



## Anti-Chinese Rhetoric Tied to Racism against Asian Americans Stop AAPI Hate Report

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Xenophobic statements about China and Chinese people correlate with incidents of racism against Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- In 502 incidents out 1,843 incident reports (27.2%),<sup>1</sup> respondents to Stop AAPI Hate reported that their assailants specifically mentioned the terms “China” or “Chinese” during the incidents of discrimination.
- News accounts about racism against Asian Americans that discussed anti-China rhetoric increased from one article in the week of March 8, 2020 to 35 articles in the week April 19, 2020.

### Anti-China Rhetoric in Hate Incidents

Content analysis of xenophobic comments regarding China demonstrate the following:

1. **Virulent animosity** towards Chinese Americans, with 37.5% of incident reports involving profanity and verbal taunts
2. **Scapegoating of China** for the spread of COVID-19, with 31.7% of the perpetrators blaming China or Chinese people as the source of the disease
3. **Anti-immigrant nationalism** of the assailants as they demand that Asian Americans “go back to China” or view China as the enemy (20.3%)
4. **Parroting of the term**, “Chinese virus” to imply the implicit association between COVID-19 and China (17.5%)
5. **Orientalist and racist depictions** of China and Chinese people as dirty, diseased, and holding strange dietary habits (12.6%)

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<sup>1</sup> 1843 incidents were reported to Stop AAPI Hate between March 19, 2020 and May 13, 2020. The total number received as of June 3, 2020 is 2066.

The following incidents exemplify how China and Chinese people have been invoked in hate incidents against Asian Americans.

### **1. Virulent Animosity: Racial Slurs/Taunts/Profanity**

- My elderly parents were walking with my two-year old and some 20-30-year olds drove by and screamed “f—k China!” at the stop light. They feel very unsafe, especially with a child.
- Person called me a “yellow n----r” and yelled “go back to China, bitch!”

### **2. Scapegoating of China: Source of Coronavirus and Its Spread**

- While I was trying to pick a bike at the dock station, the bike company employee who was changing the batteries on e-bikes yelled at me and said, “Spray that sh--” (meaning I needed to spray the bike with disinfectant after riding.) This employee went on and said, “The Chinese invented the virus and Donald Trump knows it.” I’m Asian and was wearing a mask at the time of the incident.
- My 2 Chinese boys playing street pickup soccer against three Caucasian boys - the Caucasian boys got upset about losing and said to my boys, “You’re Chinese! You have the coronavirus!!”™
- A passenger on the subway platform was yelling about wanting to “kill Chinese” for “creating coronavirus.” I was with my 10-year old biracial child; there were three or four other Asian women on the platform, at least one was wearing a face mask. I caught his eye, and then he said he should push us onto the train tracks.
- As I was taking a brief walk for fresh air and exercise, a random person on the opposite side of the street screamed at me “Go f--king die, you chink! All you chinks brought us the Chinese virus!”
- Overheard in public restroom that, “Thank God, no Chinese children were at soccer practice to infect others. “

### **3. Anti-Immigrant Nationalism:**

#### **A. Go Back to China**

- Some individuals yelled “Chinese, go back to your country!” then threw their soda at me from a moving vehicle in my neighborhood.

- A White male walked by me and said, “you f--king Chinese spread the Coronavirus to this country, you should all leave this country!” I was alone when this happened.

## **B. China as the Enemy**

- A woman sitting at a bus stop was screaming at myself and other Asians that she saw walking. She said that we were "dirty Chinese", that we were trying to take over the US, and that we "should go back to our f--king country" among other things.
- I received the following voicemail message: "I just wanted to let you know that China has lost their best customer, America. Everybody in America is not going to buy Chinese anymore, so I hope that your country struggles and everybody has no money. I think it's pretty ignorant for your government not to protect that virus; to let that virus come out and ruin the world. Thanks, China."
- While I was at the grocery store, another patron referred to me as "another one of those damn Chinese trying to infect everyone into infect everyone into communism."

## **5. Parroting of “Chinese Virus” term**

- Car rolled up, a 40ish year old Caucasian woman yelled “Chinese Virus,” then threw an empty soda can in my direction.
- A man who walked by the Duke Centennial Hall yelled at me "Chinese Virus," and stuck his middle finger up at me.
- A car of men was driving around Chicago targeting Asians, yelling racial slurs, shouting "Chinese Virus," "get out of America" and fake sneezing. They even blasted a rap song about the virus that blames the Chinese and ‘how dirty they are.’

## **5. Orientalist Depictions of Chinese Culture—Dietary Habits and Language**

- I am a student teacher at an elementary school. This particular incident involved two of my students. One of them is Chinese and the other student was teasing him, saying that he had Coronavirus and telling the other students to not go near him. Another student claimed that Chinese people eat baby dogs and bats and that's how the virus spread.
- A current graduate student in the Department of Environmental Studies posted on Facebook that "There is a special place in hell reserved for the f--king Chinese and their archaic culture...[Trump's] description of COVID-19 as the Chinese virus is the most accurate thing he has ever said--I wish it had wiped the

whole country off the planet." She further wrote, "China will learn nothing and will continue to consume wildlife into extinction. What a horrible, backwards culture and way of thinking."

- Roommate told me that the Chinese are filthy people who all deserve to die of COVID-19, and said it is no wonder all plagues spread from China. Said that the Chinese were selfish and horribly overpopulated, and they should have issued a 0-child policy so they could not proliferate.

## Appendix: Breakdown of Incidents

Type	
<b>Verbal Harassment</b>	82.7%
<b>Shunning</b>	16.5%
<b>Physical Assault</b>	5.2%
<b>Cough/Spat On</b>	1.6%
<b>Online</b>	8.6%
<b>Workplace Discrimination</b>	4.2%
<b>Barred From Establishment</b>	1.6%
<b>Barred From Transportation</b>	0.6%

Site of Discrimination	Anti-China Rhetoric
<b>Business</b>	37.6%
<b>Public Sidewalk</b>	13.3%
<b>Public Park</b>	10.6%
<b>Public Transit</b>	11.0%
<b>Private Residence</b>	9.0%
<b>Online</b>	18.3%
<b>School</b>	3.6%
<b>University</b>	3.2%
<b>Place of Worship</b>	0.2%

Reason for Discrimination	Anti-China Rhetoric
<b>Race</b>	87.8%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	77.1%
<b>Face Mask Or Clothing</b>	13.3%
<b>Gender</b>	8.8%
<b>Language</b>	6.4%
<b>Food</b>	3.2%
<b>Religion</b>	1.2%

Age	Anti-China Rhetoric
<b>10s</b>	6.3%
<b>20s</b>	38.6%
<b>30s</b>	57.1%
<b>40s</b>	32.8%

<b>50s</b>	14.3%
<b>60s</b>	14.3%
<b>70s</b>	2.1%

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Anti-China Rhetoric</b>
<b>Female</b>	70.6%
<b>Male</b>	28.4%
<b>Trans &amp; Gender Nonbinary</b>	1.0%

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Anti-China Rhetoric</b>
<b>Chinese</b>	41.1%	51.4%
<b>Korean</b>	16.7%	12.9%
<b>Asian</b>	12.0%	8.8%
<b>Vietnamese</b>	8.0%	6.6%
<b>Japanese</b>	6.2%	6.0%
<b>Filipino</b>	6.1%	6.8%
<b>Mixed</b>	6.0%	2.4%
<b>Taiwanese</b>	5.9%	7.4%
<b>Hmong</b>	2.5%	2.0%
<b>Thai</b>	1.4%	1.0%
<b>Lao</b>	1.2%	0.8%

<b>State</b>	<b>Anti-China Rhetoric</b>
<b>CA</b>	45.7%
<b>NY</b>	14.7%
<b>IL</b>	3.4%
<b>PA</b>	3.4%
<b>TX</b>	3.0%
<b>MD</b>	2.1%
<b>WA</b>	1.8%
<b>MA</b>	1.8%
<b>NJ</b>	1.8%
<b>FL</b>	1.8%
<b>DC</b>	1.8%
<b>VA</b>	1.6%
<b>CO</b>	1.6%
<b>OH</b>	1.4%
<b>NV</b>	1.4%
<b>OR</b>	1.1%
<b>GA</b>	0.9%
<b>NC</b>	0.9%
<b>WI</b>	0.9%
<b>CT</b>	0.9%
<b>MN</b>	0.7%
<b>AZ</b>	0.7%
<b>MI</b>	0.7%
<b>LA</b>	0.7%
<b>IA</b>	0.5%
<b>OK</b>	0.5%
<b>HI</b>	0.5%
<b>MO</b>	0.2%
<b>NE</b>	0.2%
<b>AR</b>	0.2%
<b>UT</b>	0.2%
<b>RI</b>	0.2%