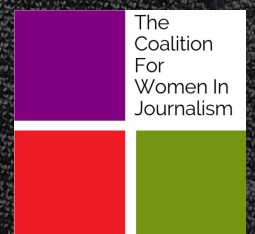


ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN JOURNALISTS ON THE FRONTLINE OF HATE AND NEGLIGENCE, CFWIJ REPORTS



2021
REPORT



ABOUT US

The Coalition For Women In Journalism (CFWIJ) is a global organization of support for women journalists. The CFWIJ pioneered mentorship for mid-career women journalists across several countries around the world and is the first organization to focus on the status of free press for women journalists. Our network of individuals and organizations brings together the experience and mentorship necessary to help female career journalists navigate the industry. Our goal is to help develop a strong mechanism where women journalists can work safely and thrive.

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Violence towards Asian American communities on the rise: A legacy of the Trump era continues.

Hate crimes against Asian-Americans have significantly increased since the Covid-19 pandemic. Numerous incidents of discrimination, violence, and verbal and physical assaults have been reported since the former U.S. president, Donald Trump, coined terms such as “Kung flu” and “China virus” to reference the coronavirus. The former president also insinuated that Chinese people were responsible for the outbreak of the virus in the country, while his administration underplayed the severity of the pandemic in the United States. During this time the CFWIJ recorded several incidents of Asian-American women journalists at the receiving end of vicious xenophobic and racist comments online from the former president. The hate-fuelled by right-wing groups online is now showing its physical manifestation. The most recent incident was the shooting of eight Asian women in Atlanta on March 16, 2021. According to early details, the shooter deliberately targeted women of Asian descent.



CFWIJ observes rise in hate-crimes against Asian Americans:

According to reported figures shared by the Asian American Journalists Association, hate crimes against Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities have increased 150 percent since 2020 according to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism. At least 3,795 reports of anti-Asian hate were recorded by the estimate of Stop AAPI Hate reporting center. Russell Jeung, a co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate, stated that more than 3000 cases of verbal and physical assaults were recorded just in one year since the launch of this platform in March 2020.

However, Juju Chang, Nightline co-anchor at ABC, believes that while the recent attacks on the Asian-American community may have garnered some media attention, the figures are still underreported. She said that the problem is more widespread across the social and economic spectrum within the country. The journalist strongly believes in the importance of allyship and considers that coalition helps create a stronger, more truthful narrative.

The Coalition For Women In Journalism has observed a clear rise in difficult and at times hateful treatment towards Asian American journalists and women in particular. Over the last two years, especially, we have received many complaints of newsroom discrimination across the United States, apart from the obstacles and unsafe environment they have had to maneuver in the field.



CFWIJ expresses concerns about threats faced by Asian American women journalists:

The CFWIJ acknowledges the struggle of Asian-American women journalists and stands in solidarity with all of them in the face of discrimination.

Many hard-working and talented Asian-American journalists have also shared how they were gaslighted in newsrooms, and at times, by the former president of the United States, Donald Trump.

CFWIJ regularly documents the discrimination and hate-driven cases against women journalists that can be documented publicly. But we also have received numerous confidential reports where journalists are not comfortable sharing their experiences publicly fearing this would affect their work and private life negatively.

“It is an unfortunate pattern that we saw was ever-present but is arising even harder since the onslaught of the pandemic,” said Kiran Nazish CFWIJ founding director. “Newsrooms, editors, colleagues urgently need to pay attention to their work ethic, language and attitude towards Asian Americans in their newsrooms. And we urge newsrooms to build support systems with a spine that can hold when Asian American journalists are receiving threats on the ground while doing their job. This is the responsibility of every newsroom.”



CFWIJ highlighted the attacks on Asian-American women journalists from political office:

Weijia Jiang, experienced hostile behaviour from President Trump. When she questioned him on his government's delayed response to the pandemic, Trump responded by telling a perfectly calm Weijia to "relax" and "keep your voice down". On another occasion, he told Jiang to "ask China" when she questioned him about his mishandling of the pandemic.

Patsy Widakuswara was reassigned after she questioned secretary general Mike Pompeo as he left the news agency office. Patsy was reassigned to the VOA Indonesian service by the director for shouting her questions at the Secretary of State. Twenty-six reporters called for the resignation of the VOA director for prioritizing Pompeo's appeasement over Widakuswara's right to hold him accountable.



CFWIJ covered the police violence Asian American women journalists had to face:

It is no surprise that when the President and his aides attempted to frame Asian-American journalists as “angry” troublemakers responsible for the outbreak of the coronavirus in the United States, law enforcement agencies targeted them with physical and verbal violence as well.

Photographer Maye-E Wong was verbally and physically assaulted by police officers during her coverage of a Manhattan protest on June 4, 2020. Police officers yelled expletives at her and ordered her to go home.

Josie Huang, a KPCC reporter, was apprehended on September 13, 2020, while reporting on the arrest of a protester in Lynwood. Josie was pushed to the ground despite identifying herself as a journalist.

CFWIJ reported on the racist attitudes Asian American women journalists were subjected to by Right Wing groups:

It was only natural then, that citizens who were supporters of right-wing politics, acted in a similar manner.

CNN anchor Amara Walker was subjected to racist attacks three times within a single hour on November 5, 2020, at a New Orleans airport. In a Twitter thread, Amara shared how one man approached her with racial slurs, and another asked her if she could speak English.

On January 9, 2021, Sarah Jeong highlighted how right-wing supporter Andy Ngo's hateful rhetoric has caused her and fellow journalists great pain. Sarah could not speak out against him for fear of what his supporters might do to her in retaliation.

Seung Min Kim had to endure extensive trolling consisting of hateful racist and sexist attacks on February 26, 2021. The journalist presented information to senator Murkowski about Neera Tanden, a nominee for Director of the Office of Management and Budget. Seung's picture with senator Murkowski received a barrage of hateful comments.

While this is of course by no means an exhaustive list, the Coalition For Women In Journalism admires the strength of Asian-American women journalists in the face of discrimination and hatred. We understand that the levels of power Asian American women journalists have to face when misogyny and racism intersect can be a true test of strength. Another example of this is Vivian Lee, who stands steadfast in her claim of gender discrimination against her previous employer.

We stand in solidarity with organizations working for Asian-American and Pacific Islander communities and people of color and commend the effort and commitment women journalists devoted to their journalism. We support the dedicated women journalists and condemn the hateful xenophobic attacks they have had to endure over the years.



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