

An open letter from David Tse about British Chinese/East Asian under representation

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David Tse Ka-shing writes an open letter about British Chinese/East Asian under representation in mainstream media.

Stephen Moss recently conducted a UK-wide survey of 100 people on 'What does being British mean to you?'

Not a single British Chinese/East Asian (BC/EA) person was interviewed. At 1.6% of the national population, this is an unacceptable oversight during London 2012, with the Olympic/Paralympic aspirations of inclusive diversity.

This practice of rendering the UK's third largest ethnic minority 'invisible' is reminiscent of the 7Up 2000 documentary series for the BBC – a new version of the Up! Series recreated with 21st century children (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/7Up_2000) – which made great efforts to include diverse White kids (region and class), Black and South Asian kids, a disabled child and even a recent Eastern European immigrant girl, but failed to include a single BC/EA child, despite these communities' long history in the UK.

So when 14Up 2000 aired in 2007 – and every subsequent 7 years – this major ongoing TV series suggested that BC/EAs don't exist in the UK, which is clearly ridiculous. A complaint to the BBC Commissioning Editor at the time produced the response that they couldn't find anyone suitable. The truth is that they didn't try hard enough twelve years ago, and unfortunately, this slack attitude continues to be reflected in Mr Moss's article in 2012.

Such pernicious 'under the radar' reporting/representation distorts the accurate picture of modern Britain, contributing to ignorance and negative stereotyping of BC/EA communities, with detrimental consequences on uninformed politicians, policy-makers, commissioning editors, casting directors, funders, reviewers and other gatekeepers.

This is especially concerning with the rise of China in economic and cultural terms, and when greater mutual understanding and respect is needed. Let's ensure that London 2012 Olympics really creates a contemporary legacy that we can all be proud of, and with a collective, positive spirit, help the UK move on from its colonial past.

Let's get more British Chinese/East Asians on TV, film, theatre & radio: <http://www.gopetition.com/petition/38249.html>;

Let's get more British Chinese into politics: info@bcproject.org

Yours,

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