

Hate Speech: Community and Family

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The covid-19 pandemic has shaken the world in an unexpected way including myself. Several Americans have been affected by the pandemic losing jobs with panic wreaking havoc across the nation. My family was also affected with the pandemic as they operated a family owned restaurant. Many customers started to slowly disappear until my family was forced to close the restaurant from quarantine. Everyone that I knew was affected mentally as they did not know what to do indoors and eventually broke down. During this time, I was also in my second semester of my freshmen year looking forward to interacting with new people and professors. My first semester was enjoyable as it was a whole new experience that I was exploring. The pandemic made all classes remote and the atmosphere just did not feel the same as being in person. I was overwhelmed as most of my family lost their jobs including myself and the transition to online was unexpected. I lost all motivation to even focus on schoolwork as I was also affected mentally, but I managed to get through. The reopening phase of New York slowly recovered my family as they were able to open back their restaurants, but there was still a decrease of customers. The pandemic was not the only cause of the decrease of customers, but also my family being Asian was a factor. Many people engaged in targeting Asians around my area as the form of hate speech grew more severe as time passed by. My family did not feel safe operating their restaurant as they would not know what would happen to them. The community around me were mostly Asians and there was an increase of violence around my area. The community used to be lively with neighbors interacting with their kids constantly with everyone knowing each other. However, everything changed as everyone is staying indoors and is afraid to walk out in fear of being victims of the pandemic and hate speech. This story is important to me as the pandemic not only affected my family, but the community I live in.