



Ten Things Every Brand Should Know About Asian-American Youth

New York, NY, SnapDragon Consultants, Feb 14, 2007 - SnapDragon Consultants, a brand insights firm, today released: “Ten Things Every Brand Should Know About Asian-American Youth.”

These insights were developed by SnapDragon in partnership with Kate Rigg, an Asian-American, award-winning performer and playwright, and are part of an ongoing initiative to deliver qualitative research and high-level insights on Asian-American youth to marketers interested in reaching this influential and growing demographic.

“Ten Things Every Brand Should Know About Asian-American Youth” is derived from Rigg’s recent discussions with hundreds of Asian-American youth as background for an upcoming piece at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC, where Rigg will be headlining at the Museum’s Asian Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebration.

“Very few ad agencies, research firms or marketing executives work directly with artists. But when it comes to generating insights, artists are often the most acute observers of culture and brands can benefit tremendously from having artists involved in the research and planning process,” said Deidre Sullivan, president of SnapDragon. “Kate Rigg adds value to SnapDragon research because she lives, breathes and speaks for a demographic that is often not clearly understood: Asian-American Youth.”

Over the past four months, Rigg interviewed students ages 14-23 in nine cities and towns (Amherst/MA, Anchorage, Honolulu, New York, Oakland, Portland/ME, San Jose, San Francisco, Seattle). They shared their thoughts, feelings and dreams around growing up in America.

Key insights included:

1. Many Asian-American youth feel excluded and misunderstood by most brands. It’s made worse by the fact that they see advertisers actively wooing the African-American and Hispanic markets.
2. Mixed race kids are proudly identifying as Hapa, a once derogatory word in Hawaiian to mean “half.” Hapa is also slang for marijuana in Japanese (spelled Happa). Hapa is supplanting terms like Amerasian, biracial, and blasian.
3. Asian-American youth are secret fans of “easy listening” adult contemporary music. Lite FM is a hidden passion.
4. There’s a “hero gap” among Asian-American kids, which is being filled for many by activists from other cultures. Martin Luther King is a role model and hero to many young Asian-Americans.
5. Most Asian-American kids refer to white people as “white people” the same way African-Americans do.
6. Underage gambling is huge. The “new” American poker obsession is nothing new to Asian-American kids and gambling has a long history in Asian culture. Many students Rigg spoke with are avid online gamblers and cardplayers. Many organize private online poker tournaments.
7. Asian-American kids want an end to the hyper-nerdy images of themselves on TV and want to see more punked-out skater and graffiti DJ images which reflect a different energy. The feeling is: Enough with the math geeks, future doctors and violinists. Asian-American kids crave street credibility—not just academic accolades.
8. Asian-American kids universally hate the question: Where are you from—especially since the answers are usually something like “Westchester” or “Boston.”
9. All things Korean are hot and getting hotter. Fashion. Foods. DJs. Online communities. Korea is the new Japan.
10. The 15 minutes of seemingly benign American Idol fame for William Hung had a surprisingly negative effect on Asian-American students. There’s a feeling that Hung perpetuated the worst stereotypes about Asian people and gave non-Asians permission to indulge in two years of racial stereotyping and mocking.



About Kate Rigg

Juilliard-trained Rigg is the force behind such cult hit shows as: Kate’s Chink-o-rama and the critically acclaimed play Birth of a nASIAN. She is also the front person/lyricist for the urban Asian hip-hop duo Slanty Eyed Mama which has been featured on NPR and the PBS special Race is the Place. Rigg has been called “a modern Lenny Bruce” (SF Examiner) and named one of Canada’s coolest exports for her “In Your Face Slanted” comedy (TIME Magazine).

About SnapDragon Consultants

SnapDragon Consultants, based in New York City, provides strategic branding and consumer research products and services, including focus groups, one-one-one interviews, ethnography, and tribal immersions (two-day tours into a specific demographic or subculture). On the branded entertainment side, SnapDragon develops and consults on book, film and online video projects.

In the coming weeks, SnapDragon will be posting short video excerpts from Rigg’s research at www.snapdragonconsultants.com. For more information on having SnapDragon develop an insight report on Your Brand and the Asian-American Opportunity, contact Deidre Sullivan directly at DS@Snapdragonconsultants.com or 866-398-1104

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