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Opinion: The entertainment industry has a lot to do to make up for its representations of Asians

Before Shang-Chi broke box office records when it premiered, Squid Game became a cultural phenomenon on Netflix. Even before BTS brought back the sound of K-pop to the mainstream audience, the train of Asian representation is full steam ahead. Seeing the faces that didn't look like mine and the similar story arcs that I went through as a child was finally on the big screen. I should be grateful, right? But I'm not entirely satisfied. Maybe it's because the entertainment industry has been detrimental to the Asian community that I feel like the stories they've been pushing out are not enough.

Don't get me wrong; I love the direction of where Asians in media are taking. But it's only suitable to acknowledge Hollywood's shortcomings first.

Such as from the 1920s to the 1950s, Anna May Wong, coined as the first Chinese-American movie star, was always pushed aside when trying to book lead roles due to her race. Frustrated with discrimination for being typecasted, she left for Europe. However, during her absence, that didn't stop Caucasian actors and actresses from playing in Asian-centric films with yellowface.

Joy Luck Club was released in 1993 and broke the glass ceiling with an all-Asian cast and depicted the story of Chinese-American women trying to find common ground with their Chinese immigrant mothers. The film was mostly met with a positive reaction from critics and should've catapulted the cast to more significant projects, but that wasn't the case. After the film gained traction for the Asian community in media, only 25 years later, when Crazy Rich Asians premiered, Hollywood gave Asians a seat at the table when producing stories and films.

The lack of representation, especially the lack of accurate representation of the Asian community, was detrimental to kids like me growing up. You'd think I would attach myself to any character that looked like me, no matter the portrayal, but I did the opposite. I rejected my culture for the longest time because I didn't see any character that resembled me. I didn't want to be seen as the submissive Lotus Blossom or grow into an evil Dragon Lady and exemplary student that my TV screen kept displaying.

Hollywood is now trying to make up for its inaccurate portrayals. Some examples include the Russo brothers using Shang-Chi as an outlet to apologize for the false image of the controversial character, the Mandarin. Henry Golding also proved that Asian males could be the

leading male in movies. This is an improvement, but until I've waited 25 years and see if this momentum of representation stays, I still don't feel there is enough positive and accurate Asian representation in media.