

# Crazy Rich Asians: Annotated Bibliography

by Haonan Wu

1.

Ho, Karen K. "Crazy Rich Asians Is Going to Change Hollywood. It's About Time." *Time*, 15 Aug. 2018, [time.com/longform/crazy-rich-asians](https://www.time.com/longform/crazy-rich-asians).

In this article, published by *Time* magazine, Karen K. Ho highlights that the movie *Crazy Rich Asians* represents a significant moment for Hollywood and a major step forward in representation for the Asian community. The film features an all-Asian American and Asian cast, which is not typical for a Hollywood romantic comedy. Thus, this cast provides room to highlight the diversity of the global Asian community by featuring actors from multiple countries, with different accents and values. Ho notes that in the past, Asian female actors were often stereotyped and asked to play roles such as the "submissive China doll, the nerdy overachiever," or the "inert sex worker." In *Crazy Rich Asians*, though, audiences see "the nuances of Asian women's experiences across generations" (Ho). Consequently, the article emphasizes the importance of diverse representation in media and entertainment, pointing out that *Crazy Rich Asians* is a positive step forward for representation and can inspire change in the industry. Overall, the article celebrates the significance of the film as a turning point for Hollywood.

2.

Kasinitz, Philip. "The State of Asian America." *Sociological Forum*, vol. 34, no. 2, June 2019, pp. 522-24. *JSTOR*, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48558743>.

Philip Kasinitz, an American sociologist and Presidential Professor of Sociology at the City University of New York, offers an expert analysis on the historical status of Asian Americans from a sociological perspective. Because Asian Americans both shared some characteristics with and differed from African Americans and European immigrants, they did not fit into the usual conceptual mechanisms of race relations and thus have been overlooked by American sociology since the mid-nineteenth century. They were often highly discriminated against, and faced social and legal barriers to interracial marriage. However, with the increase of Asian immigration following legal reforms in

the mid-1960s, Asian Americans have increasingly been at the center of discussions of race, ethnicity, and discrimination in the United States. This background source demonstrates Asian Americans' long history of exclusion and their involvement in discussions about affirmative action. Additionally, this article works as an argument source since Kasinitz raises an important question about the heterogeneity of the Asian American community. According to Kasinitz, *Crazy Rich Asians* portrays an identity that is shared to some extent across Asian American communities. In reality, though, Asian Americans are part of a diverse collection of social classes, political backgrounds, and immigrant experiences. The following two sources point out the film's insufficient representation of the Asian male protagonist and marginalized non-East Asians.

3.

**Lui, John. "Casting announcement of Crazy Rich Asians makes for a great case study: The casting choices of the new film Crazy Rich Asians show that it is all about the bottom line." *The Straits Times*, 27 Apr. 2017.**

*ProQuest*, [proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/casting-announcement-crazy-rich-asians-makes/docview/1892380708/se-2/3/accountid/3D12768](https://proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/casting-announcement-crazy-rich-asians-makes/docview/1892380708/se-2/3/accountid/3D12768).

In this article in *The Straits Times*, a well-known Singaporean newspaper, John Lui suggests that the casting in *Crazy Rich Asians* elevates white features to appeal to the "whiter is right-er" Asian aesthetic. He identifies Hollywood's insistence that "one drop of Asian blood makes a person 'Asian', or at least 'Asian enough'" and acknowledges that its decision to cast Henry Golding, a man of Eurasian descent, as the lead actor has certain marketing advantages. But this casting of a Eurasian for the sake of cross-border marketing issues exposes an underlying colorism. The author also cites other examples of colorism, such as how actress Issa Rae spoke out that lighter-skinned Black women are more likely to get romantic leads than darker-skinned Black women such as herself. This argument source suggests a latent colorist bias for profit within the film *Crazy Rich Asians* and concludes by suggesting that perhaps it would be better if leading roles in movies reflected the racial makeup of in the country where the movie is set. Lui, as an Asian drawing from an Asian aesthetic perspective, meticulously examines the lingering disparities that persist among Asians, while Western critics may remain oblivious to these nuanced issues due to their lack of comprehension.

4.

**"Non-East Asians neglected in Hollywood film portrayals." *University Wire*, 3 Oct. 2018.**

*ProQuest*, [proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com](https://proxy.library.nyu.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com)

**[2Wire-feeds%2Fnon-east-asians-neglected-hollywood-film%2Fdocview%2F2116285877%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12768.](#)**

This article published in *The Miscellany News*, one of the oldest student newspapers in the US, argues that the movie *Crazy Rich Asians* does not fully represent non-East Asians, such as Malaysians and Indians. This Hollywood movie has been praised for having a majority Asian cast, but some Singaporean locals questioned whether the film really promotes diversity or only portrays Singapore's Chinese population, the country's dominant ethnic majority. The country's Malay, Indian, and other minority communities, who collectively make up about 25% of the population, are mostly excluded from the movie. Although Southeast Asians do appear in the movie, they are often depicted in stereotypical roles such as "maids, drivers and security guards." As journalist Cat Wang points out, "such an assessment is simplistic at its very best and destructive at its very worst" (qtd. in "Non-East Asians"). This argument suggests that instead of promoting diversity and equality among Asian Americans, the film may be entrenching another new stereotype by assigning minorities to stereotypical roles. In conclusion, the author asserts that Hollywood and the rest of the world still have a long way to go before Asians are adequately represented in mainstream media. Compared to Source 3, this essay from a Western perspective examines Asian Americans as a whole from a broader viewpoint. This approach illustrates how the Western perspective can complement the detailed Eastern perspective.

5.

**Sugino, Corinne Mitsuye. "Multicultural Redemption: *Crazy Rich Asians* and the Politics of Representation." *Lateral*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2019. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/48671519](http://www.jstor.org/stable/48671519).**

Corinne Mitsuye Sugino, an Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Gonzaga University, explores "the relationship between multicultural media production and contemporary power dynamics" using *Crazy Rich Asians* as a case study. Audiences' celebration of the movie's racial progress in representation is not an isolated incident but part of a larger trend in mainstream American television and film. However, in this multicultural era, the inclusion of marginalized groups is often seen as a form of redemption from past racial injustices, creating what the author refers to as a "multicultural redemption narrative." This narrative limits the scope of what is considered liberatory by promoting the idea that the only way to achieve progress is to work within existing systems of oppression rather than seeking to fundamentally transform them. In this method source, the multicultural redemption narrative underlies the root of non-East Asians' limited representation in the film and the colorist bias in casting decisions. As such, *Crazy Rich Asians* may have signified a step forward in representation as in Source 1, but Mitsuye also highlights the ongoing work that

needs to be done in promoting diversity and equality in media and entertainment. Thus, in my opinion, to address the issue, critical reflection and action to address the underlying power dynamics that shape media production and distribution are necessary, along with a willingness to challenge dominant narratives and power structures.