How the 'Crazy Rich Asians' movie could help change stereotypes about Asian men

Notes & Cues:

Article:

In less than two weeks, the highly anticipated "Crazy Rich Asians" movie will hit theaters. The film, based on a novel of the same name by Kevin Kwan, has generated widespread excitement, particularly among Asian Americans.

It's the first Hollywood studio film in 25 years to feature Asian Americans in leading roles. It has an all-Asian cast with actors from around the world. More importantly, it shows Asians in a refreshing light: The men are attractive and charismatic, the women are headstrong and independent, and there isn't a stereotypical nerd or martial arts master in sight.

The film could have an impact not only on the Asian American community, but, if successful, on Hollywood. It steers clear of spreading stereotypes about Asian men that they have long struggled against: the perception that they are not romantically desirable—even among other Asians.

In a 2014 study published by the dating site OkCupid, statistics showed that Asian men were generally considered by women as less attractive than the average man. In movies and TV shows, Asian characters have evolved from sinister villains to goofy or nerdy sidekicks. More often than not, these characters are not masculine enough or seen as asexual.

Last year, in Psychology Today, Sam Louie, a Washington-based psychotherapist who specializes in multicultural issues, wrote that these stereotypes will only continue to be perpetuated unless Asian men are cast in leading romantic roles in the mainstream media.

"He's Jim or John first and oh, he happens to be of Asian background as well, " Louie said. " That would be the greatest hope, that these stereotypes wash away and the individual piece comes out."

Summary: