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Exploring Radical Healing Among Asian/American College Women Survivors of Sexual & Relationship Violence

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ABSTRACT

Healing approaches for survivors of sexual and relationship violence (SRV) on college campuses often focus on individual symptom reduction and are often limited by traditional punitive responses to SRV. Such dominant approaches to supporting survivors overlook the cultural and communal needs of Asian/American (A/A) college women, who are often underrepresented in SRV research. Rooted in A/A women's epistemologies, this study explores how A/A college women survivors engage in healing through culturally situated practices. Research collaborators engaged in Yum Chas and Rice Roundtables, two de/colonial and collectivist methods that drew upon a lineage of A/A ways of healing. Findings reveal how A/A women cultivate healing by re/embodying (a) food for the *whole* body, (b) solidarities with other A/A women, and (c) ancestral and intergenerational wisdom. This research underscores the need for higher education institutions to move beyond Western-centric, individualistic, and punitive models to support culturally resonant, systemic healing for A/A women survivors.

Keywords: Asian American women, sexual violence, relationship violence, healing

High rates of sexual and relationship violence (SRV) persist on college campuses, affecting a significant proportion of students (Cantor et al., 2020). A national study found that 11.9% and 10.5% of Asian/American (A/A) college women reported experiencing SRV (Cantor et al., 2020), although actual rates may be higher due to institutional mistrust (Koo et al., 2015) and cultural norms that discourage open discussions about sex (Kim & Ward, 2007; Okazaki, 2002; Trinh et al., 2014). A/A women survivors often face compounded mental and physical health challenges, including depression, suicidal ideation (Hahm et al., 2017), and PTSD symptoms

(Buchanan et al., 2018), which are exacerbated by societal trauma and systemic oppression (Bryant-Davis et al., 2009).

Current campus SRV policies primarily focus on carceral, punitive, and legalistic measures (Shepp et al., 2023) that do not address the culturally specific needs of A/A survivors. These policies often overlook the unique cultural, familial, and societal dynamics that shape A/A women's experiences and healing processes, leaving them unsupported within predominantly Western frameworks of SRV campus response. Consequently, A/A survivors face barriers to accessing effective support, as these policies fail to account for their distinct healing practices and community-centered approaches.

In this study, I collaborated with thirteen A/A college women survivors of SRV to explore the following research question: How do A/A college women survivors draw upon A/A women's ways of knowing, being, and feeling to engage in healing from SRV? This research examines how A/A women survivors use their cultural epistemologies to cultivate healing on college campuses, challenging the dominant SRV literature that predominantly focuses on the experiences of White, cisgender, heterosexual women (Duval et al., 2020; Fedina et al., 2018; Linder et al., 2020). Such limited perspectives obscure the specific healing needs of A/A women, who navigate SRV within intersecting frameworks of patriarchy, racism, and colonialism (INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence, 2016).

Furthermore, existing studies on A/A college women survivors often narrowly address barriers and risks (Bhochhibhoya et al., 2021; Duval et al., 2020; McMahon & Seabrook, 2019). Such research can unintentionally perpetuate deficit ideologies that frame survivors as lacking in resources, as opposed to possessing culturally rich healing wisdom. Additionally, Western-centric psychological treatments frequently overlook People of Color and Indigenous individuals epistemological frameworks (French et al., 2020), marginalizing the value of A/A women's healing practices and treating them as inferior. This study seeks to shift dominant narratives by illuminating culturally rooted, strengths-based healing strategies that honor A/A women's ways of knowing and promote transformative healing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the traumatic effects of SRV, women survivors often engage in a multidimensional, nonlinear healing process (Sinko et al., 2021). However, scholarship in higher education predominantly reflects the experiences of White women survivors, overlooking the unique healing needs and insights of Women of Color. For instance, as many as 80% (Eisenberg et al., 2016) and 95.3% (Hagenaars & van Minnen, 2010) of participants in healing studies were White women. Even studies with significant numbers of Survivors of Color often reduce racial analysis to demographic differences (e.g., Próspero & Kim, 2009; Próspero & Vohra-Gupta, 2008; Shenoy et al., 2010), neglecting critical examinations of how racism and other systems of power shape healing.

Survivors of Color experience SRV within a broader framework of systemic oppression, including colonialism, slavery, genocide, exploitation, racist violence, forced assimilation, and other forms of harm (INCITE! Women of Color Against

Violence, 2016). The compounded effects of SRV and societal oppression (Bryant-Davis et al., 2009; Combahee River Collective, 2015; Crenshaw, 1989) underscore the necessity of an intersectional analysis in healing approaches to address the complex realities faced by Survivors of Color. Yet, intersectional perspectives remain largely absent in the literature, which often focuses on individual-level psychological strategies aimed solely at reducing traumatic symptoms (Bonnan-White et al., 2018; Conley & Griffth, 2016; Eisenberg et al., 2016; Hassija & Turchik, 2016; Kress et al., 200

While conventional approaches to SRV healing often overlook the specific experiences of Survivors of Color, a growing body of work highlights the importance of de/colonial and culturally situated practices that resists systemic oppression, and honors ancestral knowledge and community-based methods. These approaches challenge Western-centric healing models, offering pathways that resonate more deeply with A/A communities and their ways of healing.

De/colonial and Culturally Situated A/A Ways of Healing

Healing requires resisting colonial knowledge systems that promote the false idea that Western- and Euro-centric approaches are the only valid pathways to healing (French et al., 2020). Western notions of healing often emphasize individualism, focusing on interventions aimed at symptom reduction and personal coping, while overlooking the influence of cultural, communal, and systemic factors on well-being. From a psychological standpoint, Millner et al. (2021) and French et al. (2020) argue that healing must be decolonized to better address structures of oppression and the lived experiences of Communities of Color. A de/colonial approach to healing not only supports individual healing but also acknowledges the need for collective, intergenerational, and systemic healing within these communities.

Millner et al. (2021) advocate for an "Asian-centric framework" that encourages A/A communities to reconnect with ancestral culture and land, which can facilitate healing from both SRV and the broader traumas of colonialism. This framework rejects Western psychological norms that individualize trauma, instead offering collective, culturally informed pathways that honor ancestral traditions. Such an approach underscores the need to challenge psychological models rooted in European colonialism and imperialism (Guthrie, 1998; Millner et al., 2021; Mills, 2017), which often conflict with the radical healing needs of Communities of Color. To truly support A/A survivors, communities are urged to "return to ancestral roots" (French et al., 2020, p. 27), grounding their healing in practices that align with their cultural values.

Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) is one example of a culturally situated method of healing that is rooted in A/A ancestral knowledge systems. TCM challenges Western medical models by emphasizing balance and nourishment of the whole person—body, mind, and spirit—through interconnectedness with the material, spiritual, and social environment. TCM assumes that "the capacity to heal lies inside us, not just in the hands of medical experts" (Zhao, 2010, p. 8), offering a holistic approach to healing.

Critical kapwa and *HMong epistemology* are also other examples of Asian-centric healing approaches that honor cultural intuition and emphasize resistance through a de/colonial lens. Rooted in Filipina/o Indigenous psychology, *critical kapwa* (the

interconnectedness of self and others through collective resistance) promotes both individual and collective healing from colonial trauma and other oppressive conditions (Desai, 2016). Although not explicitly directed towards SRV survivors, this approach provides an example of a culturally resonant framework that is rooted in A/A ontoepistemologies that fosters belonging and strength through community-based healing. Similarly, Vue and Mouavangsou (2021) refute colonial and White-dominant perspectives that pathologize and marginalize HMong communities by conceptualizing *HMong epistemology* as a political and psychological intervention for wholeness and liberation.

Recent scholarship has begun embedding critical analyses of power, identity, and oppression in studies of Women of Color college survivors (Harris, 2020; Harris et al., 2021; Karunaratne, 2023a), revealing culturally resonant healing pathways. For instance, Karunaratne (2023a) highlights how South Asian women survivors of dating violence find healing in ways that honor their cultural values, while Harris et al. (2021) explore how academic spaces, body-based practices, and peer support environments foster healing among Women of Color survivors. Harris (2020) found that financial barriers and mental health providers' lack of understanding of historical trauma and cultural nuances often exclude Women of Color from institutional resources, underscoring the need for culturally responsive healing interventions that address systemic challenges. Poon Ghaffari et al. (2023) also reviewed culturally specific strengths and healing traditions that could support healing among Survivors of Color in college.

In sum, this review highlights significant gaps in college SRV scholarship, particularly the limited focus on the unique healing needs of Women of Color, whose experiences are often shaped by intersecting forms of systemic oppression. While mainstream healing approaches typically emphasize individual symptom management, de/colonial and culturally situated frameworks offer more holistic pathways by honoring ancestral knowledge, cultural practices, and collective resilience. As scholarship increasingly recognizes the limitations of Western-centric models, there is a growing call for healing interventions in higher education that reflect the diverse cultural, communal, and systemic dimensions of Survivors of Color's experiences. This study responds to this call by exploring how A/A college survivors reclaim and connect with their lineage of healing wisdom inherited from their elders and ancestors. As a result, this article challenges higher education institutions to provide inclusive and effective healing pathways for Survivors of Color, addressing gaps in dominant, colonial, and identity-neutral models of healing.

Theoretical Framework

Scholars have advocated for culturally situated healing options for survivors (Bryant-Davis, 2005; Singh, 2009). However, no existing frameworks fully address SRV healing that incorporate identity, intersectionality, systemic oppression, and cultural ways of being. Therefore, this study is guided by the combination of French et al.'s (2020) psychological framework of radical healing for People of Color and Indigenous individuals (POCI) and Poon Ghaffari's (2024) Asian critical race feminism

(ACRF). Together, these frameworks shaped the study's methodological approach that centers the experiences and knowledge systems of A/A women.

Radical Healing for POCI

Rooted in liberation psychology, Black psychology, ethnopolitical psychology, and intersectionality theory, French et al. (2020) developed the concept of radical healing rooted in five anchors: critical consciousness, radical hope, strength and resistance, cultural authenticity and self-knowledge, and collectivism. Critical consciousness increases awareness of oppressive structures through reflection, political efficacy, and action. It cultivates radical hope and envisions a liberatory future. Radical hope motivates systemic transformation and reimagines a world beyond current circumstances. Strength and resistance fuel hope and embody joy despite trauma and oppression. By challenging resiliency discourses that promote adaptation over systemic transformation (Bonds, 2018), strength and resistance acknowledges structural racism and commits to transformative collective healing. Cultural authenticity and self-knowledge focus on ancestral ways of knowing. Rejecting colonized knowledge, cultural authenticity challenges White supremacy and Western centricity. Collectivism connects individual liberation to the broader goals of POCI by fostering shared support and empowerment within community, enabling individuals to resist systemic oppression collectively and create counter spaces for storytelling and authentic expression.

Integrating critical consciousness, hope, authenticity, strengths, and collectivism, radical healing extends beyond individual coping with trauma to address systemic issues. Although radical healing explicitly focuses on healing from racism, this intersectional framework also considers the impacts of other oppressive forces, such as sexism. When applied to healing from SRV, a radical healing approach specifically supports Women of Color by addressing the compounded effects of racism and sexism in their SRV experiences (Crenshaw, 1991). Unlike deficit-based approaches that place blame on individuals, radical healing uplifts the knowledge and resources of POCI communities, including A/A women's cultural wisdom, as integral to transforming oppressive structures and envisioning collective liberation.

Asian Critical Race Feminism

Asian critical race feminism (ACRF) is a theoretical framework that integrates Asian critical theory (Museus & Iftikar, 2014), critical race feminism (Wing, 1997), and Asian American feminisms (Fujiwara & Roshanravan, 2018) to affirm the unique experiences, knowledge, and resilience of Asian American women (Poon Ghaffari, 2024). ACRF emphasizes their intersecting identities and challenges deficit-informed stereotypes that depict them as passive or submissive (Mukkamala & Suyemoto, 2018). These stereotypes erase narratives of strength and resistance, causing A/A women to question their cultural resources and rely on external, often oppressive, frameworks for healing (e.g., "master's tools," Lorde, 1984, p. 95). Rooted in the lives of A/A women, ACRF reclaims the value of their lived experiences as essential for healing from societal, sexual, and relational trauma. It asserts that A/A women possess unique

knowledge due to their intersecting identities, recognizing their diverse realities and histories.

Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) is central to ACRF, helping A/A women apply their multiple identities to both healing and liberation, as documented in various anthologies (Asian Women United of California, 1989; Fujiwara & Roshanravan, 2018; Geok-lin Lim et al., 1989; Hune & Nomura, 2003; Kim et al., 1997; Sg, 1989; Shah, 1997). Both ACRF and radical healing frameworks counter deficit-based perspectives by acknowledging A/A women's agency, cultural knowledge, and capacity to resist oppressive systems. Through ACRF, A/A women can cultivate critical consciousness to understand the sociopolitical contexts of their trauma and imagine paths to liberation beyond current circumstances.

French et al.'s (2020) radical healing and Poon Ghaffari's (2024) Asian critical race feminism guided both the construction of my methods and the analysis of data by centering A/A women's cultural knowledge, agency, and collective resilience. Radical healing informed the study's emphasis on community-based practices and systemic analysis, while ACRF shaped data collection methods, such as narrative sharing and cultural artifact elicitation, to honor A/A women's lived experiences and intersecting identities. Together, these frameworks provided an analytical lens that framed A/A women as active agents of healing and transformation, allowing for a holistic understanding of SRV healing rooted in their cultural epistemologies and collective wisdom.

METHODS

Building upon culturally situated methodologies that invite cultural insiders to conduct research with and for their communities (Bhattacharya, 2019b; Smith, 2013), I developed two de/colonial methods—Yum Cha and Rice Roundtables—that prioritize A/A women voices within culturally resonant spaces I facilitated on Zoom. Inspired by Bhattacharya's (2019a) invitation to "theorize from the streets" and Yosso's (2005) emphasis on the knowledge-making resources of Communities of Color, these approaches encourage a reclaiming of cultural practices as valid forms of knowledge sharing.

Yum Cha, named after the Cantonese practice of "drinking tea," was designed to reflect a culturally resonant setting that promotes shared conversation over food and tea. Similar to semi-structured interviews (Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2021), Yum Cha mirrored environments within the Asian diaspora where individuals connect through food and conversation. Rice Roundtables, inspired by the cultural greeting "Have you eaten rice?"—an expression of collective care—fostered spaces for collaborative reflection on community and cultural wisdom as it relates to healing.

Collaborators began with a 90-minute individual Yum Cha session, where I elicited narratives that encouraged self-reflexivity. Later, each collaborator participated in a 90-minute Rice Roundtable with one or two others to discuss how their community and cultural wisdom influenced their healing journeys. Each Roundtable included activities like collage making, body-based movement (e.g., meditation), and collective discussion to reflect and process together. Collaborators were also asked to bring a cultural artifact representing their ancestral and community wisdom.

Following trauma-informed principles, I emphasized progressive consent, transparency, and agency. Collaborators were encouraged to respond only as they felt comfortable, with breathing meditations and breaks integrated throughout to promote safety. I refer to participants as collaborators to underscore our collectivist, equitable relationships and to honor their lived experiences and wisdom. This collaborative approach countered traditional, extractive research methods (Patel, 2015), ensuring that the study foregrounded relationality and collective healing.

Research Collaborator Recruitment and Information

Collaborators had to (a) self-identify as a A/A woman survivor of sexual/relationship violence, (b) be over 18 years of age, (c) be currently attending or recently attended college (i.e., within 3 years) in the United States, and (d) lived in the United States for at least 10 years to allow enough time to experience and reflect on racialization and racial discrimination (Alvarez et al., 2006). I provided the study information on a website where interested individuals could complete an eligibility survey. I recruited through flyers, emails, and social media to personal and professional networks. As a result, 13 A/A women survivors of SRV participated in the research process. Although all collaborators self-identified as A/A women, they also held multifaceted and distinct ethnic identities, including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, and Vietnamese, and some identified as multiracial and multicultural. Eleven collaborators identified as ciswomen, one identified as "nonbinary femme," and one identified as "nonbinary."

Data Analysis

Trusting my "own instincts and impulses to see what unfolds" (Bhattacharya, 2021, p. 383), I applied a de/colonial approach to data analysis by intuitively engaging and reengaging each transcript rooted in deep contemplation and embodiment. I meditated on specific words, phrases, or ideas that intuitively unfolded and served as portals that simultaneously shuttled me in and out of collaborator narratives and my own experiences. As I listened and read through each transcript, I wrote and audio-recorded revelations, emotions, and entanglements as memos that I often revisited throughout the data analysis cycle process. This embodied and contemplative approach served to decolonize my imagination and disrupt colonial knowledge building (Bhattacharya, 2020, 2021) and, instead, privileged the self-knowledge and self-determination of each collaborator.

After reviewing each transcript multiple times, I inductively developed codes by chunking and labeling segments of data (Creswell, 2014; Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2021). I used concept maps to creatively process and further visually categorize codes to create themes. Concept mapping allowed me to analyze the data in an embodied way that honored the liminality of multiple realities and senses often invoked through arts-based methods (Bhattacharya, 2020). Using this study's guiding frameworks and research question, I created several concept maps by inserting quotes, memos, images, and symbols to illuminate how A/A women's cultural wealth shaped healing from SRV.

Trustworthiness and Positionality

As a collectivist researcher, I fostered trustworthiness throughout this study within broader collective struggles for self-determination and transformation. I engaged in relational ways of fostering trustworthiness that made me "answerable" (Patel, 2015, p. 133) to the A/A women in this study. Practices included peer debriefing with A/A women and other Women of Color scholar–practitioners and inviting collaborators to talk back (hooks, 1999; Esposito & Evans-Winters, 2021) to preliminary findings through flexible options, including discussions and sending voice memos, drawings, and emails.

I identify as an A/A woman who has experienced relationship violence and work as a higher education scholar–practitioner in colonial Western academia. I am also the firstborn and only daughter of Chinese immigrants, who first taught me how to draw upon my cultural and ancestral healing wisdom in times of distress. My experiences as a sexual violence prevention educator, trauma-informed yoga teacher, and survivor advocate in higher education have connected me with several A/A women survivors, who often shared their cultural-situated ways of healing and the structural barriers they navigated. My experiences and conversations with these A/A women survivors inspired me to design a culturally situated study that centered our healing wisdom in both the methodological design and research purposes. Considering my positionality as an insider–outsider, I engaged in critical reflexive memo-writing throughout the study to examine my subjectivities.

FINDINGS

After experiencing SRV, A/A women collaborators illuminated how they re/embodied their ways of "being" through three culturally situated ways of healing: (a) Food for the Whole Body, (b) A/A Women Solidarities, and (c) Intergenerational and Ancestral Wisdom. Re/embodying their being led collaborators to embrace their wholeness and gain critical consciousness about their trauma as a way to resist against oppressive forces.

Re/embodying Being: Food for the Whole Body—"Food Is My Self-Care"

Food for the Whole Body encompassed how A/A women nourished their physical, emotional, and spiritual bodies by connecting with others through food. Collaborators shared that food was more than a biological necessity but a culturally situated and embodied way of gleaning collective knowledge and experiencing social support, all of which supported how they sought help and navigated healing.

Cassie, a Chinese woman, created a collage during her Rice Roundtable that illustrated how cultural wealth shaped her healing; she chose images of dim sum, tea, and people gathering over food (see Figure 1 for Cassie's collage). Recalling the "potluck mentality" she particularly highlighted in her Yum Cha, Cassie shared the significance of the images she chose for her collage:

> This idea of food playing a really huge role in my healing. I just identified this kind of trend of seeing all these different foods kind of come together and people aren't

> necessarily talking about anything super serious, but you can see that people are bringing different things to the table. And I remember talking about this in my Yum Cha interview, too, of everybody brings a little bit of something and it's a little bit different, but together they all make up one big communal space or one kind of combined and beautiful array of dishes to make up one kind of family gathering.

Cassie connected food with social support because she grew up attending banquets, potlucks, and dim sum with friends and family. Rooted in collectivist traditions, Cassie's potluck mentality influenced how she sought various perspectives as she navigated healing after her abusive relationship. Collective wisdom from trusted others helped her acknowledge the complexity of her relationship violence, nourish her consciousness, and find ways to heal.

Figure 1. Cassie's Collage

> [Alternate text: A graphic sequence depicting a woman followed by an arrow leading to an anxious seated figure with conversation bubbles containing '?', 'X', and '!!!'. Another arrow leads to a smaller woman next to a disguised face wearing sunglasses and a hat, followed by a final arrow pointing to a clock. This collage also has images of cultural symbols, including seaweed, tea, people sharing cultural foods, ginger, a Chinese character, lion dancing, anise, yin and yang symbol, and meditation. There is also a picture of a feather writing instrument on a piece of paper and a half-drawn face of a woman.]

In a Yum Cha, Fern, a Filipina woman, shared how hospitality is a strong Filipino cultural belief that "drives [her] to connect, and that has gotten [her] through some really hard times." Fern further elaborated how cultural food traditions of eating,

cooking, and sharing cultural foods shape "how [she] navigate[s] the world" and continues to motivate her need to connect and heal with others through nourishing food. May, a Filipino and Vietnamese queer person, also created a collage full of Vietnamese and Filipino foods in her roundtable to illustrate how cultural foods are often tethered to social support (see Figure 2 for May's collage).

When explaining her collage, May shared a story about how she goes to a particular Vietnamese restaurant when she is experiencing distress or frustration:

> I like to say that Viet food is food for my soul. So yeah, that restaurant, I literally just go to it whenever I'm annoyed really [laugh] and a lot of times I'm the only one sitting in the restaurant and every time I sit, [the owner] comes, brings me a coconut drink. He never asks because he knows I like it, and he always just brings it over to me. So it's nice to just sit there.

Because May has a relationship with the owner, she shared with a smile how she visits this Vietnamese restaurant to be in community and to find solace and healing. Collaborators highlighted how food transcends biological nourishment by providing nourishment for the whole body through collective wisdom and culturally situated care.

Figure 2. May's Collage

[Alternate text: Picture of multiple picture frames placed together of Vietnamese and Filipino cultural foods and queer representation, relationships, and intimacy.]

As cultural knowledge, other collaborators experienced culturally situated foods as an embodied healing practice. Sarah, a Chinese woman, shared that her grandmother taught that her dumplings could be an embodied healing practice and form of cultural

knowledge. Reflecting on the repetitive and collective nature of wrapping dumplings with her grandmother, Sarah shared:

> She would ask me, like if I was upset, like if she saw me frowning or something was wrong when I came home from school, if I wanted dumplings for dinner. And a lot of the times we would sit and wrap them together…the repetitive task really was a way to clear my mind…a way of grounding myself and feeling like there was something else that I could focus on.

Rooted in her grandmother's wisdom, Sarah learned making dumplings can be an embodied healing practice that nourishes the whole body, including her biological need for sustenance and her psychological need for grounding. As the roundtable continued, Sarah further illustrated such wisdom by filling her collage with rows and rows of dumplings and a photo of her grandmother.

Food also served as portals to distinct memories of familial care and collective strength and resistance. Zhixian, a Chinese woman, brought zhènjiāng xiāngcù [a Chinese black vinegar] as her cultural wealth item to her roundtable to illustrate the strength embedded in her familial lineage of survival and resourcefulness. She further explained:

> It's not like the White people vinegar, this is the good shit. It's a lot stronger . . . sauces and special spices I think bring a lot of memories about cultural wealth when you're trying to survive in a new country cuz my parents and I, we immigrated together . . . what was connecting us to our home is the food. And sometimes when you were able to discover this kind of vinegar, you feel happy and powerful.

As collaborators held, tasted, and shared about their cultural foods and food traditions, they reflected on the personal, cultural, and collective significance of food for healing their wholeness. Such collective dialogue contributed to feelings of empowerment, self-confidence, validation, and belonging.

Re/embodying Being: A/A Women Solidarities—"A Space for Togetherness"

As collaborators convened for their Rice Roundtables, each collaborator emphasized the importance of being among other A/A women survivors for mutual support and healing. Kiara, a Korean woman, described the roundtable as a "space for togetherness" that affirmed collaborator voices. Mei Mei, a Chinese-Scottish woman, noted how such gatherings counteract feelings of isolation, saying, "I appreciated hearing your stories. I always felt that my experience was very uniquely my own. And so it's really cool through the study to find that isn't true. It's something that I find very comforting." Mei Mei often felt alone in her survivor journey, which affected her self-esteem and hindered her healing progress. However, connecting her story with those of other A/A women survivors who shared similar experiences brought her a sense of validation.

Gabriella, a nonbinary mestiza/multiracial Filipino individual, also expressed gratitude for the chance to relate to others with comparable cultural and familial backgrounds. She shared:

> I feel like this experience was really unique to talk to other Asian American women and kind of relate on the cultural things and family things together that were a part of our life and impacted us during the relationship that we were in, especially the strong kind of people that grounded us that I think are helpful to think about. Because I do think that there are people I meet that are not Asian American women, they don't understand the family aspect or even just the food aspect or things that I feel very grounded in and that are very helpful even in just my day-to-day. So I think it was a really unique space to be in, that I'm really grateful for everything everyone shared.

Gabriella had previously acknowledged suppressing her emotions, hindering her ability to process her experiences. However, connecting with other A/A women survivors enabled her to reflect on her journey and understand how cultural values and family dynamics influenced her experiences of relationship violence.

Collaborators also observed how sharing their stories with other A/A women survivors expanded and validated their perspectives. During Rose and Kiara's roundtable, Rose, a Chinese woman, disclosed how she struggles with "burnout, exhaustion, and feelings of self-betrayal." She explained how external invalidation of her experiences and identities had affected her self-worth, resulting in hyper productivity and achievement. Kiara responded by affirming Rose's journey, stating, "It's your identity, and it's your journey." Later, Rose expressed her realization that she is more than her experiences and self-affirmed her agency in defining herself and her relationships. Kiara echoed this sentiment, stating, "I am enough, and I should appreciate where I am now," sharing how she now embraces herself as a whole person. Rose and Kiara found validation and empowerment in their shared experiences, affirming each other's journeys and appreciating their wholeness. Similar practices of solidarity were evident in other roundtables, where collaborators supported one another in reclaiming their agency and validating their experiences.

Through sharing and listening to A/A women's stories, collaborators gained insights into how broader cultural and societal norms shaped their experiences of SRV and healing. This was particularly significant as collaborators did not necessarily disclose specific details of their trauma but were able to recognize systemic patterns and societal influences on their healing journeys. At the end of a breathing meditation, Kiara shared:

> Something that came up during the breathing and just grounding myself is I'm so proud of myself for how far I've come. Like I don't see my sexual assault case as an individual incident. I see things as leading up throughout my identity. So like, just that alone and my journey of healing in my racial traumas, I'm just so proud of myself and how far I've come.

Kiara further shared how discussions with other A/A women survivors and engaging in the healing activities during her roundtable helped her recognize the influence of racism, sexism, and Asian cultural norms on her experiences of bodily harm. Other collaborators similarly highlighted how societal and cultural pressures often silenced A/A women, preventing them from openly discussing their experiences and hindering their ability to process trauma. However, the roundtables offered a space for collaborators to explore the parallels and distinctions in their narratives, illuminating systemic power imbalances along the lines of gender and race.

Through these interactions, A/A women survivors found validation, mutual support, and opportunities for critical reflection. Solidarity among them became a pivotal factor in reshaping their self-understanding and healing from experiences of SRV. This collective support also played a crucial role in raising awareness about the shared struggles of A/A women within a larger context of societal invisibility and systemic harm.

Re/embodying Being: Intergenerational & Ancestral Wisdom—"Reminder That There Were Generations Before Me and There'll Be Generations After Me, Too"

Collaborators shared how cultural artifacts embodied intergenerational and ancestral wisdom from ancestors, elders, and family. During each Rice Roundtable, I asked collaborators to reflect on ways their cultural wealth may have contributed to healing from SRV. PS, a Chinese American nonbinary femme, brought draw sticks to share their story of spiritual healing and connection to ancestral wisdom, stating:

> The thing that still ties me to my lineage are draw sticks. And for me it's now more of a spiritual thing and like through my own spiritual cleansing, and to connect with my ancestors because I really got into more spiritual things after my grandfather passed and that was kind of the catalyst for all this healing that I've been doing and continual healing. And so, this is the thing that makes me think of that and the wisdom that comes from it and how it's very intuitive, but as a kid you don't necessarily understand why you're doing it, but then it gets more meaning, especially with death. I feel like it gave me more meaning to, oh this is how I connected with my grandfather now that he's not in the flesh anymore but he's here looking over me and looking out for me.

PS explained their grandfather's passing was a catalyst to prioritize healing from the wounds of relationship abuse and sexual violence. Using draw sticks as an embodied healing practice, PS can connect to their grandfather and other ancestors and be reminded of the intergenerational wisdom passed from their ancestors.

Similarly, many collaborators brought family photographs and heirlooms passed down from ancestors and elders, embodying a way to honor their cultural wealth and knowledge. Mei Mei, for instance, shared a ring passed down to her, which was worn by an ancestor who immigrated to the United States through Angel Island. As Mei Mei touched the ring's sharp edges, she recalled and contemplated her ancestral and familial tales of resilience tied to this artifact. In another instance, Cleo, a Chinese woman, included images of Chinese red pockets and Chinese bao in her collage, evoking

memories of her time working at a Chinese bakery after leaving an abusive relationship. Cleo shared how working in that bakery was a way for her to "work [her] way out of a really negative space" (see Figure 3 for Cleo's collage).

Figure 3. Cleo's Collage

[Alternate text: A collage of various graphics including bunnies, people practicing karaoke, studying, and roller skating, bread, house, bicycle, lipstick, high heels, Asian red lanterns and pockets, and flowers.]

Surrounded by Chinese elders in this bakery, Cleo remembered "really feeling that sense of community." She said, "I feel like [that] was very helpful for me."

Rose brought Baoding balls to illustrate her connection to her intergenerational and ancestral lineage, stating:

> I think this is a gift from my birthplace and connection to my culture and the wisdom that comes from being able to be with what is rising and also just that this is. A lot of my Asian friends also have these balls and it's just kind of a connective thing as well too, that's really cool. So I chose it just cus I feel like it's been with me along my journey and it just kind of symbolizes growth and grounding and reminder that there were generations before me and there'll be generations after me too . . . just kind of intergenerational wisdom and connection.

As a transracial and transnational adoptee, Rose shared that her baoding balls helped her reestablish a connection with her body and cultural heritage. During distressing times, such as after the Atlanta spa shootings, Rose used her Baoding balls to ground herself and work through her trauma. As collaborators held their own cultural artifacts, they recalled and continued to draw from their intergenerational and ancestral wisdom for healing.

Collaborators recognized that intergenerational wisdom could also emerge from breaking intergenerational trauma and engaging in healing across generations. Many shared witnessing unhealthy relationship dynamics between their parents, expressing a determination to forge a different path supported by their community. For instance, during her Rice Roundtable, Gabriella showcased pictures of her sisters, illustrating how they supported each other in generating intergenerational wisdom and healing familial wounds. Despite knowing their parents' relationship was unhealthy and discussing their intention to break the cycle of intergenerational trauma, Gabriella and her sisters still faced challenges, including abusive relationships due to a lack of healthy role models. Nevertheless, they frequently reflected on their parents' relationship to understand and navigate their own relational challenges. Gabriella's story showed how discussing intergenerational trauma with family members can aid in gaining wisdom and fostering intergenerational healing. Collaborators reflected on and learned from their intergenerational experiences, actively breaking painful patterns and deriving wisdom that facilitated healing across generations. Overall, collaborators demonstrated how their lineage of cultural wisdom shaped how they healed and continue to heal from SRV.

DISCUSSION

Studies centering college women Survivors of Color highlight the importance of situating healing approaches within their cultural context (Harris et al., 2021; Karunaratne, 2023a). Findings show A/A college women survivors engaged in culturally situated healing by re/embodying food, A/A women solidarities, and intergenerational and ancestral wisdom. By re/embodying A/A women's ways of knowing and being, they resisted erasure and embraced wholeness in and beyond higher education.

Re/embodying food as nourishment for the whole self revealed how food supports emotional, social, and spiritual needs. Collective food practices reflected ancestral and cultural healing wisdom within A/A communities. For example, Cassie's "potluck mentality" encouraged a broad understanding of healing pathways, Fern's "drive to connect" highlighted relational care during challenges, and the meditative practice of dumpling making represented cultural healing wisdom passed down through generations. By reclaiming these cultural healing traditions, collaborators emphasized the importance of connecting to their lineages as a source of strength and resilience, allowing them to cultivate a sense of belonging and wholeness.

Findings also illustrated how the practice of sharing food nourishes relationships within community and lineage and is a culturally situated way of experiencing social support. Research indicates that social support significantly influences healing from SRV (Ahrens et al., 2009; Edwards et al., 2015; Littleton, 2010; Ullman, 2021).

However, existing scholarship on social support has predominantly focused on the experiences of White women (Edwards et al., 2015; Littleton, 2010). Studies that do include Women of Color often adopt a race- and culture-neutral approach, neglecting the embodied and multidimensional ways in which Women of Color authentically support each other (Ahrens et al., 2009; Ullman et al., 2008). For example, Women of Color college survivors frequently find healing within peer environments that do not necessarily involve explicit discussions about their personal experiences of violence (Harris et al., 2021).

This study demonstrates how A/A college women survivors can heal through implicit peer support. Such support aligns with Asian collectivist values, which prioritize implicit social support that does not require disclosing personal concerns or directly seeking assistance from others (Kim et al., 2008; Taylor et al., 2007). This research contributes to understanding the types of peer connections and support systems in college that can facilitate healing for A/A college women survivors.

Re/embodying A/A women solidarities emphasizes the significance of connecting with women survivors within their cultural community for profound healing (French et al., 2020). As collaborators shared their stories, they affirmed, uplifted, and learned from one another. This study facilitated a "counter-space" where A/A women could reclaim their voices, process their pain, and heal from trauma. Such spaces are particularly crucial for Women of Color survivors who face multiple marginalizations and often find themselves excluded from campus resources that primarily cater to White women survivors (Harris, 2020; Wooten, 2017).

These counter-spaces, created by and for Women of Color on college campuses, provide essential emotional support for processing internalized trauma and fostering healing (Hernandez Rivera, 2020). Shifting from an individualized to a collectivist approach, re/embodying A/A women solidarities also demonstrates how personal connections among A/A college women survivors can cultivate critical consciousness, radical hope, and resilience in the face of oppressive conditions (French et al., 2020). The study underscores how authentic relationships within a supportive collective environment can nourish intellectual, psychological, spiritual, and social needs.

Witnessing and reflecting on each other's experiences are vital components for gaining insights into oneself and others. This aligns with research that emphasizes the healing potential of storytelling (Dichter et al., 2022) and supportive disclosure experiences (Edwards & Dardis, 2020; Ullman & Peter-Hagene, 2014) among survivors. Re/embodying A/A women solidarities challenges campus responses to sexual and relationship violence that often rely on individualistic frameworks of division, punishment, and adjudication (Shepp et al., 2023), highlighting instead the relational aspects of healing and empowerment.

Re/embodying intergenerational and ancestral wisdom highlights how cultural artifacts can be embodied forms of intergenerational and ancestral connections that promote radical healing. Colonial narratives in higher education often harm Students of Color by framing their indigenous, intergenerational, and ancestral knowledge systems as objects to be extracted, decontextualized, and commodified while simultaneously invalidating and erasing their ways of being (Smith, 2013). Moreover, dominant discourses frame the United States as benevolent defenders of freedom (Fujitani et al., 2001) and erase the intergenerational trauma of imperialism,

colonialism, immigration, and anti-Asian hate (Lee, 2015), often contributing to silence and disconnection among Asian families and communities (Cai & Lee, 2022; Chou et al., 2023). Dominant narratives that silence and marginalize the influence of imperial and colonial violence in transmitting intergenerational trauma also contribute to what Espiritu (2014) called "organized forgetting." However, when collaborators held their artifacts (e.g., draw sticks, baoding balls), they connected to and remembered their parents, elders, community, and ancestors as part of their lineages of care, resistance, and healing.

Such intergenerational connections can be particularly beneficial for breaking cycles of violence and healing intergenerational wounds among college survivors (Karunaratne, 2023a). Findings add to the literature on intergenerational connections among college students by suggesting cultural artifacts can be an embodied healing practice of remembering legacies of resistance and community. For instance, some women in this study described how they used their cultural artifacts to cultivate strength by reflecting on how their elders and ancestors resisted and persisted against oppressive conditions and how they are the descendants of such legacies of survival. As collaborators reflected on such cultural wealth stories associated with their cultural artifacts, they strengthened their cultural pride and asserted their self-definitions in the face of racism, sexism, and SRV.

Consistent with the literature that emphasized the importance of cultural authenticity and self-knowledge for radical healing (Adames et al., 2023; French et al., 2020), this finding adds to the literature by expanding on the way cultural artifacts can specifically facilitate a "returning to ancestral roots" (p. 27). Specifically, meditating on the embodied wisdom within cultural artifacts can encourage the healing act of remembering intergenerational and ancestral knowledge. To date, there is no research on using cultural artifacts as a culturally responsive pathway for healing SRV through intergenerational and ancestral wisdom. Re/embodying intergenerational and ancestral wisdom expands scholarship on ways Survivors of Color can engage in radical healing through cultural artifacts that embody intergenerational and ancestral wisdom.

Implications

The findings underscore the importance of embedding culturally situated healing practices within support systems for A/A women survivors on college campuses. Traditional campus responses often center on Western, individualistic, and punitive approaches, which fail to address the collective, cultural, and intergenerational dimensions of healing necessary for A/A women. This section offers several implications for practice and research in higher education.

Practice Implications

This study provides several examples of culturally situated healing pathways for A/A women survivors, including collective and meditative food practices, connections with other A/A women, and intergenerational and ancestral wisdom. Findings illuminate how food can be an embodied collective practice that can nourish the whole body by feeding the physical, psychological, and spiritual needs of A/A women.

Campus survivor support resources (e.g., counselors, survivor advocates, sexual/relationship violence educators, and Title IX coordinators) can partner with A/A community centers and ethnic studies departments to create culturally resonant spaces that invite A/A women survivors to make, share, and eat food in the community. Such campus spaces can foster collectivist support, cultivate relationships with similar others, and share healing strategies.

Findings also support the importance of cultivating A/A women's solidarities through collective dialogue and reflection within environments that are exclusive to A/A women and honor multiple verbal and nonverbal processing methods. Confidential counselors and advocates can facilitate support groups for A/A women in college by adapting the creative methods (i.e., collage making, cultural object elicitation, and meditation) used in this study to help survivors process and collectively heal in culturally responsive ways.

Higher education leaders should also provide financial resources and institutional support for A/A women to create and lead their own counter-spaces, such as hiring more A/A women staff and faculty and providing fixed funding for A/A women student organizations to facilitate teach-ins, story-telling workshops, and radical healing programs. Such initiatives can center discussions on the intersectional nature of SRV that often uniquely shapes the experiences of A/A women and other Women of Color along the lines of race and gender. Considering how findings support the value of implicit social support in A/A communities, where minimal personal details of trauma are shared (Kim et al., 2008; Taylor et al., 2007), Title IX coordinators should also not require A/A women survivors to disclose details of their victimization to access accommodations and healing options.

Counselors and survivor advocates should integrate ancestral, cultural, and intergenerational wisdom into their campus services and programs. However, the aforementioned campus resources should be mindful not to coopt A/A women's wisdom traditions and, instead, center the voices and histories of A/A women who embody lineages of healing knowledge. For instance, findings illustrate how meditating on cultural artifacts can elicit reflection and discussion on intergenerational and ancestral wisdom from lineages of care and cultural wisdom. When working one-on-one with A/A college women, campus counselors and advocates can invite women to bring and meditate on meaningful cultural artifacts to remember and reground into the intergenerational and ancestral wisdom that they possess through their lineage of ancestors, elders, and family.

However, healing should not be the sole responsibility of A/A women nor siloed within specific campus entities (e.g., cultural centers or advocacy units). Healing must pervade the broader campus ethos through institution-wide policies and priorities. Institutional leaders must interrogate the sociopolitical realities that contribute to and shape SRV for A/A women and the ways higher education may be complicit in maintaining systemic conditions for violence to occur. When institutions ignore the gendered and racist realities intertwined in SRV, leaders invalidate how A/A women survivors experience such violence within the context of systemic domination and intergenerational trauma.

Research Implications

Findings from this study also suggest future research implications and how methodology can facilitate healing for researchers and collaborators. Countering colonial research approaches that extract appropriate knowledge from marginalized communities (Patel, 2015; Smith, 2013), this study offers several methodological considerations to center radical healing in the research process.

First, I constructed Yum Cha and Rice Roundtables by "un/learning" (Bhattacharya, 2021, p. 373) colonial and privileged discourses and reclaiming lineage, traditions, and ancestry as vital sources of knowledge (Bhattacharya, 2023; Mayazumi, 2006). Because the un/learning process is deeply personal and intuitive, researchers should take the time and space to meditate on the messy, emergent, and paradoxical tensions that arise (Bhattacharya, 2019). For Scholars of Color whose wisdom traditions are often marginalized or appropriated in higher education (Bhattacharya, 2023; Smith, 2013), such an embodied and reflexive practice can establish re/connections to knowledge systems that reside in ancestral, cultural, and collective technologies.

Second, the methods constructed for this study, such as sharing food and tea, cultural artifact elicitation, and collective discussion, were born out of culturally situated ontoepistemologies that privilege relational and communal ways of knowing. Traditional Western paradigms of inquiry endorse rigid and hierarchical power structures that reproduce imperial colonial relationships that position researchers as knowledge extractors and collaborators as information repositories (Smith, 2013). De/colonial scholars should examine power relations innate to the research process and approach inquiry as a process of relationship development that releases the predetermined "will to know" (Bhattacharya, 2009, p. 111). By cultivating relationships, collaborators' needs should be prioritized in and out of the study (Karunaratne, 2023b) and must expand beyond the rigid scope and technicalities of consent forms to center the fluidity of relationships (Bhattacharya, 2007).

Lastly, creative methods, such as collage making and cultural artifact elicitations, were situated throughout the research process to invite embodied ruminations and spiritual connections that challenged positivist and mind-supremacist approaches to inquiry. Applying creative and arts-based approaches can foreground the agency and voices of collaborators by privileging their embodied experiences, metaphors, and symbolism within a fluid and dynamic process of reflexivity (Vacchelli, 2018; Yuen, 2016). Researchers can also use creative methods to disrupt asymmetrical power relations inherent in the research and open up more possibilities for survivors to heal (e.g., photo-elicitation; Karunaratne, 2023b; Sinko et al., 2020). However, it is essential to note such methodological implications are not intended to be prescriptive or replicative. Instead, I invite scholars to be responsive to the unique epistemologies and ontologies present in themselves and their collaborators and to dream beyond the privileged discourses of qualitative research.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that healing for A/A women survivors of SRV requires a de/colonial and culturally situated approach, which integrates ancestral, cultural, and

collective practices. Findings demonstrated how A/A women engaged in radical healing through three primary pathways: re/embodying food practices for holistic nourishment, fostering A/A women solidarities for mutual support and critical consciousness, and connecting with intergenerational and ancestral wisdom to cultivate strength and resilience. These culturally grounded practices enabled A/A women to counteract the limitations of Western, individualistic models of healing that are often prevalent in higher education settings.

In advocating for healing pathways that center A/A women's lived realities and epistemologies, this study underscores the importance for higher education counselors, educators, advocates, and policy-makers to recognize and honor the cultural wisdom and resources that A/A women survivors bring to their healing journeys. By doing so, institutional leaders can develop more inclusive, impactful support systems that empower all survivors to thrive in both college environments and beyond.

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