

Updated 3-24-21

Letter from the Chair to the NYU Sociology Community

Last week 8 people, of whom 7 were Asian, were brutally murdered in Atlanta, Georgia. It wasn't an isolated event; a recent [fact sheet](#) showed a surge in anti-Asian hate crimes in 2020. To the many Asian members of our department's community of staff, students, and faculty, I hope that I speak for all of us when I say that you belong here, and you, like all of us, deserve an environment free of hate and violence. I was pleased that NYU President Andrew Hamilton issued a [statement](#) in February about the rise in anti-Asian bias in New York, and a recent [condemnation](#) of the Georgia shootings and the climate in which they arose.

When things like this happen, it may give us hope to remember that, as sociologists, we have tools that allow us to discover and show others what is going on. Indeed, many are doing important public sociology on the issue. Sociologist Jennifer Lee at Columbia recently wrote for [Brookings](#) about the rise of anti-Asian violence, as well as about recent evidence of [solidarity](#) between Black and Asian Americans. On CNN, sociologist Grace Kao of Yale talked about the history of anti-Asian immigration legislation. She also talked about her personal experience of being repeatedly asked where she is from (answer: San Francisco, USA); sociologist Shamus Khan of Princeton recently tweeted about having the same experience. Sociologist Kimberly Kay Hoang of University of Chicago, writing in [Vox](#), made the intersectional point that racialized misogyny often affects how Asian women are treated. A graduate of our doctoral program, Miliann Kang, writing in [Ms.](#) suggests ways to think about massage parlors, sex work, and the murders in Georgia. As sociologists, we know that most outcomes have multiple causes, so while it makes sense to debate which factors have larger, smaller, or no effects, it makes little sense to debate whether a particular type of violence was explained by mental health problems, racism, sexism, increased exposure to xenophobic discourse, *or* lack of laws against guns—with an implicit assumption that it must be only one.

Finally, we're not only sociologists, we're also people with feelings. Many of us are feeling grief, fear, anger, and sadness. If you are having a hard time dealing with current events, pandemic-related stress, or anything else, I encourage you to take care of yourself. Some of these NYU resources might be helpful.

For Students:

- NYU Wellness Exchange hotline (212) 443-9999 and [website](#)
- NYU Health and Wellness [virtual counseling](#) and [app](#)
- [Student Health Center services](#)
- [NYC Well App Library](#)

For Faculty/staff:

- [NYU Employee Assistance](#)
- [NYU Workplace Wellness](#)
- [NYC Well App Library](#)

I'm grateful to be a part of this community and wish you all the hope of springtime.

--Paula England, Chair, Department of Sociology