



Asian Critical Mentoring as a Third Space of Ontological Resistance

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The Research Team



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Non-presenting co-authors

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Overview

- Narratives of Asian/American researcher identity at PWI
 - 3 Southeast Asian doctoral students
 - 2 East Asian/American faculty
- Collaborative autoethnographic case study (Chang et al., 2013; Yin, 2014)
- AsianCrit (Iftikar & Museus, 2018)
- Critical mentoring relationships in the academy are informed by power dynamics specific to the ontologies of Asian/American doctoral students

Research Question & Framing

How do doctoral student experiences shape the development of researcher identity in Asian/American scholars?



Methodology

Wilson (2008) writes about the “web of relationships that we as co-researchers share, ‘underscoring the importance of **communion and research as ceremony, a departure from the conventional colonial methods of the academy**’” (p. 63).

Research Design:

- Collaborative autoethnographic case study (Chang et al., 2013; Yin, 2014)

Data Collection:

- Individual Interviews Round 1 (Faculty interview Students)
- Focus Group 1 (Faculty interview Students in a group setting)
- Individual Interviews Round 2 (Students interview Faculty)
- Focus Group 2 (Students interview Faculty in a group setting)

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

- Research team meetings in-person and over Zoom, WhatsApp chats, emails, notes, and independent study course on Asian Critical Theories & Research Methodologies
- Critical discourse analysis and classical content analysis using an inductive coding process according to tenets of AsianCrit (Iftikar & Museus, 2018) and emergent codes to generate themes.



Asian/American Scholar Ontologies

- Hidden curriculum of the academy
- Institutional violence and betrayal
- Weight of invisible labor
- Silencing and invisibilization in courses
- Model minority myth
- MotherScholar student
- Family disconnections

Key Findings

Asian/American researcher identity emerges through distinct forms of **ontological resistance to racial trauma and institutional violence.**

Ontological resistance is enacted through...

- *Story, theory, and praxis;*
- Family, culture, and history;
- Critical mentoring.

RQ: How do doctoral student experiences shape the development of researcher identity in Asian/American scholars?



Racial Trauma & Institutional Violence

The Asian/American scholars shared their experiences navigating racial trauma from oppressive and hostile environments in academia through a critical awareness of their racialization as AA, specifically challenges with existing authentically due to the harmful effects of **Asianization** and compounded along lines of **Intersectionality**.

- “As a **queer Asian American male**, I think that **brings a lot of trauma in how I present myself to others.**”
- “**I carry a lot of racial trauma** where I try to be my authentic self in predominantly white spaces in a professional setting. [...] I'm paying my hard-earned money and **I'm giving up time away from my baby, so I need to feel safe and valued** to continue to pursue this so I can take academic risks.”
- “[Instructor] gave me feedback on a paper [...] and it basically just felt like she was dinging me because she personally disagreed. It was a **white woman who was tone policing me** because she didn't agree with what I was saying. **It constrains me from being able to really feel like I can like leverage my cultural identity.**”

Ontological Resistance Through *Story, Theory, and Praxis*



Doctoral student researcher-participants were able to center their racialized lived experiences as it informs their epistemologies and challenging dominant, white epistemologies.

- ...all my favorite courses have been with professors of Color...I found myself like, really tying everything that I learned in that course with Dr. B, which is also a favorite course, the critical race theory class. [The class] really spoke to me and the experiences that I've had, or like experiences that I've seen people in my community go through. **In Dr. B's class, having the AsianCrit and CRT framework to be able to really name those phenomena....** I was able to really be like, authentically me, and just like show up instead of like, having to have a front.

Research team meetings involve communing over food and intellectual exchange.

Ontological Resistance Through Family, Culture, and History

As doctoral student researcher-participants made meaning of their experiences as scholars, they repeatedly referred to the ***transnational contexts*** of their Southeast Asian immigrant and refugee families' languages, cultures, and histories.

- “**My parents were boat people**, so I think about ways we're able to navigate these very Americanized systems to create better and different spaces for those who come after us.”
- "My great grandmother grew up under Dutch occupation like lots of other Asian folks—East Asian, Southeast Asian, South Asian, Southwest Asian—have **histories of imperialism, western military conquest and colonialism.**"



Southeast Asian doctoral scholars with Viet Thanh Nguyen, a South Vietnamese-born American professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist whose work reflects his experiences as a displaced refugee.

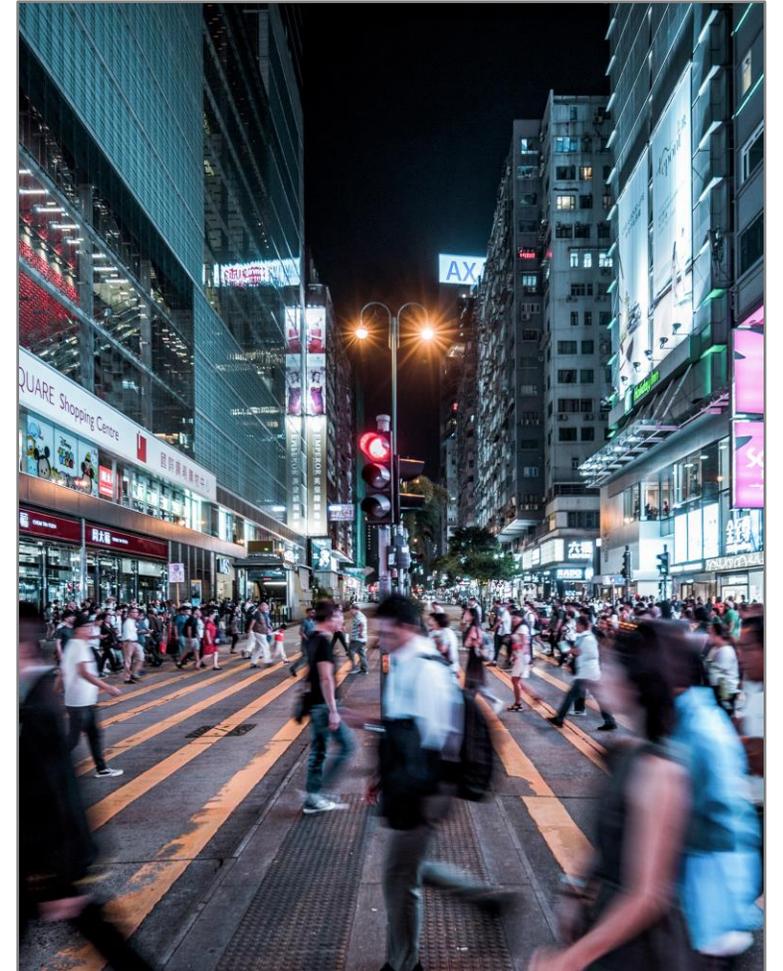
Ontological Resistance Through Critical Mentoring

Shared Asian/American ontologies throughout the graduate journey

- “Being able to be in a **research team with other AANHPI-identified scholars** in the same program, interacting with them as classmates, but also now as researchers, I think it's very pivotal.”
- “[It] is an honor to be on the team and to work with them [doc students] because I think they have a lot of possibility to be successful in publishing and going into their career. **Why would I not want to be a part of that?**”

Research & Independent Study – See themselves reflected in academic discourse

- “With Dr. B's class, having the AsianCrit and CRT framework to be able to really name phenomena [in class]. **I finally get to learn about my people.** How many years did it take for me in education to finally get there?”



Morning mentoring walk and breakfast during the 2024 AERA National Meeting in Philadelphia, PA.

Shared Experiences and Commitment to Solidarity

Through our shared experiences, we reimagine the original intentions of AsianCrit to challenge the silos that reinforce the model minority myth and **center the interconnected struggles of communities of Color** by contributing to a collective memory of shared histories of groups who have survived racial oppression.



Cultivating "third spaces" with a broader community of Scholars of Color, including doctoral and undergraduate students and faculty.

Thank you!



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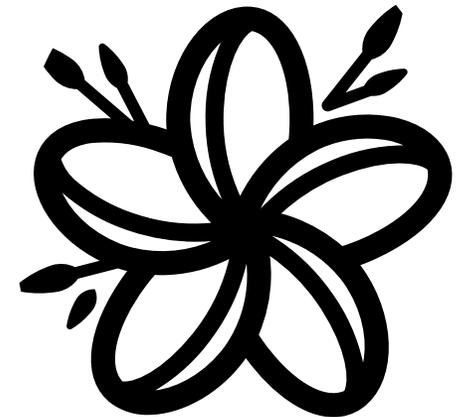
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