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Examining the Media's Representation of Asians and Asian Americans Using Photography

The photographs were effective in that they provided a jarring juxtaposition between the Asian stereotype and the Asian individual. People were generally drawn into the aesthetics of the photograph, prompting them to want to learn more. Additionally, the photographs were effective in causing discomfort for viewers, prompting analysis. There was, however, one large way that I could have improved upon my project. First, the photographs were posted with no background information on the project. My intention with that was to create a space for free dialogue and interpretation surrounding the pictures. I did not want the public to be swayed by my own intended analyses. Unfortunately, the lack of information and guidance left several class members confused as to what they were viewing and how they should interpret the photographs. To improve upon this, I will be posting a quick snippet of what the two halves of each photograph represents as well as a short breakdown of the project as a whole. This should allow viewers to understand the intention of the project without my analyses encroaching too much onto theirs.

I learned a lot from this project. What struck me the most was how easily I could completely transform a person simply by changing his or her accessories and make up. To turn my male model from his normal self into a Kung Fu master all I needed to do was paint on a bruise and tie a strip of cloth around his forehead. This represents the ease with which the media perpetuates these stereotypes. With the help of costumes, make up, and hair it is not difficult to turn an everyday person into whatever image you want to perpetuate. Television shows, movies, magazines, and even music videos very easily manipulate actors and models to conform to a specific image. I learned that there is a responsibility that needs to be placed on the media for their role in institutionalizing otherness.

In terms of the discussions and readings we have had in class, I rooted much of my project from our discussions of *Crazy Rich Asians* and Jeremy Lin. I wanted to challenge the various stereotypes of the Asian male based on our discussions of Nicholas Young and Jeremy Lin, who exist as successful and attractive young men viewed as eligible bachelors. These two men serve as examples that Asian men are not at all restricted by their race nor are they expected to conform to the stereotypes assigned to them. With my project, I wanted to further expand on that by providing a visual comparison between a stereotype and another successful, attractive young man.