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Are you struggling to navigate the transition from adolescence to adulthood, unsure of your identity and purpose? If so, you're not alone. The phenomenon of delayed adulthood has become a hot topic of discussion, with many young adults taking longer to reach milestones traditionally associated with adulthood. The concept of emerging adulthood refers to the period between adolescence and adulthood, where individuals are still in the process of developing their identity and making important life decisions. In "What Is It About 20-Somethings?", Robin Marantz Henig discusses the trend of young adults taking longer to reach adulthood, moving back in with their parents, and its impact on families and society's expectations, as well as exploring its potential benefits and drawbacks. Amy Tan reflects on Asian American Pacific Islander heritage, emphasizing diversity, encouraging readers to embrace their unique heritage, and using humor to create a sense of community. "Paper Tigers" by Wesley Yang delves into the challenges of reconciling cultural heritage with American identity for Asian-Americans and sheds light on larger issues of cultural assimilation and representation in America. While Henig discusses the phenomenon of delayed adulthood in emerging adults, the intersection of race and stereotypes further complicates this transition for individuals, particularly Asian Americans, as reflected in Amy Tan's and Wesley Yang's works, highlighting the need to address issues of

cultural identity and representation in society.

The phenomenon of delayed adulthood and the concept of emerging adulthood have become increasingly relevant in recent years, as young adults take longer to reach traditional milestones associated with adulthood. According to Robin Marantz Henig, in her article "What Is It About 20-Somethings?", "Getting to what we would generally call adulthood is happening later than ever." (Henig) This delay in reaching adulthood can have both positive and negative effects, as individuals have more time to explore their identity and make important life decisions, but may also face prolonged economic dependency and strain on family relationships. Additionally, the intersection of race and stereotypes further complicates this transition for individuals, particularly Asian Americans, as Wesley Yang notes in his essay "Paper Tigers": "Millions of Americans must feel estranged from their own faces. But every self-estranged individual is estranged in his own way." (Yang) This feeling of alienation and pressure to reconcile cultural heritage with American identity can add another layer of complexity to the already challenging period of emerging adulthood. Overall, the trend of delayed adulthood and the concept of emerging adulthood highlight the need to address issues of cultural identity, representation, and societal expectations in order to support young adults during this transitional period.

Emerging adults, particularly Asian Americans, face significant challenges in reconciling their cultural heritage with their American identity. Tan's description of her parents' journey to America exemplifies the hope and aspirations that immigrants have when they come to this country. She explains, "My mother and father had met and they've fallen in love. They wanted to marry and have children, and the only way they could do that was to leave the past behind. I imagine that a lot of love has immigrated to the US over the last 400 years." However, as Wesley Yang observes, "Before having

heard from Mao, I had considered myself at worst lightly singed by the last embers of Asian alienation." The transition to adulthood can bring additional challenges, as individuals try to establish their own identity while navigating the expectations of their cultural heritage and American society. This feeling of being caught between two worlds can be particularly challenging for Asian American emerging adults as they attempt to find their place in the world. Additionally, the societal pressure and stereotypes that Asian Americans face can exacerbate this tension. The need to reconcile cultural heritage with American identity and overcome stereotypes can make the transition to adulthood more complicated. Despite these challenges, by recognizing and transcending them, Asian American emerging adults can establish their unique identities and thrive in their personal and professional lives.

Emerging adulthood is a complex and multifaceted period of transition that is influenced by various societal and cultural factors, including race and stereotypes. Amy Tan acknowledges the impact of race and stereotypes on emerging adults in her speech, stating, "Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, we also have much in common as well. And I know because for a long time we thought my mother's grim warnings were just one of her idiosyncrasies. But then I wrote a novel, and I was shocked to learn how many Asian people told me that their mothers were just like mine. My mother wasn't wacky, it was shared heritage all along." (Tan). Tan emphasizes the importance of embracing cultural diversity and recognizing the unique experiences of each individual. However, as Wesley Yang notes in his essay "Paper Tigers," many Asian-Americans face a sense of alienation and marginalization, which can be perpetuated by stereotypes such as the "model minority" myth. Yang emphasizes, "While it may be true that sections of the Asian-American world are devoid of alienation, there are large swaths where it is as alive as it has ever been." (Yang). This stereotype can create pressure for

Asian-American emerging adults to conform to societal expectations of academic and career success, leading to a sense of disillusionment and dissatisfaction. The impact of race and stereotypes on emerging adults, particularly those of Asian-American descent, highlights the need for greater understanding, support, and representation during this period of transition.

In conclusion, the works of Robin Marantz Henig, Amy Tan, and Wesley Yang all illustrate the complexity of the emerging adulthood experience and the various societal and cultural factors that influence it. Henig's article emphasizes the trend of young adults taking longer to reach adulthood and its impact on families and society's expectations. Tan's speech encourages individuals to embrace their unique heritage and the importance of cultural diversity. Yang's essay explores the challenges faced by Asian-Americans in reconciling their cultural heritage with American identity and highlights the damaging impact of stereotypes. These works demonstrate the need for greater support, understanding, and representation for individuals navigating the complex period of emerging adulthood. Overall, emerging adulthood is a complex period of transition that is influenced by societal expectations, stereotypes, and individual experiences. It is important to recognize the challenges faced by young adults and the societal and cultural factors that may impact their journey towards adulthood. It is crucial to provide support for young adults as they navigate this period and make important life decisions. It is also important to consider how race and stereotypes can complicate our understanding of emerging adults. Amy Tan and Wesley Yang's essay provides insight into the challenges faced by Asian-Americans in reconciling cultural heritage with American identity, and the pervasive feeling of alienation that many young adults experience. Furthermore, stereotypes, such as the perception of millennials as lazy or entitled, can create negative perceptions of emerging adults and

lead to pressure to conform to societal expectations. The concept of emerging adulthood is influenced by societal expectations, stereotypes, and individual experiences. It is important to recognize these complexities and provide support for young adults as they navigate this period of transition.



Works Cited

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