

Disrupting Racism: Essays by An Asian American Prodigy Professor

DESCRIPTION: This book accessibly presents a former mathematics child prodigy's thoughts about how education and law can and cannot help overcome discrimination and racism against Asian Americans. This book has two central themes. This book's first central theme is that inaccurate, yet stubborn probability beliefs underlie racism. Racism entails negative bias in beliefs about what a person of a certain race can or will do (or not do). Because these beliefs can be very sticky, this book advocates and analyzes how education and laws or public policies can help people, organizations, and societies reconsider and change beliefs.

This book offers practical ways to foster Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Sustainability (IDEAS). The acronym IDEAS is inspired by the well-known acronym DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) and the related and lesser well-known acronym DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility) from President Biden's Executive Order 14035 Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce. The word Sustainability is added to reflect environmental and resilience concerns. This book offers a new and refreshing perspective about evergreen topics. This book also bridges three areas: storytelling, public policy evidence and concrete next steps. Many people would like to act, they just don't know what to do next. This book offers readers a pragmatic roadmap.

This book's second central theme is that emotional health, mental health, wellness, and well-being are crucial yet very often neglected topics in discussions about IDEAS. This book authoritatively crystallizes and synthesizes wide-ranging research insights from applied mathematics, behavioral sciences, coaching, decision processes, economics, finance, game theory, law, leadership studies, life improvement science, marketing, neuroeconomics, and (affective, cognitive, positive, and social) psychology. This book applies empirical, experimental, and theoretical interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary, and transdisciplinary research to suggest actionable, pragmatic takeaways about how to improve IDEAS. This book is written in a conversational and reader-friendly style. This book also utilizes examples from popular culture, including ads, movies, on-line videos, songs, and television shows.

A tagline describing this book is *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* meets *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother*. The phrase from the book's title "**Asian American Prodigy Professor**" indicates this book is humorous and offers its readers advice through lessons that interweave humorous personal anecdotes and modern behavioral sciences. This book also connects with identity politics issues because education has the potential to be transformative and mitigate gender and racial bias, conflict, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotyping. This book draws on economic models of higher education choices as human and social capital investments and simultaneously market signals of people's individual natural abilities or marginal productivities. This book takes its reader on an emotional and thought-provoking journey involving mental time travel, inner and outer mindfulness, and evidence-based strategies to achieve sustainable happiness, joy, and peace in an increasingly chaotic, complex, and nonlinear world. The book is intended to be not only informative, but also transformative. Readers of this book may cry, laugh, and learn from reading and reflecting on this book. Hopefully, readers will enjoy the journey of my life till now and the destinations we visit. Finally,

this book is a start from which readers can be inspired to take off and soar into their own personal future adventures.

AUTHOR: Peter H. Huang is a Taiwanese American, who at fourteen years old was a freshman at Princeton University, was a university scholar in mathematics and economics there, graduated in three years at age seventeen from Princeton University, earned a Ph.D. in applied mathematics from Harvard University, and received a J.D. from Stanford University. Peter's principal Ph.D. thesis advisor was Stanford University economics professor emeritus Kenneth Joseph Arrow, 1972 economics Nobel Laureate. Peter taught in law schools at Yale, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania, University of Minnesota, University of Virginia, USC, and Temple University. Peter taught in economics departments at Stanford, Berkeley, UCLA, USC, SMU, Tulane, and Iowa. Peter taught in the finance department of the business school at Tulane. Peter served as a staff economist in the Division of Consumer Protection in the Bureau of Economics of the Federal Trade Commission. Peter was a member of the Institute for Advanced Study School of Social Science during its psychology and economics theme academic year. Peter has published sixty-eight economics journal articles, book chapters, and law review articles, most recently about anti-discrimination, leadership, stakeholder capitalism, and social justice. Peter was also the guest on the January 25, 2021 episode of the American Bar Association Journal special [Asked and Answered](#) podcast series, which focuses on how lawyers' personal and professional lives have changed during COVID-19. Peter was a featured guest in two 30-minute interviews of the [Titans of Law series](#) of [TalksOnLaw](#) and had a conversation about mental health, well-being, and [zombification](#) of law students and lawyers, and another conversation about Asian American law students, Asian American lawyers, and the bamboo ceiling in the legal profession.

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CONTENTS: This book has an introductory memoir-like part I. The introduction discusses in a story-driven style my unique life growing up as a yellow prodigy in the U.S.A. My having been a child math prodigy offers personal, first-hand experiences and unique perspectives on the model minority myth and perpetual foreigner syndrome. Part I offers a brief personal memoir. Part II comprises the bulk of the book, analyzes the law and economics of beliefs, hate, IDEAS, and offers thoughts about improving IDEAS. Part II also provides tangible steps forward for decision-makers, educators, parents, students, policymakers, lawyers, economists, and concerned people of the world.

Both parts of the book shares the unifying idea that people are high dimensional portfolios of many more attributes than merely education, race, gender, sexual orientation, physical attributes, and various other characteristics. People's portfolio values fluctuate over time. People in particular can grow or appreciate in their portfolio values. The book is based on the novel complications with, and challenges in, IDEAS that are due to COVID-19. That aspect of the book explains why now. As to why this book, the pandemic and other current events offer us options to rethink how to deal with systemic problems with IDEAS that Covid-19 exacerbated.

COMPETING BOOKS: None, because of the author's unique perspective on the book's topics.

INTENDED AUDIENCE: General readers interested about education, racism, and sexism.

ESTIMATED PUBLICATION DATE: April 2023.

MARKETING: A book website featuring endorsements from George Akerlof, Debra S. Austin, James Chen, Ming H. Chen, Dolly Chugh, Shi-Ling Hsu, Justin T. Huang, Jonathan Kahn, Susan S. Kuo, Nancy Levit, Nathalie Martin, Edmund S. Phelps, Len Riskin, John L. Solow, Tanya Kateri Hernandez, Kathryn Stanchi, Ho-Mou Wu, and Kathy P. Wu.

Why Me? I possess a rare, wide-ranging intellectual background and history. My research in behavioral law and economic analysis and one-of-a-kind personal experiences uniquely qualify me to write this book.

Why Now? COVID-19 and other current events exacerbate systemic problems with racism against Asian Americans.

Why This Book? To provide accessible, new ideas about realizing belonging, diversity, equity, and inclusion by overcoming racism.

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Chapters 1-4 consist of personal anecdotes from these two law review articles for a general readership: Peter H. Huang, [*Tiger Cub Strikes Back: Memoirs of an Ex-Child Prodigy About Legal Education and Parenting*](#), 1(2) British Journal of American Legal Studies 297-347 (2012) and Peter H. Huang, [*Adventures in Higher Education, Happiness, and Mindfulness*](#), 7(2) British Journal of American Legal Studies 425-84 (2018). This chapter explains how particular lived experiences influence and shape people's beliefs. For example, a tale about not embarrassing all carbon-based life forms raises issues of group identities and racism. King Lear's question about how much each of his daughters love him relates to narrow versus broad conceptions of the self. These chapters also establish my authentic bona fides and credibility by telling some unique, entertaining, and memorable adventures. Part I considers how a psychological effect known as the hot stove effect provides a sampling-based explanation of how biases in beliefs and attitudes can result from asymmetries in the interactions that people choose to experience and the resulting information they learn or avoid. The name of this effect comes from the fact a cat who is burned once by a hot stove will learn to avoid hot stoves and also cold stoves. Part I also contains a few experiences which foreshadow how mindfulness can improve happiness and mitigate biases. See Peter H. Huang, [*Boost: Improving Mindfulness, Thinking, and Diversity*](#), 10(1) William & Mary Business Law Review 139-97 (2018); Peter H. Huang, [*Achieving American Retirement Prosperity by Changing Americans' Thinking About Retirement*](#), 22 Stanford Journal of Law, Business & Finance 189-259 (2017); and Peter H. Huang, [*Can Practicing Mindfulness Improve Lawyer Decision-Making, Ethics, and Leadership?*](#), 55(1) Houston Law Review 63-154 (2017).

Part II. Essays on the Law and Economics of Racism

In decision theory, beliefs are subjective probabilities over possible outcomes. Economics views beliefs as inputs to making decisions, with more accurate beliefs having indirect, instrumental value by improving decision-making. This part utilizes new economic theories about belief-based utility, which captures economically the intuitive notion that people can derive pleasure and pain directly from their and other people's beliefs. Even false beliefs can offer comfort and reassurance to people. This part draws on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary theories about deliberate ignorance, defined as the conscious choice by individuals to ignore certain knowledge. This part analyzes the political economy of hate, envy, and scapegoating.

This part also analyzes actionable, pragmatic evidenced-based strategies to resist hate and explicit racism towards Asian Americans. This part advocates and analyzes ways to challenge racism: positive education, mindfulness, conversations, communications, associations, cultures, and norms. See Peter H. Huang, [*Anti-Asian American Racism, COVID-19, Racism Contested, Humor, and Empathy*](#), 16(3) Florida International University Law Review 669-743 (2022); and Peter H. Huang, [*Resistance is Not Futile: Challenging AAPI Hate*](#), 28(2) William & Mary Journal of Race, Gender, and Social Justice 261-327 (2022).

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Acknowledgements

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