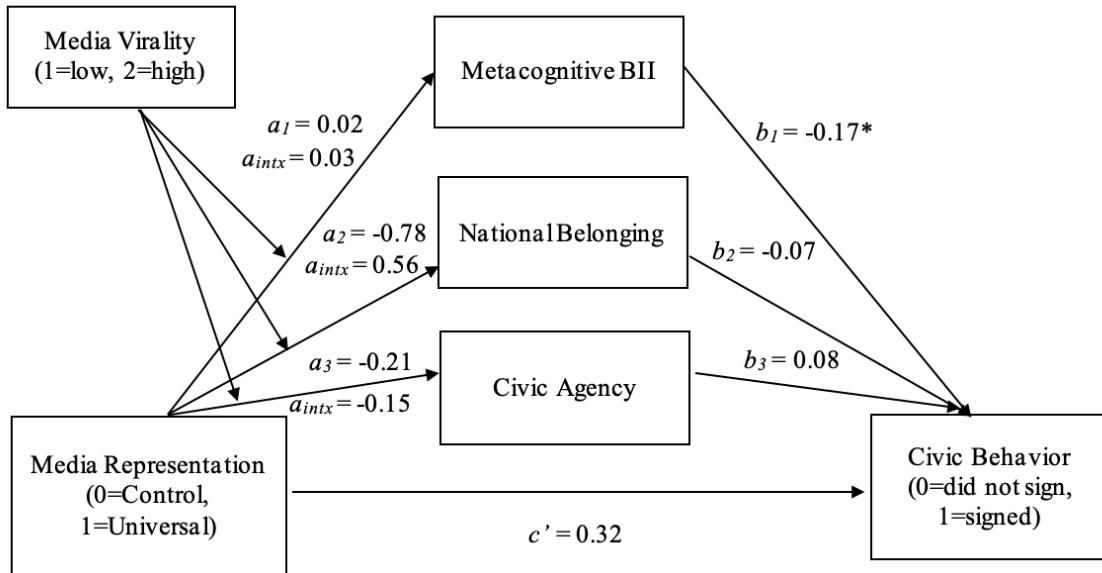
Figure **2-1**: The predicted moderated parallel mediation model comparing Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos.

Note. N = 258. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. *$p < .05$.

As an exploratory analysis, I examined the role of participants' identification with the people in the videos in explaining the relationship between media representation and: a) perceived video impact, b) civic agency, and c) civic behavior, controlling for participants' video familiarity. I did not include virality condition as a moderator given that there were no effects of virality condition on the primary dependent measures. Using PROCESS Model 4 to examine media representation as a multicategorical variable, I found that the indirect effect through identification on perceived video impact was significant for the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison (*Figure* 3-1; $b_{indirect} = 0.25$, SE = 0.08, $CI_{95} = 0.11$ to 0.43), and not significant for the Control vs. Universal video comparison ($b_{indirect} = 0.01$, SE = 0.05, $CI_{95} = -0.09$ to 0.10). Further, the indirect effect through identification on civic agency was not significant for either comparison ($b_{indirect} = 0.002$, SE = 0.02, $CI_{95} = -0.04$ to 0.04; $b_{indirect} = 0.06$, SE = 0.07, $CI_{95} = -0.08$

to 0.19). Last, the indirect effect through identification on civic behavior was significant for the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison (*Figure* 4-1; $b_{indirect} = 0.24$, SE = 0.13, CI$_{95}$ = 0.02 to 0.52), and not significant for the Control vs. Universal video comparison ($b_{indirect} = 0.01$, SE = 0.05, CI$_{95}$ = -0.10 to 0.11).

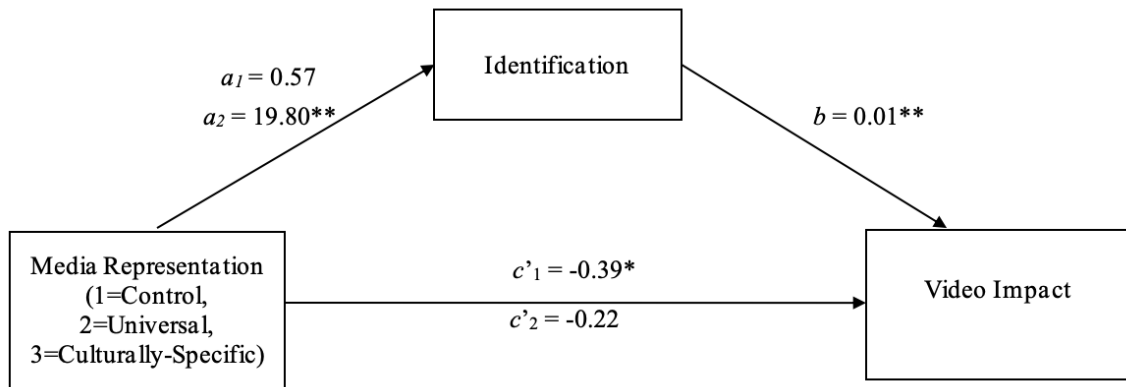Figure 3-1: The mediating role of identification in the effect of media representation on perceived video impact.

Note. N = 258. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. *$p < .05$, **$p < .001$. Subscripts refer to pairwise comparisons of Control vs. Universal videos (1) and Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos (2). Only the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison is significant.

$a_1 = 0.82$
$a_2 = 20.08**$

Identification

$b = 0.01*$

Media Representation
(1=Control,
2=Universal,
3=Culturally-Specific)

$c'_1 = 0.30$
$c'_2 = -0.31$

Civic Behavior

Figure 4-1: The mediating role of identification in the effect of media representation on civic behavior.

Note. N = 258. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. $*p < .05$, $**p < .001$. Subscripts refer to pairwise comparisons of Control vs. Universal videos (1) and Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos (2). Only the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison is significant.
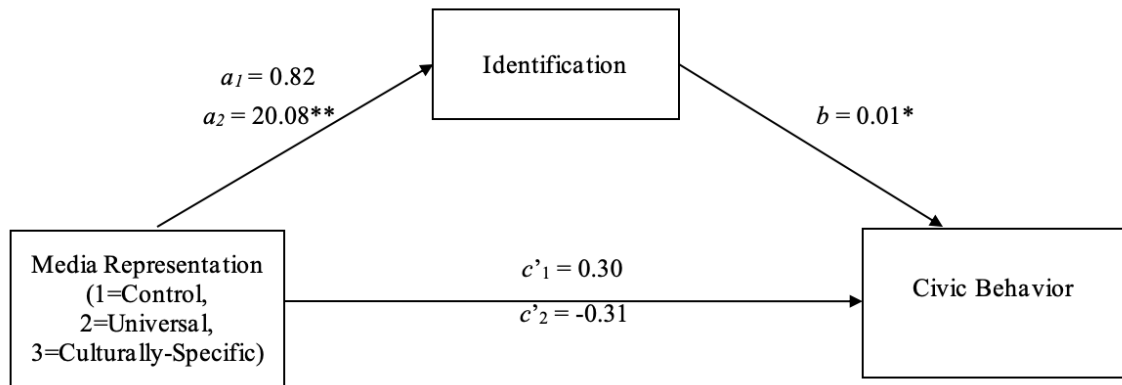
Study 1 Discussion

In this study, I examined the effects of prosocial popular internet videos on Asian American viewers, and whether media representation and virality affected participants' perceptions of the videos, identity perceptions, and political attitudes/behavior.

As a manipulation check, participants in the high virality conditions did perceive the videos as being more viral (i.e., as having greater views, likes, and comments) than those in the low virality conditions. Unexpectedly, media representation also affected perceived virality, such that participants perceived the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos as being more viral than the Control videos. Given that the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos both featured Asian Americans (i.e., ingroup members) whereas the Control videos did not, participants' may have perceived those videos as being more striking or salient compared to the videos featuring only

White Americans. Thus, participants may have responded to the measure according to their perceptions of how "shareworthy" the videos were (i.e., how many likes/views/comments they would expect or want the videos to have), thus resulting in higher virality ratings for the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos.

Media representation affected participants' identification with the people in the videos, such that participants identified more with the Culturally-Specific videos compared to the Universal and Control videos. This outcome highlights a distinction between the effects of the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos, such that media presenting ingroup members *in combination* with a culturally-salient narrative elicited the greatest identification among Asian American viewers. Thus, different types of inclusion in media may result in different degrees of felt visibility among underrepresented viewers.

Media representation also affected participants' perceptions of the videos' societal impact, such that participants perceived the Control and Culturally-Specific videos as having greater societal impact compared to the Universal videos. Given that the Culturally-Specific videos explored aspects of Asian American experiences that are seldom visible in media, participants' may have viewed them as carrying important societal messages. Indeed, an exploratory mediation analysis demonstrated that greater perceived video impact was explained by participants' greater identification with the videos when comparing the effects of the Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos, which suggests that perceiving media as accurate and/or representative in its portrayal of Asian American identity explained participants' perceptions of its social value. However, findings regarding the Control videos were contrary to predictions. Given that the Control videos were representative of the type of media that people more often encounter (i.e., featuring only White Americans), participants may have perceived them as being prototypical in what majority group viewers would watch, and thus could have responded to the video impact measure in terms of how much societal importance society *at large* would view

them as having. In the future, a video impact measure inquiring about participants prescriptive attitudes about how much importance the videos *should* have (i.e., "The videos should have influence on society") may better capture the intended construct.

Contrary to my predictions, there were no effects of the experimental conditions on participants' identity perceptions (i.e., ethnic self-esteem, metacognitive BII, and national belonging) which highlights possible limitations regarding the extent to which prosocial internet videos can affirm target viewers' minority identities. Interestingly, media representation affected participants' civic agency in an unexpected way, in that the Control videos elicited the greatest civic agency among participants. As a possible explanation, seeing Asian Americans in the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos could have reminded participants of their minority status, thus reducing feelings of political agency. In contrast, the Control videos may not have made participants' minority status as salient as the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos due to featuring only White Americans. Therefore, minority representation may not always be beneficial to target group members, and may perhaps backfire in certain contexts. It may be that minority representation that can somehow buffer against the negative effects of minority identity salience may yield more positive outcomes. For example, Culturally-Specific videos that also feature dominant group members (e.g., Asian Americans *and* White Americans discussing their favorite Asian dishes) may provide ingroup representation in a way that promotes dominant group acceptance of minority identity, rather than in a way that further distances Asian American identity from White American identity. Given that the Culturally-Specific videos used in my studies featured only Asian Americans, I would examine in a future study whether a) Culturally-Specific videos featuring outgroup members exist in popular online platforms, and b) whether this type of representation is more beneficial in improving Asian Americans' identity perceptions and civic agency.

Last, there were no effects of the experimental conditions on participants' petition-signing behavior, although approximately half of all participants in each condition signed the petition, which suggests that participants were not politically *dis*engaged in that particular task. These findings further highlight the possible limitations of the videos in affecting viewers' behavior, and possibly the general difficulty in influencing civic participation among traditionally disenfranchised groups. However, an exploratory mediation analysis indicated that petition-signing was explained by participants' identification with the videos when comparing the effects of the Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos, which suggests that media representation that can enhance identification may play a role in encouraging civic behavior. Additionally, an exploratory analysis of participants' actual voting behavior indicated that those who voted in previous elections reported higher civic agency than those who did not vote. Although real life voting behavior was not predictive of petition-signing behavior in the study, it appears to be related to perceptions of personal political power, which highlights the importance of enhancing feelings of civic agency among politically underrepresented groups.

Ultimately, the prosocial videos affected Asian American participants' perceptions of the videos in terms of their identification and perceived video impact but did not yield meaningful benefits in terms of participants' identity perceptions. Additionally, there were counterintuitive findings regarding participants' civic agency, in that participants felt most agentic in the Control video condition. Thus, while well-meaning, popular prosocial internet videos that champion minority inclusion and representation may not be benefitting underrepresented viewers as intended. These findings provide a useful initial examination of how Asian American viewers perceive different types of media representation as they exist in popular online spaces. In Study 2, I examined the effects of the videos on White participants' attitudes, and whether they could improve perceptions toward Asian Americans as an intergroup intervention.

Chapter 3

Study 2

Despite providing limited benefits to Asian American viewers, I examined whether the videos could at least improve White viewers' perceptions of Asian Americans, given that E-E may reduce viewers' feelings of uncertainty about target groups through parasocial contact as indicated by prior work (e.g., Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa, Greg, & Hewes, 2005). In Study 2, I examined the effects of Study 1's experimental videos on White viewers' prejudice (i.e., feelings of warmth and liking toward Asian Americans), identification with Asian Americans, and perceptions of heterogeneity among Asian Americans to conceptually replicate Murrar and Brauer's (2017) key findings. As additional dependent measures, I assessed participants' perceptions of Asian Americans' bicultural identity integration as a measure of racial stereotypes (BII; i.e., perceived congruence between Asian and American identity/culture), perceived knowledgeability about Asian Americans, reactance toward the videos, and pro-Asian American civic behavior (i.e., signing a petition for an Asian American issue).

H1: I predicted that if White participants viewed the Culturally-Specific videos, then they would report more positive perceptions of Asian Americans compared to those in the Universal and Control conditions due to exposure to more knowledge about Asian American identity/experiences. I also predicted these participants would report greater reactance compared to those in the other conditions, particularly in the low virality conditions, given that they may not have much prior exposure to content like the Culturally-Specific videos.

H2: Like in Study 1, I predicted that if participants viewed the Culturally-Specific/high virality videos, then they would report the greatest liking/warm feelings and identification with Asian Americans compared to those in the other conditions.

H3: Given that identification with the target group explained White participants' decreased prejudice in previous work (Murrar & Brauer, 2017), I predicted a moderated mediation model, such that identification with Asian Americans would explain the relationship between media representation (moderated by virality) and participants' prejudice toward Asian Americans.

Method

Participants

According to an a priori power analysis conducted in G*Power, 282 White American participants were recruited from a large undergraduate subject pool to aim for a final sample of 251 participants for 95% power at a medium effect size (f=.25). Participants were excluded for failing a video content recall question (i.e., "Select the two statements that best describe what each video was about") and an attention check question (i.e., "Please select 'disagree' for this question"). After participant exclusions, the final sample included 269 participants (150 women) with a mean age of 19.3 (SD=1.92). Participants were offered 0.5 course credits for their participation.

Materials

Participants viewed the same videos as in Study 1.

Procedure

As in Study 1, participants viewed two videos from either the Control, Universal, or Culturally-Specific conditions, and also viewed screenshots of the video webpages depicting either low or high virality metrics. After viewing the videos and screenshots, participants responded to the reactance measures (new for Study 2), along with the same video content recall question, a perceived virality manipulation check question (i.e., "The videos had a large number of views), perceived video impact measure, and video familiarity measure from Study 1. Newly added for Study 2, participants were then informed that they were entering the second part of the study involving perceptions of various social groups in society, and were told that they were first assigned to respond about five different groups (i.e., small business owners, LGBTQ people, teachers/educators, Asian Americans, and Atheists). Participants responded to the prejudice (i.e., warmth and liking) sliding scale measures for all five groups to help mask the study's focus on perceptions of Asian Americans. Then, participants were informed that they would be randomly assigned to just one of the five groups to respond to some additional questions (i.e., Asian Americans). Participants then responded to the identification, perceived BII, perceived group heterogeneity, and perceived knowledgeability measures (in a counterbalanced order). Last, participants were presented with an online petition concerning an issue affecting a group of Asian Americans (more details in Measures) and indicated whether or not they would anonymously sign the petition. Participants responded to demographic questions and received the study debriefing before exiting the survey.

Dependent Measures and Manipulation Check

Participants responded to the same measures from Study 1 for the Perceived Virality Manipulation Check (α=.94), Perceived Video Impact (α=.78), and Video Familiarity Covariate measures.

State reactance

Participants reported feelings of reactance to the videos through an adapted 10-item scale (Dillard & Shen, 2005) that measures freedom threat (e.g., "The videos tried to manipulate me"; α=.87), affect (e.g., anger, irritation; α=.90), and cognitions (e.g., "I like what I saw in the videos [reverse-scored]"; α=.87). Participants rated their agreement with the statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Prejudice

Participants indicated how much they "like" and "feel warmly" about Asian Americans on two sliding scales ranging from 0 to 100 (Murrar & Brauer, 2017). Although participants responded to this measure for four other groups (i.e., small business owners, LGBTQ people, teachers/educators, and Atheists), only responses toward Asian Americans were used for analysis. Scores on both scales were combined to create a composite prejudice score (α=.90).

Identification

Participants indicated how much they identify with Asian Americans using the same measure from Study 1. Responses were made on sliding scales ranging from 0 to 100 (0=Not at all, 100=Very much), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.90).

Perceived bicultural identity integration (BII)

Participants were provided the same instructions from Study 1 to rate their perceptions of the connection/compatibility between "Asian" and "American" identity/cultures. The instructions were slightly modified to ask for their own perceptions rather than third-party perceptions (i.e, "Based on how you feel in this moment, choose the image that best reflects how you perceive the connection/compatibility between these two identities/cultures").

Perceived knowledgeability

Participants indicated how knowledgeable they feel about Asian Americans through an original 4-item scale (e.g., "I feel like I am knowledgeable about Asian Americans," and "I feel like I know about the experiences of Asian Americans"). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.86).

Perceived group heterogeneity

Participants indicated the degree to which they perceive Asian Americans as a heterogeneous group through three items adapted from prior work (e.g., "The more I know Asian Americans, the more similar they are to each other [reverse-scored]"; Lee & Ottati, 1993) and one original item (i.e., "There is a lot of variability in how Asian Americans behave"). Participants rated their agreement with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree), and the items were averaged to create a composite score (α=.82).

Pro-Asian American civic behavior

Participants were provided the same instructions from Study 1 regarding a lab collaboration with Change.org, and were presented with the opportunity to sign a petition to add Asian American/Ethnic Studies to the Irvine Unified School District curriculum. The petition text was taken from a live petition on Change.org titled "Make Asian-American/Ethnic Studies a Course in All Irvine Unified High Schools" (see full petition in Appendix B). Participants were presented with the option to add their anonymous electronic signature to support the petition. Responses were recorded as a dichotomous measure ("Yes, I would like to add my anonymous signature; No, I would not like to add my anonymous signature"). Upon receiving the study debriefing at the end of the survey, participants were given the actual Change.org link to the petition to add their real online signature if desired.

Study 2 Results

Correlations between all primary dependent measures are presented in Table 3-1.

Table **3-1**: Correlations between primary dependent measures (across conditions).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Perceived virality manip. check	--									
2. Perceived video impact	.02	--								
3. R. Affect	-.09	-.01	--							
4. R. Free Threat	-.03	.15	-.26**	--						
5. R. Cog	.07	.12	-.46**	-.19**	--					
6. Prejudice[a]	.08	-.14*	-.26**	-.08	.12	--				
7. Identification	-.07	-.04	.01	.01	.08	.36**	--			
8. BII	.04	-.06	-.03	.00	.01	.28**	.33**	--		
9. Knowledgeability	-.03	.07	.07	.10	-.05	.13*	.54**	.17**	--	
10. Heterogeneity	-.07	-.13*	-.07	-.09	.01	.33**	.36**	.36**	.17**	--
11. Civic Behavior[b]	.06	.08	-.15*	-.08	.20**	.31**	.19**	.17**	.10	.28** -

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$. [a]Prejudice was measured as feeling of warmth and liking toward Asian Americans (positive values indicating less prejudice). [b]Civic behavior was a dichotomous measure analyzed using point-biserial correlations

I conducted a series of ANCOVA analyses to examine main effects and interactions of media representation and virality condition on the dependent measures, controlling for participants' familiarity with the videos ($M=2.24$, $SD=1.19$) as a covariate. The adjusted means and standard errors for all primary dependent measures are listed in Table 4-1.

Table **4**-1: Adjusted means (standard errors) for primary dependent measures.

Scale/Items	Adjusted Mean (SE) Ratings					
	Low Virality			High Virality		
	Control	Universal	Culturally-Specific	Control	Universal	Culturally-Specific
Perceived virality manip. check	3.29 (0.22)a	3.32 (0.22)a	3.78 (0.22)a	4.98 (0.22)b	5.04 (0.22)b	5.24 (0.23)b
Perceived video impact	4.30 (0.18)	3.98 (0.17)	4.15 (0.17)	4.16 (0.17)	4.17 (0.17)	3.64 (0.18)
Reactance - Affect	1.38 (0.11)	1.63 (0.11)a	1.16 (0.11)b	1.63 (0.11)	1.38 (0.11)	1.45 (0.11)
Reactance – Freedom Threat	1.40 (0.09)	1.50 (0.09)	1.33 (0.09)	1.40 (0.09)	1.42 (0.09)	1.37 (0.09)
Reactance - Cognitions	3.74 (0.11)c	3.35 (0.11)ad	3.90 (0.11)bc	3.60 (0.11)	3.54 (0.11)a	3.51 (0.11)b
Prejudice[a]	68.18 (3.44)a	73.74 (3.37)	83.11 (3.40)b	71.24 (3.40)a	76.77 (3.40)	79.97 (3.56)b
Identification	28.11 (3.24)	33.53 (3.10)	37.98 (3.16)	30.59 (3.13)	32.65 (3.13)	31.76 (3.32)
BII	4.15 (0.22)	3.83 (0.22)	4.27 (0.22)	3.89 (0.22)	3.90 (0.09)	4.35 (0.23)
Knowledgeability	2.90 (0.18)a	3.15 (0.18)	3.72 (0.18)b	3.12 (0.18)a	3.25 (0.18)	3.26 (0.18)b
Heterogeneity	4.64 (0.18)a	4.90 (0.18)a	4.66 (0.18)a	4.40 (0.18)b	4.27 (0.18)b	4.69 (0.18)b
Civic Behavior[b]	52%	63%	67%	57%	59%	57%

Note. N = 269; Control/Low virality = 44, Control/High virality = 46, Universal/Low virality = 46, Universal/High virality = 46, Culturally-Specific/Low virality = 45, Culturally-Specific/High virality = 42). Subscripts indicate instances in which *a* differs from *b* and *c* differs from *d* at $p < .05$. [a]Prejudice was measured as feeling of warmth and liking toward Asian Americans (higher values indicating less prejudice). [b]Civic behavior values represent percentages of people in each condition who signed the petition.

Perceptions of the Videos

Perceived virality manipulation check

There was a significant main effect of virality condition on perceived virality, such that participants in the high virality conditions reported greater perceived virality (M=5.09, SE=.13) compared to those in the low virality conditions (M=3.46, SE=.13), F(1, 262)=82, p<.001, η_p^2=.24, 90% CI [0.13, 0.38]. There was no main effect of media representation and no interaction between media representation and virality condition on perceived virality (all p-values>.19).

Perceived video impact

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on perceptions of the videos' societal impact (all p-values > .13).

Reactance

Participants' reactance to the videos was analyzed separately for each of the three dimensions: *affect, freedom threat*, and *cognitions*. For participants' affective reactance, there no main effects of media representation or virality condition on affective reactance (all p-values>.12). However, there was a significant interaction between media representation and virality condition for affective reactance, F(2, 261)=3.70, p=.03, η_p^2=.03, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. Simple effects tests indicated that, within the low virality condition, participants in the Universal condition reported higher affective reactance (i.e., greater anger and irritation; M=1.63, SE=0.11) compared to those in the Culturally-Specific condition (M=1.16, SE=0.11), F(2, 261)=4.53, p=.01, η_p^2=.03, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03].

For participants' freedom threat, there were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' feelings of threatened freedom (all *p*-values > .47).

For participants' cognitive reactance, there was a significant main effect of media representation, $F(2, 262)=3.46$, $p=.03$, $\eta_p^2=.03$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Culturally-Specific condition indicated more positive thoughts toward the videos (*M*=3.70, *SE*=0.08) compared to those in the Universal condition (*M*=3.44, *SE*=0.08, *p*=.05). There was also a significant interaction between media representation and virality condition on cognitive reactance, $F(2, 262)=3.46$, $p=.03$, $\eta_p^2=.03$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. Simple effects tests indicated that, within the low virality condition, participants in the Control condition reported more positive thoughts towards the videos (*M*=3.74, *SE*=0.11) compared to those in the Universal condition (*M*=3.35, *SE*=0.11, *p*=.03). Further, participants in the Culturally-Specific condition also reported more positive thoughts toward the videos (*M*=3.90, *SE*=0.11) compared to those in the Universal condition (*p*=.001), $F(2, 262)=3.64$, $p=.001$, $\eta_p^2=.05$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. There was no main effect of virality condition (*p*=.20).

Perceptions of Asian Americans

Prejudice

There was a significant main effect of media representation on participants' prejudice (i.e., warmth and liking) toward Asian Americans, $F(2, 259)=5.89$, $p=.003$, $\eta_p^2=.04$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.04]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Culturally-Specific condition reported greater warmth and liking towards Asian Americans (*M*=81.54, *SE*=2.46) compared to those in the Control condition (*M*=69.71, *SE*=2.42, *p*=.002). There was no main effect of virality

condition or interaction between media representation and virality condition on participants'
prejudice (all p-values > .59).

Identification

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality
condition on participants' identification with Asian Americans (all p-values > .22).

Perceived BII

There were no significant main effects or interaction of media representation and virality
condition on participants' perceived BII for Asian Americans (all p-values > .13).

Perceived knowledgeability

There was a significant main effect of media representation on participants' perceived
knowledgeability about Asian Americans, $F(2, 262)=3.78$, $p=.02$, $\eta_p^2=.03$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03].
Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in the Culturally-Specific condition reported
greater knowledgeability about Asian Americans ($M=3.49$, $SE=0.13$) compared to those in the
Control condition ($M=3.01$, $SE=0.13$, $p=.02$). There was no main effect of virality condition and
no interaction between media representation and virality condition for perceived
knowledgeability (all p-values > .13).

Perceived heterogeneity

There was a significant main effect of virality condition on participants' perceptions of Asian Americans as a heterogeneous group, $F(1, 262)=3.78$, $p=.05$, $\eta_p^2=.01$, 90% CI [0.01, 0.03]. Pairwise comparisons revealed that participants in low virality condition reported greater perceived heterogeneity ($M=4.74$, $SE=0.10$) compared to those in the high virality condition ($M=4.45$, $SE=0.10$, $p=.05$). There was no main effect of media representation and no interaction between media representation and virality condition for perceived heterogeneity (all p-values > .18).

Pro-Asian American civic behavior

I conducted a logistic regression to examine the role of media representation and virality condition in affecting participants' decision to sign an online petition for a pro-Asian American cause (i.e., implementing Asian American/Ethnic Studies in the Irvine Unified School District). There were no main effects or interaction of media representation and virality condition on participants' petition signing behavior (all p-values > .31).

Mediation Analyses

I conducted a moderated mediation analysis to examine the indirect effect of media representation (moderated by virality condition) on participants' prejudice toward Asian Americans through identification with Asian Americans as a mediator, controlling for participants' video familiarity. Using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2012; Hayes & Preacher, 2013), I performed a moderated mediation analysis using Model 7 with 5000 bootstrap samples, and I examined media representation as a multicategorical variable (Hayes & Preacher,

2014). I interpreted the significance of indirect effects based on whether or not obtained

confidence intervals excluded 0. In the Control vs. Universal video comparison, the indirect effect

through identification on prejudice was not significant ($b_{indirect}$ = -1.25, SE = 2.31, CI$_{95}$ = -5.82 to

3.48). Further, in the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison, the indirect effect through

identification on prejudice was not significant (*Figure* 5-1; $b_{indirect}$ = -3.24, SE = 2.42, CI$_{95}$ = -8.05
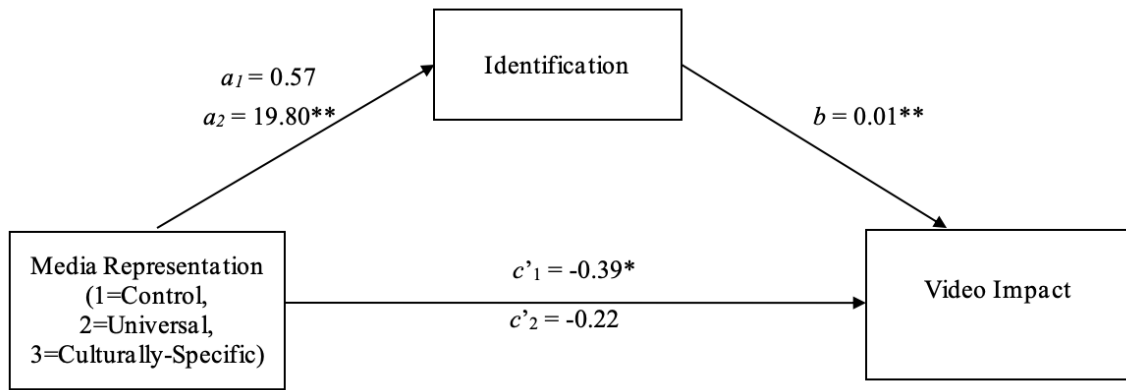
to 1.43).

Figure **5-1**: The mediating role of identification in the effect of media representation (moderated by virality condition) on prejudice.

Note. N = 262. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. **$p < .001$. *$p<.05$. Prejudice was measured as feeling of warmth and liking toward Asian Americans (higher values indicating less prejudice). Subscripts refer to pairwise comparisons of Control vs. Universal videos (1) and Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos (2).

As an exploratory analysis, I added participants' perceived knowledgeability about Asian

Americans as an additional mediator to the originally predicted model. I also did not include

virality condition as a moderator given that there were no effects of virality condition on these

measures. The new exploratory model examines the indirect effect of media representation on

participants' prejudice toward Asian Americans through perceived knowledgeability and

identification with Asian Americans as serial mediators, controlling for participants' video familiarity. Using PROCESS Model 6 to examine media representation as a multicategorical variable, I found that the indirect effect through perceived knowledgeability and identification on prejudice was only significant for the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison ($b_{indirect}$ = 2.12, SE = 0.91, CI_{95} = 0.52 to 4.10), and not significant for the Control vs. Universal video comparison (*Figure* 6-1; $b_{indirect}$ = 0.86, SE = 0.77, CI_{95} = -0.57 to 2.43).
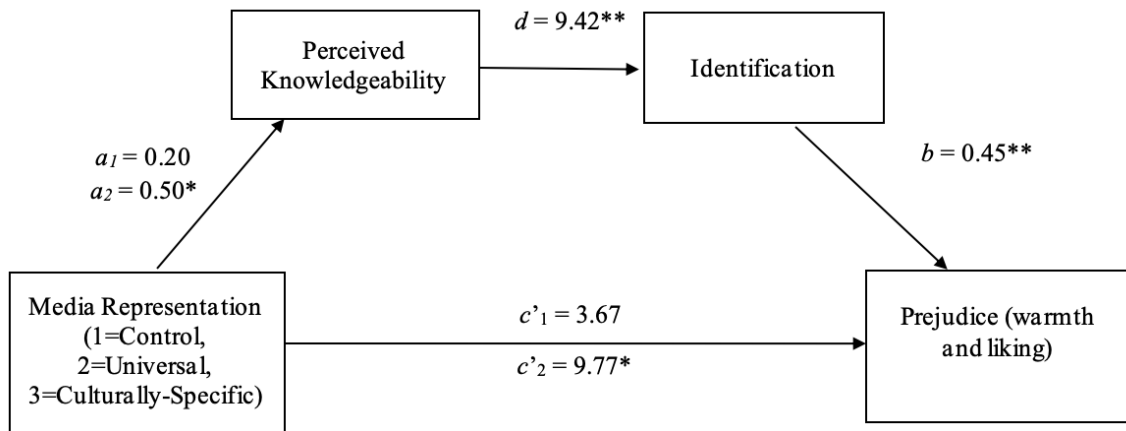

Figure **6-1**: The mediating role of perceived knowledgeability and identification in the effect of media representation on prejudice.

Note. N = 262. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. **p < .001. *p<.05. Prejudice was measured as feeling of warmth and liking toward Asian Americans (higher values indicating less prejudice). Subscripts refer to comparisons of Control vs. Universal videos (1) and Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos (2). Only the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison is significant.

As an additional exploratory analysis, I conducted a logistic regression mediation analysis (MacKinnon & Dwyer, 1993) to examine the indirect effect of media representation on participants' pro-Asian American civic behavior (i.e., petition signing) through participants' prejudice toward Asian Americans as a mediator, controlling for participants' video familiarity. Using PROCESS Model 4, I found that the indirect effect through prejudice on civic behavior

was significant for the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison ($b_{indirect} = 0.34$, SE = 0.13, $CI_{95} = 0.14$ to 0.64), and not significant for the Control vs. Universal video comparison (*Figure* 7-1; $b_{indirect} = 0.16$, SE = 0.12, $CI_{95} = -0.04$ to 0.42).

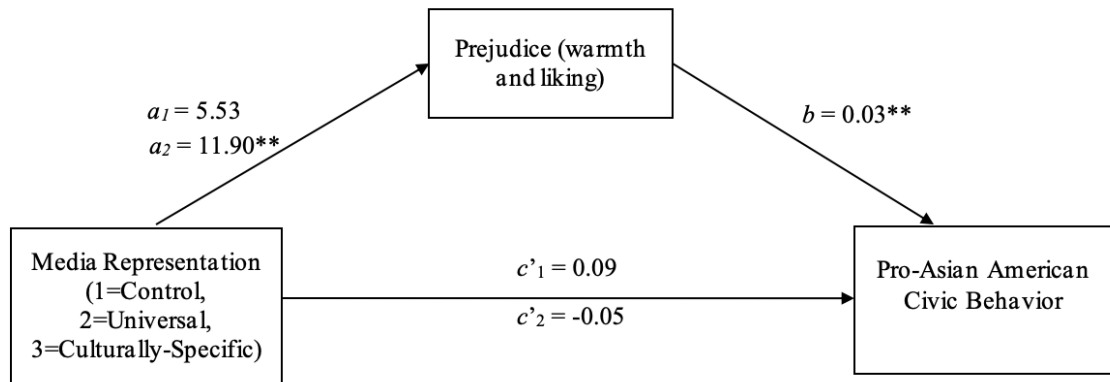Figure **7-1**: The mediating role of prejudice in the effect of media representation on pro-Asian American civic behavior.

Note. N = 266. Unstandardized beta coefficients are reported. **$p < .001$. *$p<.05$. Subscripts refer to comparisons of Control vs. Universal videos (1) and Control vs. Culturally-Specific videos (2). Only the Control vs. Culturally-Specific video comparison is significant.

Study 2 Discussion

In this study, I examined whether the prosocial internet videos could improve White viewers' perceptions of Asian Americans and pro-Asian American civic behavior.

As a manipulation check, participants in the high virality conditions reported greater perceived virality than those in the low virality conditions. Unlike in Study 1, there were no unexpected effects of media representation on perceived virality.

There were no differences across conditions regarding participants' perceptions of the videos' societal impact. However, media representation and virality affected participants'

reactance toward the videos. Specifically, within the low virality conditions, participants were more irritated by the Universal videos compared to the Culturally-Specific videos. Additionally, participants had more positive thoughts about the Control and Culturally-Specific videos compared to the Universal videos, and this manifested both as an overall effect as well as a selective effect within the low virality conditions. Taken together, the Universal videos appeared to elicit more negative reactions among White participants than the other two conditions. As a possible explanation, the Universal videos uniquely portrayed cross-group interactions, whereas the Culturally-Specific and Control videos did not. It may be the case that depictions of racially diverse individuals within the same media context provided pro-diversity messages, which were perceived as threatening and irritating. Notably, as partially predicted, this effect was specific to the low virality conditions, which suggests that high virality metrics may have acted as a buffer against viewers' reactance by signaling social acceptance. Thus, high virality metrics may be influential in mitigating White viewers' negative reactions to media that they would otherwise be averse to. In my General Discussion, I expand on the Universal videos' portrayal of cross-group interactions as both an intentional methodological decision and a study limitation.

Media representation positively affected participants' prejudice toward Asian Americans, such that participants who saw the Culturally-Specific videos reported more warmth and liking toward Asian Americans compared to those who saw the Control videos. Participants in the Culturally-Specific video condition also reported greater perceived knowledgeability about Asian Americans compared to those in the Control condition. The Culturally-Specific videos may have elicited warmer feelings toward Asian Americans by providing information about their identity-related experiences, whereas the Universal videos presented Asian Americans without the informational component. Hence, the Culturally-Specific videos may have been more successful in reducing viewers' uncertainty about Asian Americans as a group. Contrary to predictions, there were no effects of the videos on participants' identification with Asian Americans, although an

exploratory serial mediation analyses indicated that both perceived knowledgeability and identification explained participants decrease in prejudice when comparing the effects of the Control videos to Culturally-Specific videos. Thus, inclusive media that provides information about the experiences of a target group may allow majority group viewers to perceive them as more relatable, and ultimately as more likeable.

As an unexpected finding, there was an effect of media virality on participants' perceptions of heterogeneity among Asian Americans, in that participants in the low virality conditions reported greater perceived heterogeneity among Asian Americans compared to those in the high virality conditions. While there does not appear to be a clear explanation for this outcome, virality metrics may have had an effect on viewers' reliance on group stereotypes, such that high virality cues might have prompted participants to rely on heuristics. One recent study found that high virality metrics (in contrast to low metrics) resulted in participants' greater belief in unverified food safety rumors (i.e., paint thinner chemicals in cereals) posted through a tweet, and the author proposes that high virality metrics allowed viewers to use mental shortcuts to judge the credibility of the message (Kim, 2018b). Hence, cues of social approval may trigger bandwagon perceptions that result in more global message processing, although future research is needed to explore this possibility.

Despite delivering benefits to viewers' prejudice, there were no effects of the videos on participants' perceived BII (i.e., congruence between Asian and American identities/cultures). Unlike broad attitudes captured by participants' warmth and liking ratings, perceived BII appears to be a distinct construct from prejudice, given that BII concerns a specific racial stereotype involving perceived foreignness. Thus, it may be the case that video exposure to Asian Americans may not be sufficient enough in combatting specific racial stereotypes, but rather is more effective in improving broad attitudes towards groups. Additionally, given that the BII measure did not yield differences in either Studies 1 or 2, it could be the case that the measure itself was

not adequate in capturing the intended construct. As an alternative method of measuring perceived congruence between Asian and American identity/culture, future work could employ a scale approach that would ask participants to rate their agreement/disagreement with relevant statements (e.g., "I think that Asian culture is a part of American culture"). Although I originally decided against this approach due to social desirability concerns with these types of scales in current-day research, it would be worth examining with careful construction of the items.

Moreover, there were no differences across conditions in participants' pro-Asian American petition-signing behavior. As in Study 1, approximately half of participants in each condition signed the petition, indicating that participants were moderately supportive of the petition's cause overall. An exploratory mediation analysis revealed that participants' prejudice explained the relationship between media representation and pro-Asian American civic behavior when comparing the effects of the Control to Culturally-Specific videos, suggesting that prejudice reduction plays a key role in encouraging majority group members to engage in ally behaviors. Ultimately, the failure to capture behavioral changes across the conditions demonstrates the potential difficulty in influencing civic behaviors through prosocial videos. Still, the videos beneficially affected White viewers' intergroup perceptions, and I discuss the overall implications of my studies, as well as limitations and future directions, in the next section.

Chapter 4

General Discussion

Through my dissertation studies, I aimed to expand the media intervention literature through a novel examination of the role of cultural specificity of media messages and perceived media virality on viewers' perceptions. I also sought to enhance the visibility of target and, specifically, diaspora perspectives by investigating Asian Americans' perceptions of popular media that varied in degrees of ingroup representation. Ultimately, I found that popular prosocial internet videos can reduce White viewers' prejudice toward Asian Americans and increase perceived knowledgeability about them, which contributes experimental evidence to support prior work on dominant group viewers' perspectives (e.g., Murrar & Brauer, 2017; Schiappa, Greg, & Hewes, 2005). Additionally, as a novel contribution to the media intervention literature, I found that inclusive media that presents ingroup members within a culturally-salient narrative appears to elicit the most identification among Asian American viewers, above and beyond media that presents ingroup members within a culturally-irrelevant narrative.

Overall, however, the videos did not appear to provide as much benefit to target viewers as I had predicted, aside from increasing Asian American viewers' media identification and perceptions of media impact. This finding brings to light the limitations of popular contemporary media in affirming underrepresented groups. Future work should explore other mechanisms that can help explain why ingroup representation alone, even within a culturally-salient narrative, is not enough to improve Asian American's identity perceptions and civic outcomes. For example, as discussed in my Study 1 Discussion, if the Universal and Culturally-Specific videos reminded Asian Americans of their minority status, it may be that media that presents both outgroup and ingroup members within a Culturally-Specific narrative may be more effective in fostering a

deeper sense of inclusion. Specifically, portrayals of solely Asian Americans within culturally-salient video topics may increase perceptions of Asian American identity as being different or more "niche" compared to White American identity, whereas portrayals of Asian Americans along with other outgroup members within a culturally-salient narrative may depict ingroup identity and experiences as being more proximal to dominant group experiences. Ultimately, representation that allows viewers to visualize dominant group acceptance of minority identity may be more effective in enhancing minority viewers' identity perceptions.

As another possible factor of influence, research on affect and information processing suggests that positive affect leads to more simplistic, heuristic message processing, whereas negative affect leads to deeper and more effortful message processing (e.g., Gasper & Clore, 2002; Schwarz & Bless, 1991; Schwarz, Bless, & Bohner, 1991). The videos used in this study were all lighthearted in nature due to this narrative style being most common among Buzzfeed videos. Videos that are more serious or reflective in tone may lead to different, and perhaps more beneficial outcomes for target viewers. In future work, I would compare the existing video stimuli to videos with more of a serious tone to examine whether differences emerge among my dependent measures. For example, one Buzzfeed video features Asian Americans discussing their struggles with learning their parents' native language while growing up in the U.S., and a few speakers become visibly emotional as they discuss difficulties with feeling connected with their families. However, the video ends on an encouraging note with positive messages about identity acceptance. On the one hand, Asian American viewers may process the video's message deeply and perceive that this particular identity-related struggle is recognized and validated in a meaningful way. Alternatively, reminders of hardships associated with Asian American identity may lead to more negative feelings about one's identity. Thus, examining the role of affective tone in E-E intervention videos would provide useful theoretical clarifications about which types of narrative emotions could boost target viewers' feelings of affirmation.

There were several limitations to the chosen video stimulus materials. The use of popular YouTube content as intervention stimuli allowed for high ecological validity at the cost of experimental control. Certain findings from Study 2 highlighted a potential qualitative difference between the Universal videos and the others, given that the Universal videos uniquely depicted cross-group interactions while the others depicted either only White or Asian Americans. Despite this limitation, the Universal videos were chosen as ecologically valid representations of popular media that portrays minority group members in a culturally-irrelevant narrative, and importantly, culturally-irrelevant videos featuring only Asian Americans were unable to be found although I made a thorough search.

This restriction in available stimulus videos illustrates part of the core problem with popular media representation, in that videos solely featuring one racial minority group are most often concerned with racialized topics, whereas videos solely featuring White Americans are considered prototypical and suitable to all topics. Feminist scholars have described the nature of certain identity positions (i.e., White, male) as being unmarked in Western society, meaning that they are assumed to be a default way of being that carries objective and universal truths (Haraway, 1988; Smith, 1999). Indeed, as evidenced by my search for stimulus videos, popular media continues to assert this colonial discourse of the racialized "Other" in perpetuating distinctions between White/universal and racialized media spaces (Cacho, 2012; Spivak, 1985). Although companies like Buzzfeed may be well-intentioned in their efforts to provide representations of various minority experiences, Ortega (2006) asserts that this production of knowledge within hegemonic social structures illustrates what she calls "being lovingly, knowingly ignorant" (p. 61). In specifically critiquing Western White feminism, she argues that well-intended efforts to address inequality can still result in (and depend on) the subjugation of marginalized groups through mischaracterizing and homogenizing them (Ortega, 2006). Hence, although providing a form of representation for underrepresented groups, Buzzfeed's inclusive

videos may simply be accentuating perceptions of difference between White and non-White identities and experiences.

Given this limitation in available stimulus videos, researchers in future studies may consider creating their own stimulus content to better control for differences between media conditions. For example, researchers can create their own Universal videos that feature only minority group members in a culturally-irrelevant narrative (e.g., featuring only Asian Americans in the "People guess the prices of shoes" video) to better isolate the effect of the narrative between Culturally-Specific and Universal videos. Although this approach would come at the cost of ecological validity given that such Universal media content is seldom seen in daily contexts, it would nonetheless provide a more rigorous test of how narrative cultural salience affects viewers' perceptions.

As another limitation to the video stimuli, findings from these studies may only be generalizable to other video content of a similar nature (i.e., interview montage formats, 3-5 mins in length). These types of videos were selected to match the stimuli used in prior work (Murrar & Brauer, 2017), and they are of a specific informational nature. Although these videos can appeal to short attention spans through their quick delivery of information, it may be the case that longer media formats with more storytelling elements could be more effective in engaging viewers through deeper message processing. For example, certain Buzzfeed videos follow a single person or group of people over a period of time to document some kind of activity or task in a diary-like format (e.g., "We Trained to be Gymnasts in 7 Days"). Future work should examine how E-E stimuli with interview formats compare to videos that have less of a focus on information delivery, and greater storytelling qualities. Although the use of brief, digestible media is a compelling intervention strategy for the efficient presentation of information about a group, researchers should clarify whether the benefits of E-E are limited to media that communicates

direct social group information (thereby enhancing White viewers' perceived knowledgeability about the group), or if viewer immersion within a story can be an effective device as well.

Aside from video limitations, in Study 1 I recruited young adult populations ranging from 18-35 years of age from Amazon's Mechanical Turk, whereas in Study 2 I recruited undergraduate SONA participants, necessary due to funding limitations. Although industry discussions highlight various disadvantages to using undergraduate participant pools, I would assert that Penn State's undergraduate population was suitable for examining dominant group perceptions of Asian Americans, given that Asian Americans are a stark minority group within the Penn State undergraduate population (comprising approximately 6% of all students university-wide according to recent undergraduate enrollment statistics). Thus, in Study 2, I was able to examine the attitudes of White Americans who presumably have limited encounters with Asian Americans in their day-to-day experiences. Future research should seek to replicate Study 2 with a non-undergraduate sample, but the current Study 2 findings still provide a useful starting point for understanding how a brief E-E intervention can affect young adult perceptions of an outgroup that they may not frequently interact with in natural settings.

In the closing remarks of her germinal paper on "world traveling," Lugones' (1987) challenges her readers who reside within White/Anglo U.S. "mainstream" culture to engage in "world traveling," asserting that "traveling to someone's 'world' is a way of identifying with them because…we can understand what it is to be them" (p. 17). Echoing the tenets of intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954), she argues that knowing more about an "Other" and becoming more certain about their experiences allows us to be "fully subjects to each other" rather than objects of uncertainty (Lugones, 1987). Stocker (2001) provides a similar argument in describing intergroup disconnection as "the glue that holds oppression in place," and urges readers to engage in "genuine mutuality" which is the "highest realization of our moral capacities" (p. 49). Indeed, findings from my studies contribute further experimental evidence that parasocial contact with

outgroup members via inclusive media can improve dominant group members' (i.e., White viewers) attitudes and perceived knowledge about minority groups (i.e., Asian Americans). However, by examining target experiences of an intervention theoretically constructed from dominant group perspectives, findings also suggest that interventions catered to enhancing dominant group outcomes should not be assumed to be universally beneficial for *all* groups. With more empirical interrogations of well-intentioned media efforts for inclusion, scholars can hold influential media outlets accountable for their content, and future research can help inform the creation of more beneficial media portrayals that can truly affirm marginalized identities.

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Appendix A

Stimulus Materials

Kids Tell Their Parents Their Biggest Secrets

142 views

👍 1   👎 0   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   ...
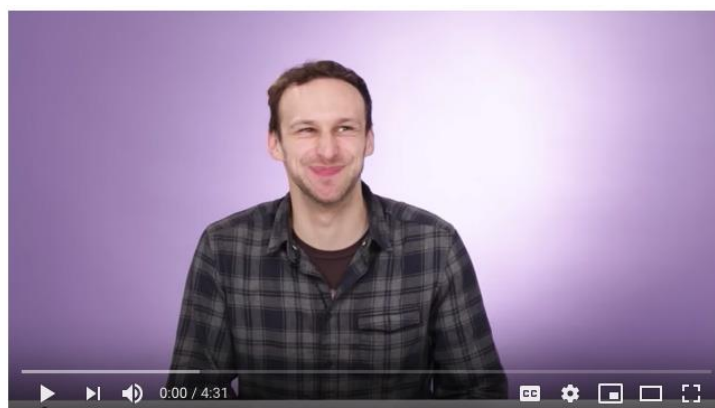
0 Comments   ≡ SORT BY

Hotel Employees Reveal Secrets About Hotels

244 views

👍 1   👎 0   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   ...

0 Comments   ⇄ SORT BY
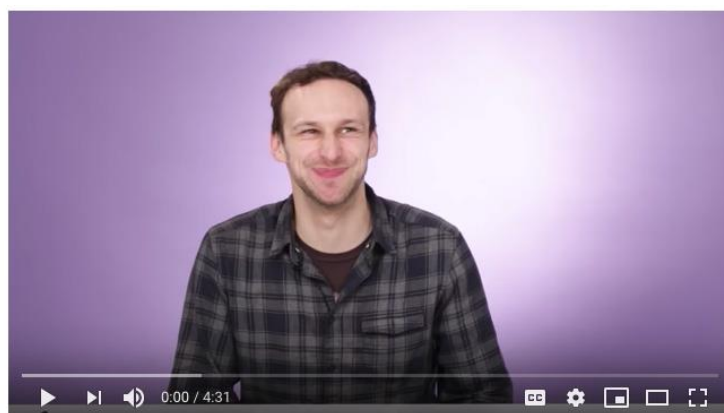

Kids Tell Their Parents Their Biggest Secrets

28,653,770 views

👍 323K   👎 16K   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   ...

51,696 Comments   ⇄ SORT BY

73

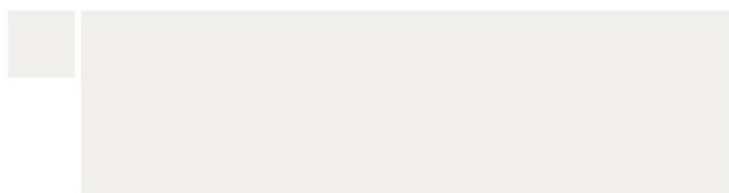Hotel Employees Reveal Secrets About Hotels

21,221,641 views   👍 243K   👎 4.9K   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   …

14,661 Comments   ⇄ SORT BY
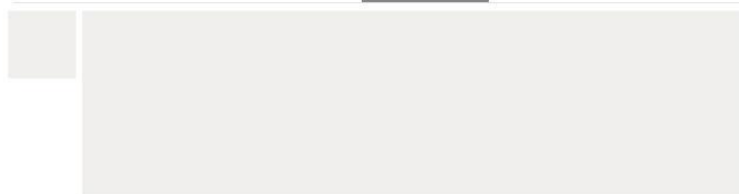

People Try "The World's Spiciest Popcorn"

142 views   👍 1   👎 0   ➤ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   …

0 Comments   ⇄ SORT BY

Can You Guess The Prices Of These Shoes?

244 views

👍 1 👎 0   ➜ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   •••

0 Comments   SORT BY

People Try "The World's Spiciest Popcorn"

28,653,770 views

👍 323K 👎 16K   ➜ SHARE   ≡+ SAVE   •••

51,696 Comments   SORT BY

Can You Guess The Prices Of These Shoes?

21,221,641 views   243K   4.9K   SHARE   SAVE   ...

14,661 Comments   SORT BY

Things Our Asian Moms Would Say

142 views   1   0   SHARE   SAVE   ...

0 Comments   SORT BY

The Hardest Asian Food "Would You Rather"

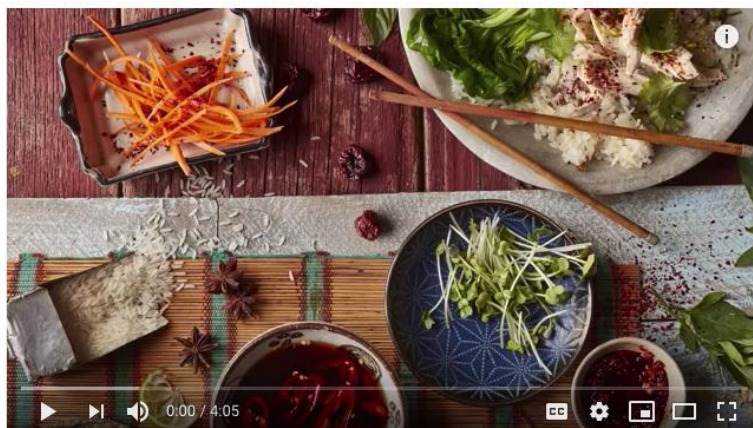244 views

👍 1 👎 0 → SHARE ≡+ SAVE •••

0 Comments ≡ SORT BY

Things Our Asian Moms Would Say

28,653,770 views

👍 323K 👎 16K → SHARE ≡+ SAVE •••

51,696 Comments ≡ SORT BY

The Hardest Asian Food "Would You Rather"

21,221,641 views   👍 243K   👎 4.9K   ➤ SHARE   ⊟₊ SAVE   ...

14,661 Comments   ☰ SORT BY

Appendix B

Measures

Study 1 Measures

Perceived virality manipulation check (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- The videos had a large amount of views.
- The videos had a large amount of likes.
- The videos had a large amount of comments.

Video content attention check
- What were the two videos about? (select two answers)
- Favorite Asian foods/dishes
- Things Asian moms say
- Guessing the prices of shoes
- Trying the spiciest popcorn
- Secrets about hotels
- Kids tell parents secrets

Perceived video impact (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
Based on your impression of the videos, please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

The videos…
- Have influence on society
- Impact people's attitudes
- Shape public opinions
- Do not have influence on society - R

Identification (0=Not at all, 100=Very much)
Please use the sliding scale to respond to the following statements regarding the people featured in the videos.

- How much do you identify with them?
- How much do you feel like you understand them?
- How much do you feel like you know them?
- How much do you see yourself in them?
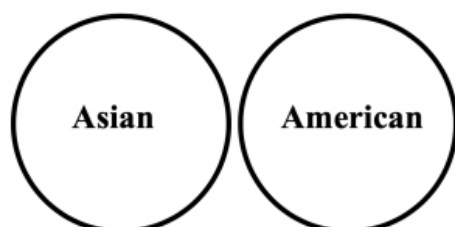- How similar do you feel to them?

Ethnic self-esteem (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- I regret that I belong to my racial/ethnic group. - R
- I'm glad to be a member of my racial/ethnic group.

- I feel good about the race/ethnicity I belong to
- I feel that my racial/ethnic group is not worthwhile - R

Metacognitive bicultural identity integration
The following two circles are visual representations of "Asian identity/culture" and "American identity/culture" very broadly.

Based on how you feel in this moment, choose the image that best reflects how you think **White Americans perceive the connection/compatibility between these two identities/cultures.**

For example, less overlap between the circles indicates that White Americans view Asian identity/culture as being disconnected/incompatible with American identity/culture. Greater overlap indicates that White Americans view the two identities/cultures as being more connected/compatible with each other.

Remember to respond according to how you think White Americans view the two identities/cultures.

National belonging (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- This country cares about my needs
- This country makes me feel like I belong
- I feel valued by other Americans
- I feel visible in this country
- I don't feel supported by other Americans - R
- I don't feel included by other Americans - R

Civic agency (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- I feel like I can contribute to change in society
- My voice has political power
- It is worth my efforts to vote in elections
- My actions won't make a difference in this country - R
- I feel like I have little control over political outcomes - R

Civic behavior

Protect U.S. citizen's rights to privacy!

In October of 2017, TSA announced heightened screening procedures of domestic passengers' electronic devices, including tablets and e-readers. TSA has not made publicly available any policies or procedures governing searches of electronic devices for passengers taking domestic flights. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) conducted 5,000 searches of electronic devices in airports in 2015. That number has ballooned to 30,000 searches in 2017. The ACLU filed a formal complaint in March of 2018, and the TSA responded in a letter denying that its airport officers examine the contents of passengers' devices. But the ACLU isn't taking TSA at its word. The organization is continuing to request internal TSA records and documents that could prove TSA's denials.

The ACLU's formal complaint states the following:

"We request that the TSA Headquarters provides information about the policies, procedures, or protocols regarding the search of passengers' electronic devices. This includes but is not limited to any policies, procedures, or protocols related to the "enhanced screening of electronic devices" referenced by then Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly in June 2017."

Before exiting this survey, please indicate below if you would like to add your anonymous signature (using a randomly generated identifier) to support the ACLU's petition.
- Yes, I would like to add my anonymous signature
- No, I would not like to add my anonymous signature

Study 2 Measures

State reactance (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree)
The content in the videos that I saw (1 "strongly disagree" - 5 "strongly agree"):
- threatened my freedom to choose what to think or do
- tried to make decisions for me
- tried to manipulate me
- tried to pressure me

The videos made me feel (1 "none of this feeling" - 5 "a great deal of this feeling"):
- Angry
- Annoyed
- Irritated
- Aggravated

Cognitive thoughts (1 "strongly disagree" - 5 "strongly agree"):
- I have positive thoughts towards the videos - R
- I feel good about the videos - R
- I like what I saw in the videos - R

Feeling thermometers (prejudice)
Please use the sliding scale to indicate how warmly you feel about the following groups (0=very cold, 100=very warm).

Please use the sliding scale to indicate your liking toward the following groups (0=very unlikable, 100=very likable).

Identification (0=Not at all, 100=Very much)
Please use the sliding scale to respond to the following statements:
- How much do you identify with Asian Americans?
- How much do you feel like you understand Asian Americans?
- How much do you feel like you know Asian Americans?
- How much do you see yourself in Asian Americans?
- How similar do you feel to Asian Americans?

Bicultural identity integration

The following two circles are visual representations of "Asian identity/culture" and "American identity/culture" very broadly.
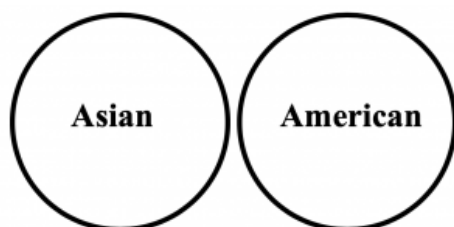
Based on how you feel in this moment, choose the image that best reflects how you perceive the **connection/compatibility between these two identities/cultures.**

For example, less overlap between the circles indicates that the two identities/culture are disconnected/incompatible with each other.
Greater overlap indicates that the two identities/cultures are more connected/compatible with each other.

Perceived group heterogeneity (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- The more I know Asian Americans, the more similar they are to each other - R
- There is little variety in the way Asian Americans think and act - R
- Asian Americans tend to behave alike - R
- There is a lot of variability in how Asian Americans behave

Perceived knowledgeability about group (1=Strongly disagree, 7=Strongly agree)
- I feel like I am knowledgeable about Asian Americans
- I feel like I'm familiar with the issues that Asian Americans face in society
- I feel like I know about the experiences of Asian Americans
- I don't feel like I know very much about Asian Americans - R

Civic behavior

Make Asian-American/Ethnic Studies a Course in All Irvine Unified High Schools

Asian American students represent nearly 60%* of the student population in the Irvine Unified School District (IUSD), yet our curriculum does not reflect this. All our social studies, literary and history courses are taught from a Euro-American perspective. There are no schools within IUSD that offer an Asian American Studies or Ethnic Studies class. Most students are not aware of contributions that were made by Asian Americans to the fabric of this country. This lack of awareness among Asian Americans and the general population has resulted in Asian Americans often being disenfranchised.

As Asian American students, we have no foundation for our own cultural pride and no space to explore cultural identity. We are looking to decolonize our education by offering Asian Americans Studies. We are demanding Irvine Unified School District offer an Asian Americans Studies course to reflect the student population and the importance of Asian American immigration history and cultures. As students, we believe this is important in promoting diversity and intercultural understanding. This class will provide all students with an opportunity to learn and understand Asian American history and our contributions to the United States while allowing students to take pride in their dual cultural heritage.

Before exiting this survey, please indicate below if you would like to add your anonymous signature (using a randomly generated identifier) to support this petition.
- Yes, I would like to add my anonymous signature
- No, I would not like to add my anonymous signature

VITA

Lizbeth Kim

EDUCATION

Dual Title PhD, Social Psychology & Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies   2017—2019
    The Pennsylvania State University, Advisor: Dr. Stephanie Shields

M.S., Social Psychology, The Pennsylvania State University   2015—2017
    Advisor: Dr. Stephanie Shields

B.A., Psychology (honors), University of California, Berkeley   2009—2013
    Advisor: Dr. Joseph Campos

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Clara Mayo Grant—*Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues*   2018
Travel Award—*Society for Personality and Social Psychology*   2016
Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention—*National Science Foundation*   2015
Graduate Scholar Award—*The Pennsylvania State University*   2015

MEDIA INTERVIEWS

Jones, Brad. (2018, January 5). A former Facebook VP says social media is destroying society. And he's
    right. Retrieved from https://futurism.com/former-facebook-vp-social-media-destroying-society-
    hes-right/

PUBLICATIONS

Dahl, A., & Kim, L. (2014). Why is it bad to make a mess? Preschoolers' conceptions of pragmatic
    norms. *Cognitive Development*, *32*, 12-22.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

McCormick-Huhn, K., Kim, L., & Shields, S. (2019). Unconscious bias intervention at work: An initial test
    of WAGES-Business (Workshop Activity for Gender Equity Simulation) and Google's
    "Unconscious Bias @ Work"

Kim, L., & Matsick, J. (2019). Facebook LGBTQ pictivism: The effects of women's rainbow profile filters
    on sexual prejudice and online belonging

Kim, L. (2019). Inclusive internet media and brief interventions: An examination of target and majority
    group perspectives

Kim, L., & Shields, S. (2017). The impact of confronting online sexism on third-party beliefs and behavior.

Kim, L. (2016). "Thank you for mansplaining that to me": A thematic analysis of Facebook comments
    discussing issues of feminism.