

RESEARCH PROJECT BRIEF
MARCH 2022

EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE & ANTI-ASIAN XENOPHOBIA DURING COVID-19



PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY
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UC
SPEAKS UP

UCLA

DOUBLE JEOPARDY

EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ANTI-ASIAN XENOPHOBIA AMONG UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA STUDENTS DURING COVID-19

FOCUSING ON ASIAN COLLEGE STUDENT COMMUNITIES

During the COVID-19 pandemic, xenophobia against the Asian population has increased dramatically. Close to 40% of participants from a national study conducted in 2020 said racist and racially insensitive views about Asians have increased since the start of pandemic (Ruiz, Horowitz, & Tamir, 2020). With the rapid increase of reported hate-crimes, it is likely that the incidence of sexual violence and sexual harassment against Asians has increased as well. At the same time, the hostile environment may decrease survivors' motivation to seek external help after the incidents.

The underrepresentation of the Asian population in public discussion on widespread discrimination and xenophobia can falsely lead to the conclusion that anti-Asian violence does not merit inclusion in our national debate on and reckoning with systemic racism. This may lead to human rights violations being overlooked, both at the larger societal level and on our UC campus communities. However, as stated by UCLA's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Office, "The images, the footage, the stories, and statistics cannot be ignored. Reports continue to come in of horrifying acts of anti-Asian bias and violence across the country" (UCLA, 2021). Self-reported rates of violence against Asians have been particularly high over the past year (Gover, Harper, & Langton, 2020), but data are limited. Data on gender-based violence among Asian American and Asian international college students are especially scarce.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This 12-month research study to examine intersections of sexual violence and sexual harassment (SVSH) and anti-Asian racism and discrimination (in both covert and overt forms) that University of California (UC) students from Asian communities have experienced. We will utilize mixed methods including 1) surveys and semi-structured in-depth interviews and 2) two transmedia storytelling methods including photovoice and installation art. We aim to assess types of SVSH and anti-Asian racism, discrimination and xenophobia Asian undergraduate and graduate students across the UC have been exposed to during/after the COVID-19 pandemic. Our research methods are informed by intersectional, community-engaged frameworks (McCauley, Campbell, Buchanan, & Moylan, 2019) guided by trauma-informed practices (Campbell, Goodman-Williams, & Javorka, 2019) and survivor-centered principles (Ghanbarpour et al., 2018).

Throughout the research process, we will consistently prioritize study participants' confidentiality and safety, following UCLA Human Research Protection Program guidelines and consent procedures. All participants will be provided detailed information on available survivor resources. We aim to generate both scientific evidence and transmedia artwork to provide study participants with a safe space to express themselves and heal by "valuing cultural intelligence rooted in norms, history, language, experience of inequities and oppression, and lived experiences" (Ghanbarpour et al., 2018, p.532) of students from diverse Asian communities. Findings generated from our research will be used to inform culturally-appropriate, campus-based services for the Asian population.

OUR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim 1. To explore the types and context of sexual violence and sexual harassment Asian students have experienced during their time as a UC student.

Aim 2. To assess relationships between UC Asian students' experiences of sexual violence and sexual harassment, anti-Asian racism, discrimination and xenophobia.

Aim 3. To understand how the rise of anti-Asian discrimination, hate and violence has impacted Asian students' help-seeking behaviors, resilience and coping strategies after their experience of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Aim 4. To develop materials to raise awareness about and inform development of culturally-specific advocacy materials and violence prevention and health promotion services for Asian students across the UC system.





OUR SCOPE OF WORK

THIS SECTION INCLUDES THE PROJECT PROCESSES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EXECUTION.

A two-phased study is implemented between August 1, 2021 and July 31, 2022 virtually across 10 UC campuses.

Phase One Mixed-Method Research

We conduct an online survey to assess changes in sexual violence and sexual harassment students experienced, microaggression, and mental and physical health before and after the onset of COVID-19. After the survey, we conduct 60-minute in-depth interviews with up to 30 Asian international students and 30 Asian American students (or until we reach data saturation), recruited from across the 10 UC campuses. The interviews aim to assess Asian students' experiences of and recovery from SVSH, with a focused exploration of how participants feel the rise of anti-Asian racism, discrimination and xenophobia has impacted their resilience, their ability to heal, and their physical and mental wellbeing and health.

Phase Two Transmedia approach

The second phase use a transmedia approach to conduct two unique but complementary storytelling techniques: photovoice and installation art (Frohmann, 2005). Photovoice is a participatory research method that engages and empowers participants to tell their own personal, lived stories through photography and group dialogue. Transmedia storytelling expands on this approach by providing the participant with multiple additional media platforms to use to expand their narrative over time. Photovoice and transmedia storytelling approaches have been found to provide a more culturally competent way for marginalized individuals to both express themselves and deepen their understanding of important (often traumatic) issues or concerns.



PROJECT TIMELINE

TASK	START	END
PHASE 01 STUDY PREPARATION AND IRB APPROVAL	JUNE 2021	OCTOBER 2021
PHASE 02 SURVEY AND INTERVIEW DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	NOVEMBER 2021	AUGUST 2022
PHASE 03 ART AND TRANSMEDIA WORK	JANUARY 2022	OCTOBER 2022
PHASE 04 REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION	APRIL 2022	DECEMBER 2022



FUNDING SUPPORT

AGENCIES

MARTHA OGATA GRANT TO STUDY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & ABUSE IN ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COMMUNITIES

UCLA ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER

PATRICK AND LILY OKURA RESEARCH GRANT ON ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN MENTAL HEALTH

UCLA ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES CENTER

UCLA RACIAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE GRANT PROGRAM

THE INSTITUTE FOR AMERICAN CULTURES (IAC) IN COLLABORATION WITH THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

INSTITUTIONAL COURAGE RESEARCH GRANT

CENTER FOR INSTITUTIONAL COURAGE

FAIR COLLABORATION PLAN

THE STUDY TEAM REGARDS FAIR COLLABORATION AS AN ETHICAL AND SCIENTIFIC IMPERATIVE THAT ADVANCES KNOWLEDGE AND ARE COMMITTED TO RESPECTING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCHERS AND STUDY PARTICIPANTS.



This mixed method, inter-disciplinary study requires a systematic and iterative process in conducting, analyzing, and disseminating findings. All persons involved in the data collection and analysis will be credited and will be invited to bi-weekly virtual meetings via Zoom to ensure that every member's input is considered; if a person is unable to attend, detailed post-meeting notes will be sent afterward. All members are encouraged to make comments on the meeting notes and related shared files. Each member will lead a sub-project based on areas of expertise. The team will assign responsibilities with opportunities for flexibility and future adjustments to ensure that each member contributes equally.

AS A STUDENT-LED INITIATIVE, UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHERS WILL LEAD DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DESIGN, DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS, AND DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS.

Two principal investigators will 1) oversee the structure of the research team to ensure that the research project progresses according to the protocols approved by the UCLA Human Research Protection Program, 2) advise and consult students on the progress towards outcomes, 3) review and advise reports, posters, manuscripts, and other intellectual products from the project, and 4) lead seeking opportunities for extramural funding and collaboration with other organizations. The research team will follow International Committee of Medical Journal Editors' recommendations for the conduct, reporting, editing, and publication of scholarly work.

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS

THE AWESOME PEOPLE BEHIND THIS PROJECT



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CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR



JIANCHAO LAI

CO-PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR



JENNIFER WAGMAN

FACULTY ADVISOR



NOX YANG

STUDENT RESEARCHER



SEAN SUGAI

STUDENT RESEARCHER



LAUREN MCCARTHY

FACULTY ADVISOR

Eunhee and Jianchao are doctoral students and they lead all aspects of the study as co-principal investigators. Jennifer is an associate professor and she leads UC Speaks Up. Since 2016, she has been the Director of Violence Prevention Research in the UC Global Health Institute Women's Health, Gender and Empowerment Center of Expertise. Nox is an undergraduate researcher, a photographer, and a documentary producer.

Sean is an undergraduate researcher and focuses on medical anthropology, public health, and medicine. Lauren is an Associate Professor at UCLA Design Media Arts. She works with performance, film, photography, and installation to create different layers of experience - related to race, gender, disability, and class - examining boundaries around our intimate spaces.

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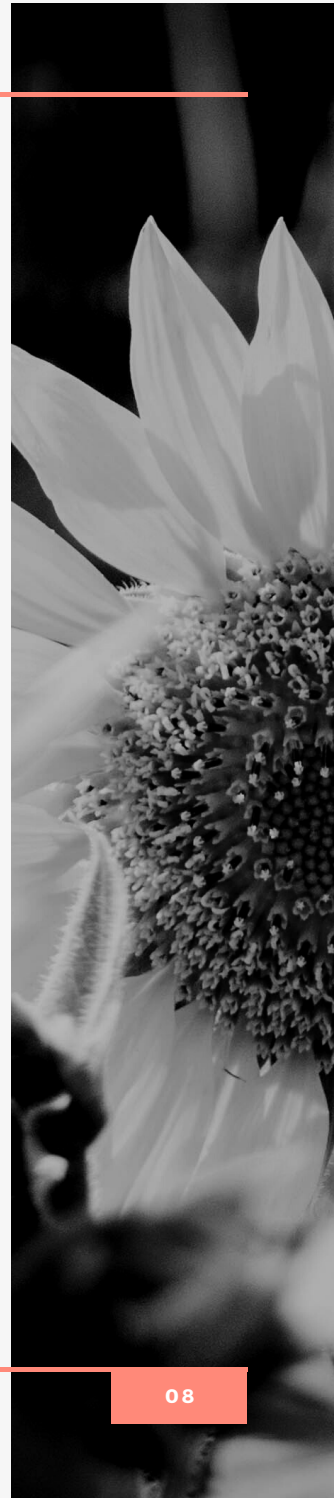
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LEARNING AND DISSEMINATION

THE LEARNING AND DISSEMINATION FROM THIS STUDY WILL OCCUR IN AN ONGOING FASHION.



Research Reporting and Dissemination

Our team is committed to disseminating all findings and lessons to UCs, public health, social work, and media art communities. Examples of conferences where these results will be shared include: [Institute of Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Annual Summit](#) and [Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum](#). We will seek to publish in a number of peer-reviewed journals, including Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health, Journal of Interpersonal Violence, Gender & Society, Culture, Health & Sexuality, and Social Science & Medicine.

Art and Transmedia Work

Based on the Photovoice project, we will create a short documentary and/or exhibition and submit the work to art festivals like 2022 Sundance Short Film Challenge (expected submission due April 6, 2022) that are designed to support women artists creating new work in film and media, with a priority on filmmakers from historically underrepresented communities. Formal awardee, Prof. McCarthy will advise Ms. Yang on the submission.

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