

QUESTIONS FROM

Susan Cain, *Quiet, The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking,*
Chapter 8, "Soft Power: Asian-Americans and the Extrovert Ideal,"

[The following reading seems to deal in much racial and ethnic stereotyping; who knows the truth of the matter. But as you read this, keep track of—be prepared to list by the end--three stereotypical attributes of Asian Students or Asian Education as compared to Western students and the Western educational system.]

We will be studying geniuses in this course, but here are a couple of initial questions:
Based on what you know from your general education, are the iconic geniuses throughout history introverts or extroverts?
What happens if you keep all of your ideas to yourself?
Is it possible to be an introvert personally but an extrovert intellectually?

p. 181. "I'm a lot more interested in listening to what the teacher says and being the good student . . ." What exactly, in your opinion, IS "the [or a] good student"?

p. 181: "If I have a choice between doing something for myself, like going out with my friends, or staying home and studying, I think of my parents. That gives me the strength to keep studying." Name an instance where you did sometime that really "cost you something" because it was the right thing to do for your parents. If you can't name one, don't be afraid to say "Can't name one."

p. 182: Why might second generation Asian-American's (or any second generation immigrants) be "risk averse?" And to hypothesize wildly, if this is true, will 4th and 5th generation immigrants be less risk averse? Are geniuses risk averse or do they have a high tolerance for risk, what do you think?

p. 182: Are good study habits and sky-high test scores marks of genius? What do Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, Oprah Winfrey, Mark Zuckerberg, Nicola Tesla, and Albert Einstein all have in common? At one point or another, each of them _____

p. 184 bottom: "listening, writing, reading, and memorization" are characteristics of East Asian classrooms, or so it is said here. Interesting question: how important is the capacity to memorize to the genius. Did Einstein have an Einstein-like memory?

p.185: Discusses "going off subject". How important is it to stay "on subject" in life. Do geniuses stay "on subject?" Can you name a profession or two in which it is essential that you always follow the rules to the last letter—where being original is a liability, perhaps even criminal?

p. 185: Will we in this class consider it "rude" if you participate in class or "rude" if you don't?

p. 185 bottom: “Another [instructor] vowed to make class participation part of the grade in order to prod Asian students to speak in class. “You’re supposed to downgrade yourself in Chinese learning because other thinkers are so much greater than you,” said a third.

Does the Asian system, to generalize broadly, inculcate a sense of inferiority? How might it help a genius to be supremely self-confident? Are you likely to do more or less thinking if you believe that “other thinkers are so much greater than you”?

p. 189 top: [Pursuing stereotypes] Many Asia cultures place value on harmony within the _____. Whereas Western culture, by contrast is organized around the _____. (Thought question: make a case, of you were 80 years old and in good health, it would be better to live in Beijing than Boston (or any Western city).

p. 189: Match the picture with the emotion. Asian societies Western societies
domination pictures submissive pictures

p. 190: When displeasure, fear, or opposition is expressed in an Asian culture, is it more likely to be done in the form of _____ (which may be why Korean Airline pilots have a record of crashing—remind me to mention Gladwell on that point, *Outliers*, Chapter 7)

a. a question b. a declamatory statement c. a criticism

p. 191 middle: According to this, is being loud and brash a way to popularity and wealth (or even the presidency) in Western culture?

p. 194: What is the “bamboo ceiling” even though it may not be called that here?

p 197-200: discusses Gandhi The suggestion in all of this reading is that the true leader is actually a quiet introvert. We will discuss this in class with regard to the “leader,” the “successful person” and the “genius.” But for the moment, was Gandhi a shy, quiet, leader? And which great American was his intellectual disciple? Which great American president, arguably the greatest, was shy and quiet? Thus, what might we conclude about the relevance of being shy and quiet to genius.

- there seems to be a correlation
- there does not seem to be a correlation
- there might be a correlation, but the issues if far from clear