

AF:	Hi, my name is Alexa Feathers and I'm here to interview	
ST:	Samneang Tho	
AF:	In Tacoma Washington discussing racism, culture, identity, and ethnicity. So, how long have you lived here in Tacoma?	
ST:	Um, consistently I've lived here all my life so far.	
AF:	So you haven't lived anywhere else?	
ST:	Not for like an extended period of time. There's been times where, um, I've been with family in California for like, months and months, but it's never been like a, home home ya know.	
AF:	Mhm. Not like you haven't lived there for years.	
ST:	Yeah	
AF:	Mm. How're, how's California different from Tacoma?	
ST:	It's very different, first off the weather. It's immediately different over there, ya know it's like hot most the time and it's sunny, but its', it's fun and it feels not more local but it, well not for me at least it doesn't feel local.	
AF:	Where did you live in California?	
ST:	Umm, Long Beach, California and I have family in Murrieta.	
AF:	Yeah Murrieta is a lot different from like, Tacoma because you're surrounded by mountains there and it's like a microwave in Murrieta.	
ST:	Mhm it get's so hot there.	
AF:	So, moving on from that, what's your ethnicity?	
ST:	I consider myself Asian but specifically Cambodian.	
AF:	Just Cambodian?	
ST:	Well I know there's like other stuff, I'm not too sure of it. But mostly I just go Cambodian.	
AF:	Mm. So have you ever experienced any type of discrimination, microaggressions, racism, from like peers, adults, schools?	
ST:	Uhh, in, a lot of the times when I was younger, especially at like school, there would be kids who would like jokingly do things like if they weren't Asian. They would jokingly do things that were very clearly racist like ya know stereotypical stuff like, "ching chong", do stuff with there eyes. They'll, I was gonna say misgender but not, they'll get my ethnicity wrong and they'll just like assume things	
AF:	Like, like on purpose? Or they wouldn't even ask you. Was it, was it more like ignorance?	
ST:	I, I think it was more ignorance but at the same time they didn't care enough to ask so. So that's been what most of my experience with it has been, especially when I was younger and not so much as I got older. I think the last time I remember it happening, was, was like 6 <sup>th</sup> , 7 <sup>th</sup> grade. And maybe I'm just not noticing it or maybe it just doesn't happen as much.	
AF:	Yeah. Uhm. So moving on from that you know what the model minority myth is right?	
ST:	Yes I'm very familiar with it	
AF:	Mhm. Has it affected you in any kind of way?	
ST:	Yeah, even, even without knowing it because I had just learned about it, technically last year but it's, it's something that has always weighed on me and I think like, no offense to my parents but they, they, push it on me without noticing, it's, or without knowing they are because like, at the end of the day they want the best for me, but with their standards its like, it just	

	feels too much. And then I later found out that it's the model minority and I've always heard in the media that like, Asian kids specially always, or were always high up and they always needed to do their best, and I just never realized like where it came from, but it's definitely been something that I've gone through my whole life, like experiencing without even realizing it.	
AF:	Have you felt like, like a pressure is always on you to like, always do good in school, always get the best grades, always like, ya know that kind of stuff, just always excel at something?	
ST:	Yeah I've always felt that, especially with my own grades, it's always something I want to work towards even if they're good, like, I always want it to be better, and a lot of times, I, I probably am capable, but my stress of wanting to do better holds me back sometimes.	
AF:	Would you like to move on to a different question or do you wanna keep talking about the model minority myth?	
ST:	We can move on.	
AF:	So when was your earliest memory of seeing or experiencing racism?	
ST:	I can't think of a specific time exactly but I'm probably gonna assume it was from a movie or show.	
AF:	It is kind of vague, a bit of a vague question. Have you seen like, any of your siblings, mom, experience it at all.	
ST:	Not really honestly. Umm. I've never personally like, seen them deal with it or like heard them deal with it.	
AF:	So it just came from media that you saw it from?	
ST:	A lot of the time yeah.	
AF:	So moving on from that let's talk about culture. Have you ever felt connected to your culture?	
ST:	Yeah, I'm not, I'm not super big on my culture but ya know I'll, I'll do things every now and then with my family and it, it, I do feel a sense of connection like when I'm praying or I'm like, out and about at the temple or something ya know, I'm seeing all these people who are like celebrating the same thing as me and are doing the same. It's, there is some connection there.	
AF:	When you go to the temple do you feel like a sense of community when you're there, like, because before we've talked about this before when you go the temple during new years you tend to like party and eat with family members and people that you don't really know all that well, but does it feel like you have a sense of community there?	
ST:	Yeah for sure, especially, especially on holidays because like, everyone's there for a good time, they're celebrating culture so, ya know you walk in and at first you may be feeling like "I don't really know anyone all too well" but after like, 20-30 minutes you're playing games, you're gambling, you're having fun, you're partying. It's, it's just a good time, and its, they really help you, help you feel connected there.	
AF:	What are some ways you practice your culture or have practiced your culture?	
ST:	Um, so on new years what we do is, we have these like, sticks? And you, you light them on fire, it's, the way I'm describing it is a bit bad, but it's like a slow burning stick and we use it to pray to like our ancestors, to like Buddha and whatnot for blessings, and things like that.	
AF:	Is it the incense? Or is it something else.	
ST:	Is that what it's called?	
AF:	Yeah incense are like, the sticks that you light and they smell good and they give off a lot of smoke.	
ST:	Yes, I, it doesn't, the ones we use don't have a smell but it's yes, it's that.	

AF:	Yeah the closest thing I can think of too would be like incense. So when did you feel the most connected to your culture in your life. Like this could be from as soon a couple months ago or like, as far as you a little kid?	
ST:	Yeah, uuuh, in recent times I honestly haven't really been doing as much, I haven't gone to the temple in a while, I'll still do things at home but back when I was younger I would always go with like, my grandma, and like my siblings, and I'd always see like friends there, and I think one of the times when I was younger is probably when I felt the most connected with it, because that was when I was, I was really into it, especially at the temples during the holidays.	
AF:	What would you do at the temples?	
ST:	We would, I love playing this game, it's called Klah Klok. It's, so so you have a board and it has 6 pictures, you basically bet which one is gonna get rolled. Then a dice is rolled that has all the pictures on it, and then there's like a crab, that's all I remember, there's different animals and stuff, and it's basically just like a guessing game. That we also gambled in a little.	
AF:	So, before we talked about your experience with monks, and that kind of stuff, would you like to talk about that?	
ST:	I could talk about that a little. I, I don't remember too much, it was, when I was, I wasn't super young, I would probably say like 5 <sup>th</sup> grade. Um, you know how like some people go to like, camps in the summer. That's that's basically what this was. I would, I would just like go there, like hang out. I was there for like a couple days, on and off for like a month and I would just go there, hang out, they'd like, teach you some stuff, show me some things. It was just an interesting experience to see like, what they did, and how they always interacted with other people.	
AF:	So, have you ever felt a sense of imposter syndrome when it comes to your ethnicity and culture? Or have you felt like, have you felt like, "yeah this feels right to me" or have you felt like, "I don't really feel it all that much"	
ST:	I think in that sense maybe a little, because I've never been super big on religion and honestly most the time when I do it it's because of like my families doing it so I'm like, "yeah alright, I'm, I'm in" but, I don't know, maybe since I'm not super connected I don't know. I just don't really know how I feel about it a lot of the time.	
AF:	So, that is all the questions that I have for you. Thank you very much Sam.	
ST:	Of course.	
AF:	It was nice doing this with you.	
ST:	Thank you for having me.	