



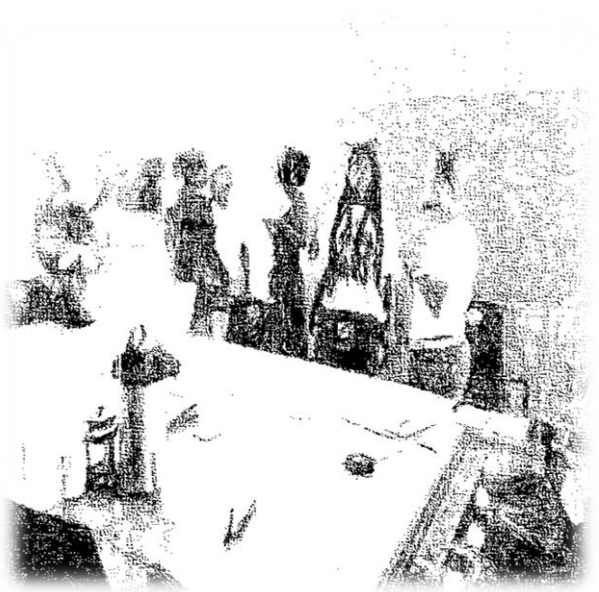
## We Won't 'Cool it Down'

Words

by

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**Gender stereotypes** are often endured and drilled into the mentalities of Asian and Black women across the world. This has been ongoing for many generations. **These misogynistic ideas have been formed and shaped by history, media and cultural expectations.** People could argue and dismiss this issue as outdated, since now women have rights and freedoms. However, in countries around the world today **women are restricted** from continuing their education, pursuing a career and **even have no say about their own body.** Some people view this all as too global or say "*at least we're not experiencing this **right?***" "



**"Wrong!"** Many women from **Asian and African backgrounds** face criticism, solely based on gender, from people as close as **immediate family members** today. For example, young women in our focus groups for **Authoring Our Own Stories** expressed a frustration at having to challenge the family expectation that they should be willing to curb their education and career aspirations to attract a male partner

and marry. One young



woman said that she was told to 'cool it down...' to avoid appearing too threatening to a future husband. She also **shared her love and commitment to her family and culture** and acknowledged the emotional conflict so many women go through as they navigate external expectations with their own, internal aspirations to succeed.

Raising awareness about the prevailing issues of gender stereotypes **isn't about assigning blame** - it's about acknowledging how these narratives often shrink the full spectrum of who women are.

We must all continue to use our influence to challenge the stereotypical roles assigned to women and girls by society and **help them find their own voice!**



