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Alcohol-involved Rape Disclosure among Asian American College Women

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A dissertation
submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of Washington

2012

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Abstract

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Using a multi-study mixed-methods approach, this dissertation investigates disclosure of alcohol-involved rape for Asian American college women. Qualitative interviews first examined the cultural context of alcohol-involved rape disclosure from the experiences and voices of socially drinking Asian American college women. Next, an anonymous survey was administered comparing alcohol-involved rape history and disclosure behavior of Asian American and White American college women. Lastly, an experimental study assessed the differences among a sample of Asian American and White American college women in likelihood to report a detailed hypothetical acquaintance rape scenario when alcohol use is involved; cultural predictors of reporting behavior were also examined. This research aimed to inform current inconclusive prevalence rates of alcohol-involved rape for a potentially highly vulnerable population, given the rising rates of alcohol use and the steady high college enrollment of Asian American women. Encouraging rape disclosure is essential to enhance support, treatment, and recovery for victimized women of all ethnic groups.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	
List of Figures	ii
List of Tables.....	iii
Dissertation: Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1. The cultural context of nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape among Asian American college women: A qualitative study.....	4
Dissertation: Transitioning from qualitative to quantitative research.....	42
Chapter 2. Disclosure of alcohol-involved sexual assault amongst Asian American and White college women.....	44
Chapter 3. Cultural factors Associated with disclosure of alcohol-involved rape to informal and formal Sources: An experimental study.....	57
Dissertation: Summary and Conclusions.....	103

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number	Page
3.1 Means of Likelihood to Disclose by Participant Race.....	99
3.2 Means of Likelihood to Disclose by Alcohol Condition.....	100
3.3 Parental influence related to likelihood to disclose among Asian Americans.....	101
3.4 Independent self-construal related to likelihood to disclose among Asian Americans.....	102

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Page
1.1 Cultural contexts of alcohol-involved rape nondisclosure for Asian American college women.....	41
2.1 Sexual assault experiences.....	54
2.2 Disclosure of unwanted sex play (USP).....	55
2.3 Disclosure of penetrative sexual assault (PSA).....	56
3.1 Means and standard deviations.....	96
3.2 Bivariate correlations of cultural constructs and disclosure likelihood by source.....	97

Dissertation: Introduction

Prevalence rates of sexual assault for Asian American women are inconclusive, which is speculated to be due to a decreased tendency to disclose sexual assault as compared with other groups for cultural reasons (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2006); to our knowledge, this remains scientifically unexamined. Nondisclosure and inconclusive rape rates are problematic, as they are potentially related to the underrepresentation of this group in research on rape, rape treatment and support for rape-related issues. College women are known to be particularly vulnerable to alcohol-involved rape and sexual assault (e.g., Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004), however, with consistently high college enrollment (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009) and increasing alcohol use (e.g., Grant et al., 2004), Asian American college women may be at particular risk for experiencing alcohol-involved rape. With the underutilization of mental health services by Asian Americans (e.g., Sue, Fujino, Hu, Takeuchi, & Zane, 1991) and speculated decreased disclosure, we need to better understand how this group conceptualizes rape and the context of disclosure to various sources to better serve this community.

Because most rape research with U.S. populations has traditionally focused on White women and more recently on African American women (Wheeler & George, 2005), it is appropriate and timely to inaugurate research on alcohol-involved rape among Asian American college women and it is best to begin initially with a qualitative research approach. One type of qualitative research is grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Grounded theory allows Asian American college women to share their perceptions of alcohol-involved rape and rape disclosure in their cultural context and from their own voice (Ponterotto, 2005). This approach will also identify cultural factors that are key in understanding rape nondisclosure for this group, which

can be included in subsequent quantitative studies. These quantitative studies use different research designs to investigate differences in rape disclosure behavior of White and Asian American college women.

Using a mixed-methods approach to examine alcohol-involved rape nondisclosure among Asian American college women, the specific aims of this dissertation project include:

1. To gain an in-depth understanding of the cultural contexts of perceptions of rape disclosure or nondisclosure and the role of alcohol from the experiences and voices of Asian American college women and qualitatively investigate commonly held beliefs about typical rape scenarios as provided by White American and Asian American college women through individual interviews.
2. To assess alcohol-involved sexual assault and disclosure history as provided by a sample of Asian American and White American college women through an anonymous survey.
3. To experimentally examine differences between Asian American and White American college women in likelihood to disclose a detailed hypothetical acquaintance rape to five different disclosure sources by manipulating alcohol use and to examine the potential roles of relevant cultural constructs in likelihood to disclose among the Asian American sample.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 address each of these aims in this order.

Chapter 1

The cultural context of nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape among Asian American college women: A qualitative study

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ABSTRACT

With high college enrollment and significantly increasing alcohol use, Asian American (AA) college women may be at particular risk for experiencing alcohol-involved rape. Even though AA women have expressed the weakest intention to report rape over other ethnic groups, cultural factors influencing these decisions remain unexamined. Guided by grounded theory, we individually interviewed 17 self-identified AA socially drinking college women about how the average AA socially drinking college woman would respond to an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape. Despite being aware of benefits to disclosing an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape, participants emphasized that nondisclosure of rape would be the normative response due to concerns that were framed within sociocultural and structural themes. Within a sociocultural context, rape nondisclosure significantly focused on negative consequences on relationships with parents, and to a lesser extent, with friendships. The structural context of nondisclosure referenced mental health and police services, which included Asian stereotypes and mistrust of police. Emotional avoidance and not labeling an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape as rape were described as strategies to keep a rape nondisclosed. These AA women's conceptualization of mental and physical health concerns and specifically post-rape concerns were framed within sociocultural contexts and may not match that of U.S. mainstream conceptualizations of health, which are more individualistic. Culturally sensitive rape prevention and psychoeducation may be more effective to increase access to care and support.

KEY WORDS: rape, alcohol, culture, Asian American college women

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 30% of college women report having rape experiences, attempted and completed (e.g., Abbey Ross, McDuffie, & McAuslan, 1996), and upwards of 50% of college rapes involve alcohol (e.g., Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004), indicating that alcohol-involved rape is a pervasive problem among college women. With estimates of less than five percent of female college rapes reported to police a year (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), underreporting and nondisclosure of rape is a significant concern, potentially preventing support and treatment from a variety of damaging physical, psychological, social, and behavioral health consequences associated with rape (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).

With high college enrollment (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009) and significantly increasing alcohol use (e.g., Grant et al., 2004), Asian American college women may be at particular risk for experiencing alcohol-involved rape, because alcohol use is linked to increased likelihood of rape victimization (e.g., Cole, 2006). Asian American rape prevalence rates in college are inconclusive. Heightened nondisclosure – compared to women of other ethnicities – due to cultural reasons is speculated to be the cause for identifying few Asian/Pacific Islander rape victims in national data (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998; 2006). Among college populations, survey data yield mixed results on Asian rape rates (Kalof, 2000; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987), and data on alcohol-involved college rape rates rarely include racial differences. Exploring nondisclosure will help to elucidate contradicting prevalence rates of rape among Asian Americans.

Over 30 years ago, Asian women expressed the weakest overall intentions to report a hypothetical rape over Blacks, Hispanics, and Whites (Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981), yet Asian American cultural factors contributing to underreporting have not been examined. The

current qualitative study provides a unique cultural context and deeper understanding of nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape among Asian American college women.

Alcohol-involved Rape Attitudes

Given the high rates of alcohol-involved college rapes (e.g., Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004) and rising drinking rates of Asian American college-aged women (Grant et al., 2004), attitudes toward intoxicated rape victims are highly relevant to disclosure of alcohol-involved rape. Victim alcohol use has been shown to predict self-blame (Koss, Figueredo, & Prince, 2002; Littleton, Taquechel, Axsom, 2009). Additionally, external observers judge drinking women more sexually disinhibited and less socially skilled than nondrinking women (George, Cue, Lopez, Crowe, & Norris, 1995; George, Gournic, & McAfee, 1988), and victim blaming has been shown to be higher for alcohol-involved rape than rape without alcohol (e.g., Stewart & Jacquin, 2010). These attitudes likely influence rape victims' disclosure. Although this research has not been conducted with Asian Americans, it is likely a similar and perhaps even a stronger phenomenon for this group, given their cultural context.

Cultural Context of Rape among Asians and Asian Americans

Asian and Asian American cultural contexts may not facilitate and may even attenuate rape disclosure, particularly when alcohol is involved. More so than their non-Asian counterparts, Asian American college students have been shown to hold higher rape-tolerant attitudes, such as being more likely to believe in rape myths (e.g., rapists are strangers and sex is the primary motivation for rape) and having more stringent definitions of rape (Kennedy & Gorzalka, 2002; Koo, Stephens, Lindgren, & George, 2011; Lee, Pomeroy, Yoo, & Rheinboldt, 2005; Mills & Granoff, 1992; Mori, Bernat, Glenn, Selle, & Zarate, 1995). Taken together with

other rape research and cultural theories, these findings demonstrate that cultural context is necessary to consider when examining rape disclosure behavior.

While gendered expectations exist within all patriarchal cultures, in which women are expected to maintain “female virtue” by abstaining from alcohol and sex before marriage, Asian American women may be socialized to idealize female virtue even more so than mainstream US culture. Given their marginalized ethnic status in the U.S., Asian women may idealize gender roles to affirm a positive identity, mitigating the negative representations of their ethnic group by the dominant culture (Tajfel, 1981; Mahalingham & Leu, 2005). At the same time, however, these representations can create pressure to live up to these idealized gendered expectations (Mahalingham & Leu, 2005). An Asian American woman who was raped while intoxicated may self-evaluate that she “failed” to live up to these expectations of female virtue, likely influencing decisions to disclose.

Interdependent self-construal – a shared characteristic of Asian cultures – involves a cultural orientation whereby the in-group’s needs and social harmony are prioritized over the individual. This orientation is in contrast to independent self-construal, which emphasizes individual goals, as motivated by personal rights and preferences (e.g., Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Interdependent self-construal may contribute to nondisclosure of rape among Asian American college women in that a strong sense of interconnectedness may strengthen a reluctance to disclose a rape for fear of violating social harmony. This is particularly relevant given that 95% of college rapes are committed by a known offender (e.g., Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000) who may be a part of the victim’s in-group. Interdependence-related constructs such as self-construal, shame, and loss of face may be key in understanding nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape among Asian American college women. When coping with social and

academic stressors, Asian Americans were shown to use explicit social support (seeking advice and emotional solace) significantly less than White participants due to negative consequences on those relationships (Kim, Sherman, & Taylor, 2008). Given that rape disclosure is likely seen as involving explicit social support, these relational concerns likely contribute to rape nondisclosure. Additionally, if an individual behaves in a manner perceived as socially deviant, she would cause her in-group to experience shame and loss of face. Cross-cultural research comparing how Japanese and U.S. college students would advise a hypothetical sister who was raped supported the importance of interdependence-related constructs of shame and social face more so for the Japanese than U.S. students (Yamawaki, 2007, 2008). These findings point to the importance of considering interdependence-related constructs when examining rape disclosure.

Lastly, in addition to the cultural context, structural context factors, such as perceived discrimination, may have an effect on rape reporting to authorities, particularly the police. Asian Americans also have been found to be less likely to use formal resources such as mental health services (Abe-Kim et al., 2007). African Americans are less likely than Whites to report rape to police due to racial discrimination concerns (Wheeler & George, 2005). Not directly examined yet, perceptions of racial discrimination in institutional structures may be contributing to lower rape reporting to the police and mental health professionals for Asian Americans.

Present Study

To our knowledge, no study has examined alcohol use within the cultural context of rape disclosure for Asian American college women. Qualitative research and specifically grounded theory (Fassinger, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) is the recommended methodology for researching unexamined topics in multicultural psychology (Ponterotto, 2010). This approach provides a voice, in their own words, to disempowered groups who may have shared lived

experiences (Ponterotto, 2005). Grounded theory involves systematically coding, categorizing, and formulating themes and subthemes that are generated from the lived experiences of the participants, ultimately leading to theory development. The purpose of the current analyses was to allow the data to inform the cultural context with which alcohol-involved rape disclosure occurs or would not occur among Asian American college women.

METHODS

Participants

Theoretical sampling was utilized to recruit participants to ensure that the current sample would be drawn from the population we were interested in, i.e., Asian American college women between 18 and 29 years old, whose drinking rates are rising as alcohol use by their counterparts' in other ethnic groups is stabilizing or decreasing (Grant et al., 2004). Thus, in order to be eligible for the study, volunteers were required to identify as women, between the ages of 18 and 29, and identify as "social drinkers" because the interviews required participants to respond according to their experiences of having consumed alcohol. Volunteers also must have self-identified as Asian or Asian American.

The sample was comprised of 17 self-identified "socially drinking Asian American college women." Ages ranged from 18 to 23. Nine participants were freshman and eight were sophomores or juniors. Nine participants were US-born and eight were born in Asia. Seven participants identified as Korean or Korean-American, and two were of mixed Asian descent: Indian-Vietnamese and Chinese-Filipina. Seven identified with "Asian American" or another Asian group (Cambodian, Chinese, Filipina, Indonesian, Taiwanese, or Vietnamese); one of these women noted a French great-grandmother and identified as "Vietnamese," and one had an

Irish parent and a Japanese parent and identified as “Asian-American.” When referencing an individual participant, her self-identified ethnicity was used.

Interview Process

To increase comfort and facilitate the disclosure of opinions on sexuality, alcohol use, and culture, individual interviews were chosen over focus groups. Scholars and evidence suggest that Asian American families discuss sexual matters less than other ethnic groups (e.g., Okazaki, 2002; Abramson, Moriuchi, Waite, & Perry, 1983), particularly Asian American college women who, more so than Asian American college men, recalled receiving the message from their parents that sex is a taboo topic (Kim & Ward, 2007). Taking this into account, rather than collectively placing individuals who are already hesitant to discuss sexual matters in a room together, individual meetings were thought to be more sensitive and conducive to collecting this information from this population.

Because evidence suggests that for people of color, ethnic-matching in therapeutic settings can lead to better outcomes (Flicker, Waldron, Turner, Brody, Hops, 2008; Farsimaden, Draghi-Lorenz, & Ellis, 2007), the first author, an Asian American female clinical psychology doctoral student conducted all interviews. Given the sensitive nature of the interview topics (i.e., sexuality, culture, and alcohol use), the first author’s clinical training in sexual assault, alcohol and addictions, and diversity provided her with the skills necessary to carry out interviews with care. Participants were recruited from the University of Washington Online Subject Pool Program. They were compensated with Psychology course extra credit. The online listing of the study explicitly stated that study participation required comfort discussing sexuality, male-female relationships, alcohol, and culture. After signing up for the study, potential participants were contacted, informed about the study in detail, and scheduled for an interview.

At the interview, the first author obtained informed consent, administered measures, and asked participants to choose a pseudonym to protect confidentiality on recordings. Additionally, to ensure comfort with being interviewed, all questions were posed in the third person by asking about the “average socially drinking AA college woman.” Interview questions elicited participants’ beliefs about factors that influence an AA woman’s decision to disclose or not disclose an alcohol-involved rape. Participants also generated hypothetical “typical” alcohol-involved acquaintance rape scenarios for the development of a vignette for a different study. Interviews were conducted in a private on-campus office and lasted 45 to 60 minutes each. Questions were open-ended and followed an interview guideline that allowed for follow-up and probing questions. Neutral questions were posed to avoid the phrasing of questions influencing responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). For example, rather than asking, “who she would avoid telling about a rape?” we asked, “after being raped, what would she do?” After the interview, each participant was debriefed and provided psychoeducation on rape and alcohol, along with related materials and local referrals and contact information for study staff. Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Notes taken by the first author during the interview were also transcribed.

Analyses

Interviews were conducted from January 2009 to March 2010. Following the tenets of grounded theory (Fassinger, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), preliminary analyses began after the first interview was conducted. For the first three interviews, the first author worked with two advanced research assistants who each independently reviewed transcripts and generated a list of observed themes and subthemes. After discussing these themes as a team, an initial codebook was created, which continually evolved as more interviews were conducted.

Using the constant comparative method, the first author produced and reviewed in-depth coding memos based on interview notes and consulted with co-authors and advanced research assistants to adapt interview questions for subsequent interviews and make necessary adjustments to the codebook. This iterative process of crafting interview questions during each stage of the analysis allowed topics that arose in one interview to be followed up in-depth in the next and helped research staff identify when saturation was reached on a topic (Ponterotto, 2010). At least two research assistants as well as the first author coded each interview transcript. Coding discrepancies were resolved through reflective discussions about data analysis, coding, and culture. Coding and themes were discussed within the context of a single interview and across interviews. This coding process culminated in a finalized coded data set.

RESULTS

Overall, despite being aware of benefits to disclosing an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape, participants emphasized that an Asian American woman would choose nondisclosure due to concerns that were framed within sociocultural and structural themes. Within a sociocultural context, rape nondisclosure was described with a significant focus on negative consequences on relationships with parents, and to a lesser extent, friendships. The structural context of rape nondisclosure was explained in reference to mental health and police services, which included Asian American stereotypes and mistrust of police from a minority perspective. Lastly, within a psychological context, participants described strategies to keep a rape to herself, involving emotional avoidance and not labeling an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape as such. See Table 1 for a summary of the study findings.

Rape Nondisclosure: The Presumptive Response

Despite demonstrating their knowledge of rape and benefits to disclosure, participants unanimously asserted that an Asian American college woman would not disclose. Unanimously, they deemed disclosure to be futile since “no one you tell can change the past,” as an Indonesian junior said. Throughout interviews, when asked about how the average Asian American college female would respond to an acquaintance rape, even though questions were framed with, “...rather than answering what she *should* do, describe what she really would do,” all of the women initially replied with what they thought she was “supposed” to do post-rape. For instance, a common post-rape initial response was to “go to the police.” With probing, however, these women stated that in reality, that would not happen. This pattern also occurred when participants described the role of family:

Participant (P): Family should be the number one supporter in any kind of situation.

Interviewer: Okay, so you said they should be the number one supporter. In this case, would they be?

P: I think it would be hard for them to support because of the whole sex and virginity is sacred thing ...Actually, she'd be judged [by her parents]. Yeah...she'd be afraid that they would disown her. (Filipina American sophomore)

Eventually, this participant emphasized that she would “never” tell her parents. The same pattern arose in which participants had no difficulty identifying post-rape options of disclosing to family, friends, health care professionals, or police, as well as benefits to each option, such as social support, physical health, or justice. Nevertheless, ultimately, all but one participant declared that these benefits would not outweigh the costs of disclosure, and she would tell no one.

Further data support that lack of knowledge about rape is not necessarily the reason for rape nondisclosure. Early on in each interview, participants were capable of providing accurate

definitions of rape. Further they were able to appropriately take into account alcohol use and perpetrator relationship with the victim, indicating that these women possessed appropriate knowledge about rape. However, applying these definitions to scenarios later on in an interview proved to be more complicated.

These initial responses to post-rape reactions appeared to be formulaic, as if participants were rehearsing a known script regarding what a rape is and how one is “supposed” to respond. It was clear though that this knowledge does not facilitate rape disclosure. Participants stressed that the most realistic response to a rape would be to “keep it to herself.” Furthermore, not only did they believe that this is what would happen but also, as a Chinese American sophomore put it, “it’s something she *should* deal with by herself.” Despite being aware of rape definitions and benefits to post-rape options, Asian American women reported more compelling reasons to not disclose an alcohol-involved acquaintance rape. The remainder of findings will focus on the contexts of these reasons.

Sociocultural Context of Nondisclosure

In describing the aftermath of a hypothetical alcohol-involved acquaintance rape of an Asian American college woman, all participants emphasized the relationships in her life that would be adversely affected by disclosure of this rape. Relationship with parents was unanimously identified to be of utmost concern, and secondly, concerns with friendships were addressed. Even with a personally traumatic experience like rape, paramount concerns would be grounded in the sociocultural contexts of these relationships.

Relationship with parents. Out of all provided rationales for rape nondisclosure, unequivocally, the most frequently and deeply described theme involved never telling parents and ensuring they never find out. Participants believed that not telling anyone at all further

guaranteed parents' unawareness. All 17 participants emphatically deemed parents as the primary issue with disclosure.

She probably definitely wouldn't tell [her parents]...At that point, she'd feel ashamed of herself 'cause she let herself get to that point [drinking] where she couldn't make a good judgment and let it happen...She probably really just would do anything that she could just so that her parents don't find out. (Asian American freshman)

Nondisclosure to parents was described within the following four contexts: Asian parents' expectations of their daughter to be a "good girl," avoidance of parental distress, avoidance of personal distress, and nondisclosure to others.

Expectations to be a "good girl." Participants discussed the expectations daughters and women in Asian families must live up to, which centered on maintaining female virtue, described as being a "good girl" who does not drink or have sex. A Filipina American sophomore frequently stated that, Asian women are expected to be "more wholesome" than White women. Not one participant described rape as a "crime" to be disclosed to parents, but focused on the content of the act—sex. Because of the involvement of sex, participants explicitly first explained that sex is taboo in Asian families, especially for daughters.

Talking to Asian parents about a rape, just the act of it is really hard to talk about. Sex is supposed to be for marriage; no matter if you listen to that or not, you have to at least pretend that is the way you're looking at it. (Korean American freshman)

This participant immediately connected rape to sex. A Cambodian American junior directly compared her experience to White families and the communication barriers she dealt with:

White girls are brought up differently...they're more open [in their families]. You can tell your parents *everything*, and you are allowed to do so many things. But with an Asian

family, you are close with your parents but you don't talk to them about everything because of the whole, kind of language barriers or cultural differences, so it's harder to talk about anything, let alone [sex].

Because of the emphasis on the sex of a rape, participants all described that merely from having had sex before marriage, Asian women are thought to be "dirty" and "impure," regardless of whether the sex was nonconsensual. Thus, the primary concern about disclosing a rape to parents would be divulging that she has had sex and is not the "good girl" parents raised:

Most Asian parents that I know expect that their daughter to be virgins until they're married. So like if you're raped, it's like the sex thing. It's like a disappointment thing. They can't believe it because they have this idea in their head: "my daughter is going to be a virgin when she gets married. So she would be pure, not like a dirty girl."

(Cambodian American junior)

Reactions to a rape disclosure that an Asian woman would receive from her parents was contrasted against the reaction a White woman may receive from her parents with particular focus on the differences in shame from having been raped and having had sex:

If she was White then maybe her parents would be a bit more accepting of [rape], and be there more for comfort and not look down upon it so much. It wouldn't be really feeling shame towards themselves...I don't think [sex] would be as big of a deal just because I feel like more White families they kind of expect, maybe, their daughter to be out having sex, whereas Asian parents can be very strict about that type of ordeal. (Asian American freshman)

Related to the notion that White families may be more accepting than Asian families of their daughters having sex, one participant described the added embarrassment of disclosing that an

Asian American daughter engages in consensual sex play with men to her parents, indicating in another way that she is not a “good girl”:

If you were hooking up with someone and it went too far, to rape, then it brings up questions of “are you a sexually active or promiscuous?” If it was an acquaintance rapist, then it means you probably had some consensual activity at the start, like kissing or whatever, so telling your parents [about a rape] without having drunk doesn’t matter that much, since you still have to tell them you were messing around with a guy, and you do *not* tell Korean parents that. (Korean American freshman)

Incorporating alcohol into a hypothetical rape further reaffirmed that Asian women would not tell her parents. Discussing alcohol use for Asian women is taboo as well. Participants described the indirect ways in which Asian parents ask about drinking:

I think it’s just ‘cause there’s like no communication about [alcohol]. I know a lot of my other friends who are Caucasian—they’ll Skype with their parents and they’ll be like, “So, how much did you drink last night?” and stuff like that. My parents...they don’t really ask like *that* or in depth really. They go like, “Are you okay? Are you alive?” but they won’t acknowledge it...that’s their way of asking. (Vietnamese American freshman)

This lack of acknowledgment around Asian daughters drinking alcohol would make it particularly difficult to disclose an alcohol-involved rape, according to participants. Revealing to parents that she has had sex *and* drinks alcohol was described as a “double whammy.” “Asian parents would get so mad [if an Asian girl was drinking when raped] because girls shouldn’t be drunk. Never ever.” (Taiwanese freshman)

Avoidance of parental distress. Participants believed that a rape disclosure would lead to unnecessary distress – losing face, experiencing shame, hurt, and burden – for parents, and thus

nondisclosure would protect parents from these adverse experiences. In explaining this notion, participants described Asian families as being more interconnected than White families.

You reflect your family...So if you do good in school, people would say “yeah your family brought you up right. They taught you how to be focused.” While if you do something bad, it would be like “what kind of parents do you have?...Or your family doesn’t care about you?” (Cambodian American junior)

Because Asian families are so connected, when one person does something disreputable, it affects the reputation of the whole family. The following participant addressed this when describing Asian women who drink:

Especially because you are a girl and you are drinking, it is kind of embarrassing. You’re a total mess...you’re not really lady like and not structured. That’s not a good way to represent yourself or your family. (Cambodian American junior)

Thus, most notably and most frequently, parents and their reputation were referenced as being adversely affected if the community knew that their daughter had been raped.

I think she’d be afraid to tell anybody because there’s that whole social status thing...It’s about her family, so being labeled as that girl who was raped could affect your family standing so then you might not want to put your family through that. (Korean American freshman)

Questions about whether parents “raised her right” would be made, particularly if she had been drinking alcohol. Again, with people knowing their daughter has had sex (consensual or not), it is known she is not a “good girl,” which may bring shame upon family and parents. As a Taiwanese freshman put it, “if they got raped, they are seen as not clean and like people will

think this girl is not a good girl. And people will even say she *should* have shame.” Participants adamantly stated that they would not want their parents to lose face in this way.

Furthermore, participants described that telling parents would only needlessly hurt them. As a Vietnamese American freshman said, “I feel like a lot of Asian parents worry a lot ‘cause they always want the best for their kid. Telling them would only make them worry more. Why would she want that?” Additionally, telling them would only multiply the number of people who are hurt by the victimization. “Because she knows that the parents would be really really hurt if they know that their daughter is going through something like that,” (Taiwanese junior).

Furthermore, when describing ways in which parents could help her after a rape, participants believed that in most cases, Asian parents could not help her navigate unfamiliar U.S. systems, reinforcing the idea that telling them would only needlessly burden them and unnecessarily make them worry.

I feel like just most Asian parents, they are new—well not new to the country but even though they have been here for awhile, they don’t really know what’s going on...I feel like if they feel that they can’t help that much, they would be just hurt by it too. If they can’t help their own daughter, I think they would just be hurt by it. So the daughter, she would be just like trying to handle it on herself to save the burden from her parents.

(Cambodian American junior)

Avoidance of personal distress. Participants also believed that Asian parents would likely increase restrictions on their daughter, blame her, or even punish her for being raped for “putting herself in that position,” especially if she had been drinking. Moreover, disclosing an alcohol-involved rape meant that parents would alter their opinion about her. These consequences were

described as being “worse for Asians” (Filipina American sophomore) than other women and were described by all but one of the participants.

So if you tell your Asian parents, they’re...not going to think about you being a victim. They’re going to think about the bad things that you have done to get yourself into that place...[if she drank] it would make them even less likely to tell their parents because... you could have consented and you just didn’t remember. Yeah, I feel like you’d be more blamed by your parents especially if alcohol was in the situation. (Korean American freshman)

If she were to tell her parents [that I was drunk and raped], her parents would lose trust in her and have a new opinion about her, and that would take a toll on her. “Now my parents think that oh I’m this party girl,” which is not who I really am but it’s just what I do on occasion. (Cambodian American junior)

For Korean American or Korean teens I know if they got pregnant their parents would not be supportive or they’d kick her out and would be really frustrated and like even embarrassed...So, if a Korean American got raped, I feel like she would be thinking like “what are my parents going to do? They’re going to freakin’ kick me out.” (Korean American freshman)

Other participants echoed these and similar personal consequences an Asian American daughter would experience from disclosing an alcohol-involved rape to parents. As a Cambodian American junior put it, parents would tell her that she “should have known better since they did not raise her to behave like that.”

Even in the face of seeing benefits to disclosing to parents, participants believed that the disruptions and consequences to relationship with parents, given the context of Asian families, would be too much to bear.

After you tell her, you may have that mother-daughter relationship again. She may be there to care for you. But it's the step of getting there. Everything in between is so much to handle that you probably just won't do it. (Korean American freshman)

Nondisclosure to others. To further guarantee that parents do not find out about a rape, nondisclosure to other sources was also described. Formal authorities such as medical personnel and law enforcement and informal sources such as friends who may be socially connected with parents were mentioned. Disclosing a rape to any of these sources increases the chance that parents find out. Some participants feared that telling the police may either require or urge the involvement of parents, and similarly, telling a friend whose parents know her own parents is also a risk of exposing a rape experience. One woman believed that medical and insurance bills might expose sexual health-related medical tests received by an Asian rape victim:

She probably wouldn't [see a doctor]. If she's on her parent's insurance, she wouldn't want to have anything show up [on their bills]...She probably really just would do anything that she could just so that her parents don't find out. Even if it meant say, she did get pregnant and needs an abortion. She probably wouldn't even tell them. But she probably would try to pay for everything herself or get friends' help rather than her parents.' (Asian American freshman)

Friendship considerations. Participants mentioned unwanted disruptions to friendships, as well. Although these friendship-consequences were at least noted by every participant, these

discussions were not nearly as extensive as discussions involving the effects of rape disclosure on parental relationships.

In discussing the perpetrator of the rape as an acquaintance, disclosing rape would again be highly unlikely when considering the context of social circles and friendships. Three women described protecting an acquaintance perpetrator and his social circle from the stigma of being labeled a “rapist”:

It being somebody who you knew...once you accuse somebody of rape it gives them a label. It stigmatizes them, if you even just mention it...once that statement is made about the individual and people hear about it then it affects everybody around them. (Asian American sophomore)

When the perpetrator of rape is an acquaintance, it also tended to muddy the labeling of the experience as rape, especially when alcohol was involved, leading to nondisclosure. Despite the rape, the primary concern was maintaining people’s relationships, demonstrated in the following quotes:

Because...it’s somebody you know. It might feel like it wasn’t rape. I just feel that they won’t go there straight away because they don’t want to press charges or turn in somebody that they know. Even if it’s a friend of a friend then it’s like ‘hey your friend just raped me’ and what does that say about the friendship that you had with that actual friend? Because...yea, you don’t want to ruin one relationship because you want to turn in somebody. (Half Indian and half Vietnamese sophomore)

I won’t probably tell [my friend whose friend raped me] because, if we’re thinking about alcohol, I’d be afraid I wasn’t sure if it was rape. I wouldn’t want to put that kind of restriction on their friendship if I wasn’t sure about it. I mean I wouldn’t think of them as

a very good person, but I don't want to damage anybody else's thoughts about their friend. (Korean American freshman)

It is important to note that all participants stated that *if* an Asian American college woman were to consider telling anyone about a rape, whether or not alcohol was involved, she would most likely tell a trusted female friend, largely because she would be able to trust this girlfriend most to keep it to herself. This consideration emphasized yet again that the decision to disclose would be made keeping social relationships in mind.

Structural Context of Nondisclosure

Within structural contexts, participants emphasized avoiding the involvement of formal resources, specifically mental health professionals and the police. An overarching theme involved Asian people handling personal matters, such as rape, on their own. As a Korean American freshman noted “[Asians] are just less dramatic in the sense of calling officials. Asian people feel like it's their personal lives so they should be able to handle themselves. They don't need any outside forces to help them.” As another Korean American freshman stated, “[Koreans] wouldn't want to go to a stranger that they don't really know to talk about their personal problems and for them to tell them what to do or what not to do.” In accordance with the sociocultural context of rape nondisclosure, being “less dramatic” and handling a rape on her own would cause less disruption in relationships and less shame for all involved.

Mental health professionals: The absolute last resort. Given participants' certainty about keeping a rape to herself, nearly all of the participants stated that seeking mental health services would only even be considered as an absolute last resort. They described all the alternative options that would be exhausted before resorting to a therapist and stated that only if unable to function, would she see a therapist.

The major reasons behind not seeking mental health services were to avoid reliving the rape and avoid additional stigma. The belief that seeking mental health services would make her feel worse was echoed by all participants.

When rape occurs, it's the whole you-don't-ever-want-to-relive-it thing. I don't know if they ask anything, but I would assume that when you go see a mental health professional you're going to have to tell them what happened. So therefore you're reliving the situation. And if you're going to them as your second source, then that would be the third time reliving it. (Half Indian and half Vietnamese sophomore)

Participants also stated that seeing a therapist would add additional stigma to the already stigmatized role of being a rape victim. After this participant described the stigma and shame associated with being a rape victim, she stated:

Right when you hear like a counselor or psychiatrist or something it's just like there's something wrong with me kind of a thing. That connotation is not really positive. And people don't think of you positively already [for being a rape victim]. You'd be making it worse. (Korean American freshman)

Three participants were the exception, immediately stating that a therapist would be an ideal resource since a therapist would not be in her social circle and therefore not affect the social face of her family. Again, maintaining social relationships was declared her first priority. Demographically, these three participants appeared to have no commonalities, varying by ethnicity and time in the U.S. One participant also stressed the importance of cultural alliance:

It might be different if they go to a mental health person if they are of Asian descent.

They would want to talk to somebody who either could possibly have cultural

background in the same area or something along those lines. (Asian American sophomore)

Police and race-related concerns. Not reporting an alcohol-involved rape to the police was rationalized within discussions of racialized experiences of Asian American women, specifically through Asian American stereotypes and mistrust of the police.

Asian American stereotypes. Sixteen of the 17 participants described stereotypes about Asians in the U.S. and linked this to potential police interactions. Being perceived as a foreigner who cannot speak English or understand something “American” and paradoxically being expected to be smart were the most commonly named stereotypes. Stereotypes of Asian American women specifically involved being perceived as shy, passive, and hypersexualized.

These stereotypes influencing policemen’s perceptions of a rape and the victim were described in-depth. One participant (Vietnamese American freshman) stated that stereotypes that Asian American women are quiet and shy may lead police to assume she did not refuse assertively enough and blame her for the rape. Other stereotype-based police perceptions were:

Like all men, policemen have stereotypes that Asian girls live sexually, and they judge them for it. Policemen think, “You did something, or you flirt too much, or you wear something to sexually attract them to rape you.” (Korean American sophomore)

They have this misperception that all Asian people will misunderstand something because of a language barrier. So I feel like the police would just be like ‘oh well I think you’re wrong’ or “you misunderstood.” ...I feel like they might think she’s being over dramatic because of stereotypes. (Korean American freshman)

Police mistrust as minorities. By virtue of being an ethnic minority in the U.S., Asian Americans struggle with trusting the police. As (Korean American freshman) put it, “It’s not like

a trust thing that you don't know that specific policeman, but it's like questioning the police overall and if they're going to understand...since you're not White—not the White norm.”

Another participant stated that reporting to the police only risks making an Asian American woman feel worse:

Most Asian people I know think that police is just not on their side, just 'cause they're Asian. Because when you say police, we just picture a White officer. You're Asian telling a White officer, he's just not going to believe you. I don't think she would feel reassured [by the police] because they're not going to go right away and arrest this guy and you feel like wow, I told them and they didn't do anything. So then you blame yourself more. (Cambodian American junior)

Psychological Context of Nondisclosure: Coping

Participants described purposeful and at other times unintentional psychological strategies to cope with nondisclosure: emotional avoidance and not labeling an alcohol-involved rape a “rape.”

Emotional avoidance. All participants adamantly endorsed coping with rape by avoiding related thoughts and emotions. (Korean American freshman): “Since it happened and there's nothing you can do about it, why make yourself feel worse by reliving it *and* make other people feel bad too by telling them? Just put it behind you and move on.” Over and over again, others echoed the idea that “moving on” through avoidance was the best way to cope with rape.

Alcohol-involved rape: Blurred rape labels. By not labeling an experience as “rape,” there is nothing to report and less to be ashamed of. Thus, although not necessarily done intentionally, how participants defined rape and then whether participants labeled scenarios as “rape” became acutely important for disclosure. When participants applied their own accurate

rape definitions to self-generated hypothetical rape scenarios involving alcohol, it became apparent that 11 out of 15 (two participants were not asked) of them did not fully grasp what rape looks like. A half Indian and half Vietnamese sophomore explicitly asked herself, “Well, if she was drunk, is it still even considered a rape?” Similar to others, this Korean American freshman engaged in victim blaming:

Actually, I feel like she’ll feel more guilty when she’s intoxicated. Because when you’re intoxicated you sort of kind of not ask for it but if you were put into that sort of situation like you’re drunk and you are willing to go with a guy to a room or somewhere else, you were actually like putting yourself into that situation.

Like others, this same participant also provided excuses for a hypothetical perpetrator who drank, despite just having been reminded that she was to assume the scenario was a rape.

I think that would be even more embarrassing to hear that she was sober but the other person wasn’t. I’m sure if she was drunk and he was raping her or whatever like she could have done something like screamed out loud or went out or even try to push him away or something, you know? I mean I feel that most people would take it as you were okay. You were sober. Why didn’t you just run out and stop it?

According to these participants, the presence of alcohol allows a victim to not label an assault as “rape,” therefore further facilitating nondisclosure.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this paper was to examine the cultural context of alcohol-involved rape disclosure for Asian American college women. Participants reported that an Asian American woman would likely not disclose an alcohol-involved rape to anyone, despite recognizing benefits of disclosure. Three major themes emerged from participants’ discussion of

nondisclosure: sociocultural, structural, and psychological contexts of nondisclosure. The sociocultural context of nondisclosure involved concerns about how disclosure would influence interpersonal harmony, with a primary emphasis on parental and peer relationships. Structural racial discrimination was a deterrent to disclosure, and as such, participants viewed police reporting as unlikely and perceived mental health service-seeking as a last resort. Lastly, participants reported psychological strategies to cope with alcohol-involved rape in lieu of disclosure.

The sociocultural context of nondisclosure of an alcohol-involved rape involved disrupting relationships with primarily parents and also peers. Participants' main concerns surrounding an Asian American woman disclosing to her parents were: failure to uphold the idealized gender role of the "good Asian girl," causing distress for her parents and herself, and nondisclosure to others. All participants immediately connected rape with sex rather than characterizing it as a crime, and as such, disclosure referenced the act of sex, rather than being victimized. Expectations of the "good Asian girl" described by participants are consistent with previous work that finds that in many Asian cultures, valuing female virtue means that engaging in sex and alcohol use by unmarried women is not socially sanctioned and considered shameful (Kim, 2009; Lee, Battle, Antin, & Lipton, 2008). Supportive White parents were contrasted with Asian parents who may be more likely to blame and shame their daughter, particularly if she had been drinking. Participants described wanting to avoid this personal distress; avoiding it may in fact may be beneficial according to work that has found that negative social reactions to rape disclosure are associated with poorer psychological health (e.g., Ullman & Filipas, 2001). Although we lack direct evidence that parents would react negatively to disclosure, research indicates that these expectations may match reality since Asian Americans tend to blame rape

victims more than their counterparts (e.g., Lee et al., 2005), and qualitative work has demonstrated angry reactions from parents upon discovering daughters are sexually active (Kim, 2009). This cultural difference may indicate that participants view the benefits of disclosure as a White American cultural norm that does not fit with their Asian American experiences and perceptions.

Additionally, consistent with other research, conversing about sexual victimization was described as especially difficult for Asian American women due to the cultural inappropriateness of directly discussing sex (Kim & Ward, 2007). In addition to sex as taboo, we found that participants reported that discussing Asian American female alcohol use with parents is equally as taboo as discussing sex. This is a novel finding. Like sex, alcohol use is discussed in implicit and indirect ways. Thus, disclosing to parents about being raped while intoxicated is inconsistent with cultural norms about how to discuss these topics, as disclosure requires direct communication. Moreover, participants perceived that disclosure would result in placing unnecessary burden and distress on an Asian American woman's parents. Parents would not be able to navigate unfamiliar U.S. systems or undo the assault; telling them was seen as hurting them without good reason. Consistent with Asian cultural constructs of interdependent self-construal in which one's action is motivated by not only consequences to herself but also to her significant others (Hall & Barongan, 1997) and social face in which her behavior/reputation reflects that of her group (Hall, Sue, Narang, & Lilly, 2000), an Asian American woman would not disclose a rape to protect parents' reputation and their well-being. Similar concerns about preserving friendships and friends' social face were described by participants, particularly if the perpetrator was an acquaintance. Lastly, not disclosing to medical personnel and police due to

fear of parents finding out is particularly relevant for educating this group on confidentiality rights with police and medical systems.

Within the context of structural factors as barriers to disclosure of an alcohol-involved rape, participants viewed seeking help from a mental health professional as the absolute last resort due to the assumption that it will only increase symptom severity and lead to the stigmatization of being mentally ill. Educating Asian American college women on mental health services and therapeutic goals with regard to symptoms as well as confidentiality rights with mental health professionals may be worthwhile. Further, consistent with current literature on resource utilization among Asian American women victims of violence (Bui, 2003; Xu, Sun, Zhang, & Xu, 2001), participants reported that mistrust of the police would prevent them from disclosing. A review showed that the biggest barriers to service utilization for African American rape survivors are structural and include experiences of racism in the criminal justice system, stereotyped views of Black women as strong, and the lack of Black helping professionals (Ullman, Townsend, Filipas, & Starzynski, 2007). Similarly, participants in this study reported that stereotypes of Asian women as passive and sexualized may lead the police to blame victims for the rape.

Psychological strategies to cope with alcohol-involved rape utilized by Asian American women included emotional avoidance, avoiding thoughts and emotions related to the alcohol-involved rape and not labeling an alcohol-involved rape a “rape.” Participants believed that avoiding thoughts and feelings related to the alcohol-involved rape would help them recover more quickly. According to a substantial body of literature on posttraumatic stress disorder, these methods of avoidance coping have been found to be ineffective in reducing psychological

distress and to be potentially harmful (Lawler, Quimette, & Dahlstedt, 2005; Tiet, Rosen, Cavella, Moos, Finney, & Yesavage, 2006; Ullman et al., 2007).

Study limitations must be considered. Study recruitment materials explicitly stated that participation required the discussion of sexuality, male-female relationships, alcohol use, and culture. Thus, volunteers may not be representative of Asian American women in general, many of whom would presumably forego involvement in such as study. However, since our goal was to elicit information about these topics, having participants who were open to discussing these domains was necessary and essential. Additionally, although in accordance with qualitative interview methods, only a moderate number of participants were included, preventing us from examining specific ethnic subgroups (e.g. Vietnamese and Japanese) and limited interpretation of data. However, our aim was to qualitatively examine Asian Americans as a whole to lay a foundation for future work to quantitatively study these results with larger samples, better enabling investigation of specific subgroups. Future work should focus on specific ethnic subgroup differences.

Despite these limitations, findings from the current study have important implications for alcohol-involved rape disclosures among Asian American women. Sociocultural, structural, and psychological nondisclosure contexts emerged from the data demonstrating that culture is dynamic and exists both within and outside an individual. Of particular importance, we found that the U.S. mainstream conceptualization of rape disclosure and physical and mental health, which views these as individual issues of health and justice, does not fit with the Asian American cultural conceptualization, which views them as entrenched within interpersonal relationships. Thus, more research is needed to further elucidate our findings and to broaden the conceptualization of health to incorporate interpersonal relationships and community. Future

research should also examine other cultural specific variables such as acculturation, ethnic identity, and Asian American community response to disclosure.

Furthermore, despite the seeming finality of decisions to not disclose an alcohol-involved rape, after interviews were conducted and during study debriefings, participants were very engaged in open conversations about rape myths and local resources. In interviews, choosing nondisclosure was not driven by a lack of knowledge about the benefits of disclosure but by the consequences of disclosure within cultural contexts. During debriefings (although not coded data), when the interviewer provided information about rape myths and summarized participants' reasons to disclose and not disclose, they became ambivalent about disclosing rather than definitively decided to not disclose. Many women expressed having "ah-ha moments" about definitions of rape and stated disclosure might be reconsidered, especially to mental health professionals. Perhaps this in part reflects the extensive cultural competency and motivational interviewing (MI; Miller & Rollnick, 2002) training the first author/interviewer received. During debriefings, true to MI, ambivalence was recognized, empathy was expressed, and discrepancy between their goals/values and nondisclosure was developed, all with cultural sensitivity. These women voiced their hesitations with disclosure to a nonjudgmental audience and then were provided information about alternatives to silence that were then discussed within the context of the information that they just provided. These findings suggest that by incorporating MI and cultural competence, women can be successfully encouraged to identify benefits of disclosure and ways to minimize interpersonal costs. Future research should address these ideas for developing culturally sensitive rape psychoeducation efforts for this group.

These data reveal that alcohol-involved rape disclosure is highly unlikely for Asian American college women. Even though questions were asked about the effects of disclosure for

the individual woman, responses were most often framed within sociocultural contexts and relationships, indicating rape disclosure is not an individual issue but a group issue for Asian American college women. From these qualitative data, subsequent research should examine these findings with larger samples of Asian American women, and on a broader level, our findings indicate that cultural theories and contexts must be considered when conducting research on rape and alcohol.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was supported in part by the following grants: 1R01AA016281-01A2 PI: William H. George, 1F31AA018237-01A1 PI: Kelly H. Koo. This research was also supported in part by the University of Washington (UW) Institute for Ethnic Studies in the United States and The Graduate School Fund for Excellence & Innovation of the UW Graduate School. Lastly, we wish to thank our devoted research team, Jenny Chong, Junny Kim, and Jolynn Siu, for their invaluable volunteer work.

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Table 1

Cultural Contexts of Alcohol-involved Rape Nondisclosure for Asian American College Women

- I. Rape Nondisclosure: The Presumptive Response
- II. Social Context of Nondisclosure
 - a. Relationship with parents
 - i. Expectations to be a “good girl”
 - ii. Avoidance of parental distress
 - iii. Avoidance of personal distress
 - iv. Nondisclosure to others
 - b. Friendship considerations
- III. Structural Context of Nondisclosure
 - a. Mental health professionals: The absolute last resort
 - b. Police and race-related concerns
 - i. Asian American stereotypes
 - ii. Police mistrust as minorities
- IV. Psychological Context of Nondisclosure: Coping Without Disclosing
 - a. Emotional avoidance
 - b. Alcohol-involved rape: blurred rape labels

Dissertation: Transitioning from Qualitative to Quantitative Research

Results from the qualitative interviews described in Chapter 1 demonstrate that from the perspective of these 17 Asian American college women, Asian American college women would be less likely than their White counterparts to disclose alcohol-involved rape and rape in general and that there are specific cultural constructs that may be driving decreased disclosure. One of the aims of conducting grounded theory qualitative research (and these informative interviews specifically) is to provide a platform from which future research can be conducted. Therefore, the next two dissertation chapters will address two different research methodologies that tested the ideas generated from the qualitative data—a survey and an experimental study.

Chapter 2 presents a brief survey that compares alcohol-involved sexual assault histories and disclosure behavior between Asian American college women and White American college women. The significance of this survey involves its consideration of actual past behavior of both groups.

In the qualitative study, using her own experiences and history, each participant conceptualized and then discussed rape disclosure based on her own idea of rape. Similarly, in the survey, data on the characteristics of the rape that influenced disclosure behavior were not collected. In the third experimental study though, the concept of rape was standardized with an acquaintance rape scenario. Chapter 3 presents this experiment in which an acquaintance rape scenario with an alcohol manipulation (present or absent) was read by White and Asian American college women and likelihood to disclose this rape scenario to five different sources was compared. In addition to testing the differences in likelihood to disclose, rather than only using race as a proxy for culture, cultural constructs that were identified in the qualitative interviews were also considered in predicting likelihood to disclose. Using a standardized rape

scenario allows for interpretations of differences in likelihood to disclose to be attributed to the independent variables (race, alcohol, and cultural constructs) rather than speculations about the characteristics of the rape.

Conducting and analyzing the qualitative data before conducting the survey and experimental study allowed for the qualitative data to inform the research questions and design of the subsequent studies. Gleaned from data collected from the qualitative interviews, it was clear that the perceptions Asian parents have of their Asian/Asian American daughter was a primary influence in rape disclosure decisions and that *if* an Asian American woman were to disclose to a rape to someone it would be her friend. Thus a “parental influence attitudes” measure was created that assessed the level of influence of parents’ perceptions influenced a woman’s decision to disclose rape. This measure was included along with the literature-guided and theory-based cultural constructs in the experimental study. Additionally included in both the survey and experimental study was a separate assessment of friend and parent disclosures. Thus, the qualitative research appropriately influenced subsequent studies.

Chapter 2

Disclosure of Alcohol-involved Sexual Assault among Asian American and White college women

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Data collection and manuscript preparation was supported by grants from the National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (1R01AA016281-01A2 PI: William H. George, F31 AA018237-01A1 PI: Kelly H. Koo).

Word count: 2671

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Abstract

Alcohol-involved sexual assault and disclosure history were compared for Asian American (AA) and White American college women (WW). Survey results indicated AA and WW were equally likely to experience alcohol-involved oral rape and anal rape and all sexual assault when alcohol was not involved, but WW experienced higher proportions of alcohol-involved vaginal rape and unwanted sex play (USP). Seventy-two percent of AA and 82% of WW disclosed any sexual assault. When excluding disclosures to friends, only 10% of AA and 20% of WW disclosed any sexual assault. AA were significantly less likely than WW to disclose alcohol-involved USP to a parent and any USP to a parent and a friend. Results suggest both groups require comparable sexual assault research attention; consideration of culture is essential to understanding disclosure.

Key words: Sexual assault, rape, alcohol, disclosure, Asian Americans

With less than 5% of college rapes reported to police a year (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), nondisclosure of sexual assault is a pervasive problem among college women, limiting support and treatment for the detrimental consequences associated with rape (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011).

Asian American (AA) women are speculated to be less likely to disclose rape than other groups due to cultural reasons, which may be confounding AA rape prevalence rates (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Because increased alcohol use is linked to increased likelihood of rape victimization (e.g., Cole, 2006), AA college-aged women's recent rising alcohol use (e.g., Grant et al., 2004) may be increasing their vulnerability to rape victimization.

Asian women have been found to express the weakest intentions to report a hypothetical rape over other groups (Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981). With patriarchal societies necessitating women to abstain from drinking and having sex, women who are sexually assaulted while drinking may be less inclined to disclose than sober women. Research suggests these gendered attitudes may be stronger for AA women (Lee, Battle, Antin, Lipton, 2008). Despite speculations in differences of sexual assault disclosure between AA and other groups, these differences have not yet been tested and alcohol has not yet been considered.

Present Study

This study compares alcohol-involved sexual assault history and disclosure between AA and White American college women (WW). We hypothesize that both groups will be equally likely to experience sexual assault, regardless of alcohol-involvement, and that AA will be less likely than WW to disclose sexual assault, especially when alcohol was involved.

Methods

Participants

Participants were college women who identified as either “Asian/Asian American” ($n = 255$) or “White/Caucasian/European American” ($n = 375$), who were part of an undergraduate psychology subject pool in a large West Coast public university. AA mean age was 19.33 ($SD = 1.18$), and WW mean age was 19.08 ($SD = 1.10$). Participants included freshmen (55.2%), sophomores (23.7%), juniors (14.9%) and seniors (5.9%).

Procedure

Study information was posted on a website for students participating in the undergraduate subject pool and indicated that the survey would ask about potentially sensitive topics regarding culture, sexuality, and alcohol. Interested students were provided a web link through the online recruiting system. Participants completed the 50-minute survey from the computer of their choice and then received course credit.

Measures

Disclosure of unwanted sexual experiences. Participants’ unwanted sexual experiences were assessed using a revised version of the widely used Revised Sexual Experiences Survey (RSES; Koss & Gidycz, 2007). RSES assessed the full range of sexual assault and sexually coercive experiences since the age of 14: unwanted sex play (USP; fondling, kissing, or rubbed up against the private areas of my body [lips, breast/chest, crotch or butt] or removed some of my clothes without consent [but did not attempt sexual penetration]), oral rape, and vaginal and anal penetration. RSES was revised to assess alcohol involvement in sexual assault. For each type of endorsed sexual assault, participants reported whether or not they disclosed that assault to the following sources: a parent, friend, police, and medical and mental health professional.

Results

Due to the small sample sizes and unequally distributed data among cells, one-sided

Fisher's exact significance tests were used to test for differences in proportions of sexual assault experiences and disclosure observed between ethnic groups.

Sexual Assault History

In Table 1, AA and WW sexual assault histories are presented and also disaggregated by alcohol involvement. For each type of sexual assault, the number of women who have experienced that type is presented. Data for oral, vaginal, and anal rape were also aggregated into "penetrative sexual assault" (PSA). Percentages presented in Table 1 represent the percentage of women who have experienced that type of assault within that ethnic group. For instance, 14% of AA women reported experiencing alcohol-involved USP.

Both AA and WW were equally likely to experience all types of sexual assault when alcohol was not involved. However, WW experienced a higher proportion of alcohol-involved vaginal rape (Fisher's test, $p = .02$) and USP ($p < .001$) than AA, but were equally likely to experience alcohol-involved oral and anal rape.

Sexual Assault Disclosure

Fifty-two of the 72 AA (72%) and 122 of 149 WW (82%) who reported sexual assault disclosed sexual assault to any sources, regardless of sexual assault type and alcohol involvement ($p = .07$). Although it may appear that disclosure behavior is relatively common, disclosure to a friend is driving these higher rates of disclosure. When excluding friends as a disclosure source, disclosure rates dramatically decrease, such that only 7 of 72 AA (10%) and 30 of 149 WW (20%) disclosed any sexual assault ($p = .04$), indicating that AA were half as likely to disclose than WW.

Due to low disclosures to non-friend sources, USP and PSA disclosure data were presented separately. Table 2 presents the number of USP victims who disclosed at least once to

each source within each ethnic group, as well as the percentage of those who disclosed within that group. For instance, according to Table 2, 69% of AA who reported experiencing alcohol-involved USP disclosed their experience to at least one friend. Directions of differences were such that AA were less likely than WW to disclose. This was the case for alcohol-involved USP to a parent ($p = .02$) and any USP regardless of alcohol-involvement to a parent ($p = .04$) and a friend ($p = .04$). Trending significant differences were found for USP without alcohol to all formal sources ($p = .09$) and mental health professionals ($p = .09$), and any USP regardless of alcohol to mental health professionals ($p = .10$). Table 3 presents disclosure data by PSA victims. Only overall PSA disclosure to mental health professionals was found to be a trending difference ($p = .09$). AA and WW were equally likely to disclose remaining types of USP and PSA.

Discussion

Differences between AA's and WW's alcohol-involved sexual assault histories and disclosure were examined. As hypothesized, AA and WW were equally likely to experience sexual assaults when no alcohol was involved and for alcohol-involved oral and anal rape. However, WW were more likely to experience alcohol-involved USP and vaginal rape. Excluding disclosures to friends, sexual assault disclosure was low for both groups. As hypothesized, AA were less likely than WW to disclose any USP to a parent or a friend and even less likely to disclose alcohol-involved USP to a parent. Differences reaching significance levels were found for AA being less likely than WW to disclose any USP and PSA to mental health professionals.

Present findings replicate studies that demonstrate comparable sexual assault rates for AA and WW (Kalof, 2000), indicating they require comparable research attention. Differences in alcohol-involved oral and anal rape may be explained by ethnic differences in drinking rates.

Although AA drinking is on the rise (e.g., Grant et al., 2004), overall drinking rates continue to be lower than for Whites, which is likely reflected in these significant differences in alcohol-involved sexual assaults.

Consistent with previous work (e.g., Ullman & Filipas, 2001), most participants told someone about their assault and most commonly told a friend. Not only is a friend likely to have the most contact with a college student rape victim over parents or formal sources, a friend likely shares similar attitudes and thus is less likely than other sources to react negatively to disclosure (Ullman & Filipas, 2001). Additionally, AA college women rationalized that a trustworthy female friend is the ideal disclosure source because she can be depended on to keep it to herself (Koo, Nguyen, Andrasik, & George, 2011).

Caution is warranted in drawing final conclusions about ethnic differences on disclosure to non-friend sources. Excluding friend-disclosures, disclosure by both groups was so low that including one more woman who disclosed could have shifted findings. Nevertheless, several important points can be noted. A novel finding shows that AA are less likely to disclose USP to a parent and friend than WW and may be reflective of sex as being more taboo to discuss amongst AA (Kim & Ward, 2007). Moreover, consistent with research demonstrating AA lower service utilization (e.g., Sue, Fujino, Hu, Takeuchi, & Zane, 1991), not one AA disclosed a sexual assault to mental health professionals. Additionally, regardless of ethnicity, college women did not seek medical services or report to the police. However, sexual health risk and injury were not assessed; it is undetermined if the assaults warranted medical services. The role of alcohol in sexual assaults on disclosure is difficult to ascertain given the low rates of disclosure to sources other than friends. However, AA were less likely to disclose USP to parents than WW, which was even less likely when alcohol was involved, indicating that drinking during USP may be

even more taboo to discuss with AA parents than USP alone.

The small sample of women who disclosed sexual assault to sources other than friends was a research limitation. Another limitation involved grouping all AA together, which is particularly limiting when looking at AA alcohol use, which varies between Asian ethnic groups (e.g., Luczak et al., 2004). Despite these limitations, due to the scant work in this area, this study addressed unanswered questions and laid a foundation for future work.

Future research should recruit AA and WW sexual assault victims, which would result in increased variability in disclosure rates to examine differences in disclosure behavior, particularly to parse out the effects of alcohol. Additionally, surveying an ethnically diverse representative college sample would gain accurate prevalence rates of alcohol-involved sexual assault and disclosure. Lastly, identifying cultural constructs driving ethnic differences in alcohol-involved rape disclosure behavior is necessary.

AA and WW require comparable sexual assault research attention. Furthermore, excluding friend-disclosures, nondisclosure of sexual assault is pervasive among all women, but is of particular concern for AA. Future research must expand upon these findings to understand the cultural context of alcohol-involved sexual assault disclosure.

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Table 1. *Sexual Assault Experiences*

	Asian Americans	White Americans
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Unwanted sex play		
Alcohol-involved***	36 (14%)	115 (31%)
No alcohol	44 (17%)	55 (15%)
Oral rape		
Alcohol-involved	10 (4%)	19 (5%)
No alcohol	9 (4%)	11 (3%)
Vaginal rape		
Alcohol-involved*	10 (4%)	34 (9%)
No alcohol	15 (6%)	14 (4%)
Anal rape		
Alcohol-involved	2 (1%)	6 (2%)
No alcohol	3 (1%)	3 (1%)
Penetrative sexual assault		
Alcohol-involved*	19 (8%)	47 (13%)
No alcohol	20 (8%)	22 (6%)
Any sexual assault		
Alcohol-involved***	43 (17%)	128 (34%)
No alcohol	51 (20%)	59 (15%)

Notes. Penetrative sexual assault includes oral, vaginal, and anal rape.

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 2. *Disclosure of Unwanted Sex Play (USP)*

	Asian Americans	White Americans
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Disclosed USP with alcohol	27 of 36 (75%)	91 of 115 (79%)
Formal sources	1 (3%)	6 (5%)
Medical	1 (3%)	0 (0%)
Mental health	0 (0%)	5 (4%)
Police	0 (0%)	2 (2%)
Informal sources	27 (75%)	91 (79%)
Parent*	0 (0%)	14 (12%)
Friend	25 (69%)	89 (77%)
Disclosed USP without alcohol	34 of 44 (77%)	38 of 55 (69%)
Formal sources [†]	0 (0%)	4 (7%)
Medical	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Mental health [†]	0 (0%)	4 (7%)
Police	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
Informal sources	34 (77%)	37 (56%)
Parent	3 (7%)	9 (16%)
Friend	24 (55%)	33 (60%)
Disclosed any USP	48 of 64 (75%)	110 of 141 (69%)
Formal sources	1 (2%)	7 (5%)
Medical	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Mental health [†]	0 (0%)	6 (4%)
Police	0 (0%)	2 (1%)
Informal sources	48 (75%)	110 (78%)
Parent*	3 (5%)	19 (14%)
Friend*	39 (61%)	105 (75%)

[†] $p < .10$; * $p < .05$

Table 3. *Disclosure of Penetrative Sexual Assault (PSA)*

	Asian Americans	White Americans
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Disclosed PSA with alcohol	12 of 19 (63%)	34 of 47 (72%)
Formal sources	0 (0%)	6 (13%)
Medical	0 (0%)	1 (2%)
Mental health	0 (0%)	4 (9%)
Police	0 (0%)	2 (4%)
Informal sources	12 (63%)	33 (70%)
Parent	1 (5%)	3 (6%)
Friend	11 (58%)	33 (70%)
Disclosed PSA without alcohol	12 of 20 (60%)	12 of 22 (55%)
Formal sources	1 (5%)	4 (18%)
Medical	1 (5%)	0 (0%)
Mental health	0 (0%)	3 (14%)
Police	0 (0%)	2 (9%)
Informal sources	12 (60%)	10 (46%)
Parent	4 (20%)	3 (14%)
Friend	8 (40%)	10 (46%)
Disclosed any PSA	21 of 35 (60%)	39 of 59 (66%)
Formal sources	1 (3%)	7 (12%)
Medical	1 (3%)	1 (2%)
Mental health [†]	0 (0%)	5 (9%)
Police	0 (0%)	2 (3%)
Informal sources	21 (60%)	37 (63%)
Parent	5 (14%)	4 (7%)
Friend	17 (49%)	37 (63%)

[†] $p < .10$

Chapter 3

Cultural Factors Associated with Disclosure Differences of Alcohol-involved Rape to Informal and Formal Sources: An Experimental Study among White and Asian American college women

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ABSTRACT

College student Asian American (AA) and White American women (WW) read a detailed acquaintance rape scenario in which the presence of alcohol in the scenario was manipulated. They then rated how likely they would be to disclose the rape to a friend, parent, police, medical personnel, and mental health professional and completed cultural measures. A 2 (participant race) x 2 (alcohol condition) x 5 (disclosure source) repeated-measures analysis of variance was performed. AA were less likely than WW to disclose to a friend, parent, mental health professional, and medical personnel; both groups were equally likely to disclose to police. The presence of alcohol in the rape scenario was associated with decreased likelihood to disclose to police only. For both ethnic groups, likelihood to disclose to a friend was greater than to all other sources and likelihood to disclose to a parent was lower than to a friend. Furthermore, more so for AA than WW, disclosure likelihood to a parent was less likely than disclosure likelihood to all other sources. Among AA only, a 2 (alcohol condition) x 5 (disclosure source) repeated-measures analysis of covariance with cultural constructs serving as covariates found that independent self-construal and parental influence interacted with type of disclosure source. These findings suggest that cultural background is crucial in understanding rape disclosure behavior and must be considered in providing this group appropriate post-rape support.

KEY WORDS: Asian American, culture, rape, alcohol, and sexual assault

INTRODUCTION

Nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape is a pervasive problem among college women. Approximately 30% of college women report having had rape experiences, attempted and completed (e.g., Abbey Ross, McDuffie, & McAuslan, 1996), and upwards of 50% of college rapes involve alcohol (e.g., Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004). Estimates of less than five percent of female college rapes are reported to police a year (Sampson, 2002), which potentially prevents support, treatment, and recovery from the variety of damaging physical, psychological, social, and behavioral health consequences associated with rape (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). With high college enrollment (U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2009) and alcohol use significantly increasing as their counterparts' use is stabilizing or decreasing (e.g., Grant et al., 2004), Asian American college women may be at particular risk for experiencing alcohol-involved rape. Because alcohol use is linked to increased likelihood of rape victimization (e.g., Cole, 2006), this group's rising alcohol use may be increasing vulnerability to rape victimization.

However, Asian American rape prevalence rates are inconclusive, and nondisclosure of rape is likely a contributing factor (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2006). Asians have expressed the weakest overall intentions to report a hypothetical rape among Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White women (Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981). Among college populations, survey data yield mixed results on Asian rape rates (Kalof, 2000; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987), and data on alcohol-involved college rape prevalence rates rarely include ethnic differences, let alone Asians. Exploring nondisclosure will help to understand contradicting prevalence rates of rape among Asian Americans, a historically overlooked population. The current study not only

addresses these ethnic differences in alcohol-involved rape disclosure but also examines the roles of relevant cultural factors as well as type of disclosure source in nondisclosure behavior.

Asian American Cultural Constructs Related to Rape

Rape research with Asians and Asian Americans indicates that Asian cultural contexts may not facilitate rape disclosure. Asian American college students tend to hold higher rape-supportive attitudes than their non-Asian counterparts and express greater endorsement of rape myths, indicating a less stringent definition of rape (Kennedy & Gorzalka, 2002; Koo, Stephens, Lindgren, & George, 2011; Lee, Pomeroy, Yoo, & Rheinboldt, 2005; Mori, Bernat, Glenn, Selle, & Zarate, 1995). In cross-cultural work, Japanese college students minimized a hypothetical rape, blamed the victim, and excused the perpetrator significantly more than American college students (Yamawaki & Tschanz, 2005). Although these findings demonstrate that Asian American college students tend to endorse rape myths more than other groups, this research has primarily used race as a proxy for culture without identifying cultural constructs that may be driving these differences as well as their effects on rape disclosure. Thus, in addition to examining rape myth beliefs and race, researchers must also begin identifying relevant cultural constructs and examining their associations with alcohol-involved rape disclosure for Asian American college women.

Gender role attitudes. Gendered expectations exist within all patriarchal cultures where women are expected to maintain “female virtue” by abstaining from alcohol and sex before marriage. However, Asian American women may be socialized to endorse patriarchal values more than other women, likely leading to decreased disclosure. Affirming a positive identity and mitigating the negative representations of their ethnic group by the dominant culture (Tajfel, 1981; Mahalingham & Leu, 2005), Asian women have recognized an idealized female virtue

(Kim, 2009) that superiorly differentiates them from White women in the U.S. (Mahalingham & Leu, 2005). At the same time, however, these representations can create pressure to live up to these expectations (Mahalingham & Leu, 2005). If after having drunk, she was raped, an Asian woman may self-evaluate that she “failed” to live up to these expectations of female virtue, fostering nondisclosure. Moreover, Asian American college women have been indirectly taught by their parents that men are sex-driven initiators of intercourse and that they are passive sexual limit-setters (Kim & Ward, 2007), making it women’s responsibility to prevent rape. Endorsing patriarchal gender roles more so than White women may be contributing to decreased alcohol-involved rape disclosure by Asian American women.

Self-construal: Interdependent and Independent. A shared characteristic of Asian cultures, interdependent self-construal involves a cultural orientation where the in-group’s needs and interpersonal harmony are prioritized over the individual, as opposed to independent self-construal, which prioritizes individual rights and preferences and is characteristic of U.S. culture (Hall & Barongan, 1997; Hall, Windover, & Maramba, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Interdependent self-construal may contribute to nondisclosure of rape among Asian American college women in that a strong sense of interconnectedness may strengthen a reluctance to disclose a rape for fear of violating interpersonal harmony. This is particularly relevant given that 95% of college rapes are committed by a known offender (e.g., Abbey, Ross, McDuffie, & McAuslan, 1996; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000) who may even be a part of the victim’s in-group. By the same token, independent self-construal has been shown to contribute to reporting rape to the police because individual justice may be emphasized over group needs (Yamawaki, 2008). Thus, self-construal may be key in understanding rape nondisclosure.

Loss of face. In an interdependence-oriented culture, if an individual behaves in a socially deviant manner, that person loses social face (maintaining a positive reputation to preserve family honor) for her in-group (Hall & Barongan, 1997). Thus, if an Asian woman is raped after having consumed alcohol, in addition to believing she failed to live up to gendered expectations of female virtue, she may further be hesitant to disclose for fear of losing face (Lee & Law, 2001; Luo, 2000; Xu, Xie, & Chen, 1998). Cross-cultural research further supports the importance of interdependence-related constructs. U.S. college students were more likely to advise a hypothetical raped sister to report a rape to the police than their Japanese counterparts, which was mediated by independent self-construal and moderated by concern for the victim's face (Yamawaki, 2008). Japanese participants low on concerns for victim-face tended to advise the victim to report the rape incident to the police, while face concerns did not predict advising for U.S. participants. These findings demonstrate the importance of the roles of these cultural constructs in understanding nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape, yet this work has not yet focused on the perspective of the victim herself and has not been conducted with Asian American college women.

Disclosure Source Differences

Victims of rape consistently disclose to informal sources significantly more than to formal sources, i.e., police and medical and mental health services (Golding, Siegel, Sorenson, Burnam, & Stein, 1989; Ullman & Filipas, 2001a). Although this research has conceptualized informal sources as consisting of friends and family (e.g., Kaukinen, 2004; Ullman & Filipas, 2001a), recent qualitative work finds that for Asian American college women, there is a stark distinction between disclosing rape to parents than to friends (Koo, Nguyen, Andrasik, & George, 2011). Relationship with parents was described as the primary influential factor in

nondisclosure of rape for this group, even when disclosing to sources that were not parents. Thus, these “parental influence attitudes” consist of the extent to which these women are influenced by and concerned with maintaining a positive relationship with parents, including preservation of a positive perception of their daughter, and protecting the well-being of parents. These parent-specific barriers likely prevent an Asian American woman from disclosing an alcohol-involved rape. This parental influence suggests that parents and friends must be distinguished as disclosure sources in rape disclosure research. Supporting this notion, a recent survey of White and Asian American college women found that of all disclosure sources, a friend was the most common disclosure source over a parent, police, or medical and mental health services (Koo & George, 2011). However, the role of parental influence attitudes on rape disclosure behavior and disclosures to a friend and/or parent versus other sources has not yet been examined between White and Asian American college women.

Present Study

The current study examines differences in alcohol-involved rape disclosure by Asian American and White American college women as well as cultural constructs that relate to disclosure behavior. White and Asian American college women read an acquaintance rape scenario in which the presence of alcohol in the scenario was manipulated and they then rated their likelihood to disclose the rape to the following five disclosure sources: a friend, parent, police, medical personnel, and mental health professional. The following hypotheses were tested: (1) Asian Americans will be less likely to disclose than White American women to all five disclosure sources, (2) the presence of alcohol in the rape scenario will be associated with decreased likelihood to disclose, (3) likelihood to disclose to a friend will be greater than to all other sources, (4) likelihood to disclose to a parent will be lower than to a friend, (5) likelihood

to disclose to a parent will be less likely than disclosure likelihood to all other sources more so for Asian Americans than White Americans, and (6) among Asian Americans, although directions of hypotheses were not made, the cultural constructs loss of face, parental influence, rape myth beliefs, egalitarian gender role attitudes, and interdependent and independent self-construal will interact with disclosure source on likelihood to disclose.

METHODS

Participants

Participants were college women who identified as either “Asian/Asian American” ($n = 165$) or “White/Caucasian/European American” ($n = 181$) who were part of an undergraduate psychology subject pool in a large West Coast public university. However, 54 (33%) Asian American and 50 (28%) White American participants either failed or chose not to answer the following assessments of their recollection of scenario details: her single status ($n = 21$), her acquaintance relationship with the perpetrator ($n = 39$), and the manipulated variables of race of the perpetrator (which matched the participant’s race, $n = 55$) and alcohol consumption ($n = 25$). Only one of these participants chose to not answer all manipulation checks. The majority of “choose not to answer” responses came from White participants who chose to not identify the perpetrator’s race ($n = 29$). Perhaps this can be attributed to colorblindness in the U.S. that teaches us (inappropriately so) to not explicitly see or discuss race, especially for Whites (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). All those who failed the alcohol condition manipulation check were told they did not consume alcohol and believed that they had ($n = 16$); perhaps this was due to the rape scene—a college house party where other people were drinking. Participants who failed or chose not to answer manipulation checks were excluded from analyses.

Of the remaining sample ($n_{\text{Asian American (AA)}} = 111$; $n_{\text{White American Women (WW)}} = 131$) Asian American participants' mean age was 18.75 ($SD = 1.19$), and White American participants' mean age was 18.62 ($SD = 1.05$). Participants included freshmen (66.5%), sophomores (19.4%), juniors (8.7%) and seniors (5.4%). Two White American participants were first generation and in the U.S. an average of 1.5 years; 14.5% were second generation (with at least one parent born outside the U.S.); the remaining 84% were third generation or higher (at least both parents born in U.S.). Asian American participant's generation statuses were distributed among first generation (39.6%), second generation (52.3%), and third or higher generation (7.2%). First generation Asian American participants reported they had lived in the U.S. for an average of 8.34 years ($SD = 5.83$). Asian American participants identified as Chinese (35.1%), Korean (31.5%), Vietnamese (16.2%) and other Asian American, including South Asians (17.2%).

Materials and Measures

Scenario: Acquaintance rape. The scenario was developed through an in-depth process. First, the first author individually interviewed college women ($N = 22$) who met eligibility criteria to participate in the current study on how they imagined the most typical and realistic alcohol-involved acquaintance rape unfolding. Based on these data, the first author wrote the first draft of a scenario. Next, through an iterative process of revisions, she consulted with the second author, a team of research assistants (who also met eligibility criteria for the current study), and other mentors. The scenario was developed and successfully piloted with 24 participants. See Appendix for full scenario.

The finalized scenario presented a second person perspective acquaintance rape that consisted of 1,042 to 1,047 words, depending on the condition. Participants were instructed to read the passage carefully while picturing themselves in the situation. The scenario described a

female character who is at her friend's house party and clearly refuses sexual advances made by a male acquaintance (a friend of a friend whom she had a large lecture class with the previous quarter). This ultimately leads to forced vaginal penetration without consent. The perpetrator's race was matched with the participant's race. Also, whether she and the perpetrator both drank alcohol was manipulated. In the alcohol condition, both characters were described as having had a "few vodka tonics" and as "somewhat drunk." On a scale of 1 (*not at all realistic*) to 10 (*completely realistic*), participants' mean rating of the scenario was 6.98 ($SD = 2.17$), indicating the scenario was mostly realistic to participants and thus a valid tool. No significant ethnic group difference was found on this measure.

Demographics. Participants responded to a standard demographic questionnaire assessing age, race, race of parents, generational status, years in the U.S., etc.

Dependent variables: Disclosure likelihood. After reading the scenario, participants rated how likely they would be to tell a parent, a friend, medical personnel, a mental health professional, and the police on a 1 (*not at all likely*) to 7 (*highly likely*) scale. These measures served as the dependent variables.

Loss of face. Concern for social face was measured with the 21-item Loss of Face Scale (LOF; Zane & Yeh, 2002) on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate increased concern with social face and losing face. Sample items are "I maintain a low profile because I do not want to make mistakes in front of other people," and "I do not criticize others because this may embarrass them." LOF showed good internal consistency with this sample for each ethnic group (Cronbach's $\alpha_{AA} = .86$; $\alpha_{WW} = .80$).

Self-construals. Interdependent and independent self construals were measured by the 30-item Self-Construal Scale (SCS; Singelis, 1994). The SCS is a 7-point Likert scale ranging

from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The SCS contains two 15-item subscales that assess independent self-construal (SCS-Independent; e.g. “I enjoy being unique and different from others in many respects”) and interdependent self-construal (SCS-Interdependent; e.g. “I will sacrifice my self interest for the benefit of the group I am in”). Higher scores indicate greater endorsement of independent and interdependent self-construals. For the current study, internal consistency was acceptable for the SCS-Independent (Cronbach’s $\alpha_{AA} = .79$; $\alpha_{WW} = .73$) and for the SCS-Interdependent scales (Cronbach’s $\alpha_{AA} = .72$; $\alpha_{WW} = .72$).

Rape myth beliefs. The 19-item Rape Myths Acceptance Scale (RMAS; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995) assessed attitudes and general false beliefs about rape that function to deny and justify male sexual aggression. Sample items include, “When women talk and act sexy, they are inviting rape,” and “If a woman doesn’t physically fight back, you can’t really say that it was rape.” The RMAS showed good internal consistency with this sample for each ethnic group (Cronbach’s $\alpha_{AA} = .89$; $\alpha_{WW} = .91$). Participants rated each item on a 7-point Likert scale.

Parental influence. From related qualitative work (Koo et al., 2011), it was revealed that post-rape, Asian American women’s primary objective would be to never let parents discover their daughter was raped. Based on these data, the research team developed a 14-item questionnaire, the Parental Influence Questionnaire (PIQ) assessing the extent to which parent-specific barriers would prevent her from disclosing a rape where she had been drinking to her parents. PIQ reflected an Asian American woman’s concerns for maintaining the relationship with and well being of parents as well as preserving parent perceptions of their daughter. PIQ sample items include, “I wouldn’t want my parents to feel ashamed for my actions,” and “I wouldn’t want my family to have a bad reputation with others in our community (e.g., church, family friends, extended family),” “I wouldn’t want my parents to check on me more,” and “I

wouldn't want to talk about the topic of sex with my parents." Participants rated each item on a scale of 1 (*disagree*) to 5 (*agree*). Strong internal consistency was shown with both ethnic groups (Cronbach's $\alpha_{AA} = .93$; $\alpha_{WW} = .94$).

Gender roles. Attitudes toward gender roles were assessed using the 20-item Traditional Egalitarian Sex Roles Scale (TESR; Larsen & Long, 1988). A sample item is, "Having a job is just as important for a wife as it is for her husband." Examples of reversed items are, "Men who cry have weaker character," "The role of teaching in the elementary schools belongs to women," and "I would not allow my son to play with dolls." Higher scores indicate increased support for gender egalitarianism. Participants rated each item on a scale of 1 (*definitely does not reflect the way I feel*) to 6 (*definitely reflects*). (Cronbach's $\alpha_{AA} = .84$; $\alpha_{WW} = .86$.)

Social desirability. Given the sensitive nature of the content of the rape scenario, responding with social desirability was accounted for with the 40-item Balanced Inventory of Desirability of Responding (BIDR; Paulhus, 1991). Good internal consistency was shown with the BIDR (Cronbach's $\alpha_{AA} = .75$; $\alpha_{WW} = .78$).

Procedure

Each participant was recruited through one of two methods: an email from her sorority or an online recruitment system through an undergraduate psychology department subject pool. Recruitment information indicated that the anonymous study would ask how college women experience their culture and sexuality and how these are related to alcohol use. They were told they would read and respond to a story about an encounter between a man and a woman. Students who were interested were emailed a web link from the first author. Participants were randomly assigned to scenario alcohol condition. Participants completed the 50-minute study from any computer of their choice. Participants completed measures in the following order: LOF,

SCS, PIQ, BIDR, scenario and disclosure likelihood ratings, RMAS, and lastly TESR. After completing the study, participants received course credit for their participation if recruited through the psychology subject pool ($n = 239$) or a \$10 iTunes gift card if recruited through a sorority ($n = 3$).

RESULTS

Normality

Test assumptions were first considered when conducting analyses. Because Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was significant for likelihood to disclose to a friend ($p = .001$), this variable was transformed with a log transformation, which corrected this issue ($p = .15$). Remaining dependent variables and all cultural covariates were normally distributed and within appropriate ranges of skewness and kurtosis.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents separately by racial group, the means and standard deviations of likelihood to disclose to each source and the six cultural constructs of interest: parental influence, rape myth acceptance, loss of face, egalitarian gender roles, and interdependent and independent self-construals. Independent samples t -tests revealed significant differences by racial group, also presented in Table 1. In accordance with cultural theories, more so than White Americans, Asian Americans endorsed higher attitudes on the following cultural constructs: interdependent self-construal, $t(240) = -2.45, p = .02$; parental influence attitudes, $t(239.42) = -8.16, p < .001$; and rape myth beliefs, $t(230.24) = -3.92, p < .001$; White American women endorsed egalitarian gender role attitudes more so than Asian American women, $t(240) = 2.71, p = .007$. There were no significant differences by racial group on independent self-construal and loss of face.

Also presented in Table 1, were differences in likelihood to disclose to the five different sources by racial group. Asian Americans were significantly less likely than White Americans to disclose to the following sources: a parent, friend, mental health professional, and medical personnel. No significant differences were found between Asians and Whites on likelihood to disclose to the police. Difference values are presented below in the 2 x 2 x 5 repeated-measures ANOVA.

[INSERT TABLE 1]

Table 2 presents bivariate correlations between each of these measures for the Asian and White samples separately. Among the Asian American sample, parental influence, rape myth acceptance, independent self-construal, and egalitarian sex roles were significantly correlated to likelihood to disclose to various sources, but loss of face and interdependent self-construal were not significantly correlated to disclosure likelihood to any source. None of the measured cultural constructs was related to likelihood to disclose to a mental health professional. Among the White American sample, parental influence, rape myth acceptance, independent and interdependent self-construal, and egalitarian sex roles were significantly correlated to likelihood to disclose to various sources, but loss of face was not significantly associated with likelihood to disclose to any source. None of the measured cultural constructs was related to likelihood to disclose to a friend. For both samples, parental influence was negatively correlated and independent self-construal was positively correlated with likelihood to disclose to the police; parental influence was negatively correlated with likelihood to tell a parent. Remaining correlations between cultural constructs and likelihood to disclose to a source were either dissimilar between groups or nonsignificant relationships for both groups.

[INSERT TABLE 2]

2 x 2 x 5 Repeated-measures Analysis of Variance

A two-way mixed model repeated measures analysis of variance was first conducted to examine the categorical predictors of participant race (Asian or White) and alcohol (present or absent) on likelihood to disclose the rape scenario to five different disclosure sources: a friend, parent, police, mental health professional, and medical personnel. We performed two planned comparisons to assess the difference in likelihood to disclose to a friend versus all other disclosure sources and the difference in likelihood to disclose to a friend versus a parent. All multiple tests were corrected for using the Benjamini and Hochberg False Discovery Rate (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995).

Between subjects effects. Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ($\chi^2(9) = 52.93, p < .001$); therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ($\epsilon = .90$). Analyses revealed a significant main effect of disclosure source on likelihood to disclose, $F(3.59, 828.09) = 330.23, p < .001$. A priori contrasts revealed that as hypothesized, friend disclosures were more likely than disclosures to remaining four disclosure sources, $F(1, 231) = 1,888.68, p < .001$; and parent disclosures were less likely than friend disclosures, $F(1, 231) = 764.33, p < .001$.

The between subjects factor of participant race produced a significant main effect, $F(1, 231) = 16.24, p < .001$. The between-subjects factor alcohol condition and the interaction between alcohol condition and participant race were not significant, $F(1, 231) < 1, ns$.

Race by disclosure source interaction. There was a significant interaction effect between disclosure source and participant race, $F(3.59, 828.09) = 8.61, p < .001$, indicating that likelihood to disclose to different sources differed for Asians and Whites. Consistent with hypotheses, White Americans were more likely to disclose to a parent, friend, mental health

professional, and medical personnel than Asian Americans; however, no group difference was found in likelihood to disclose to police (see Figure 1). Post-hoc tests were performed comparing likelihood to disclose to different sources between Asian and White participants. Asian participants were more likely to tell all non-parent sources than a parent than Whites. Specifically, likelihood to disclose to a medical personnel, compared to a parent, was greater for Asians than Whites, $F(1, 231) = 5.06, p = .03$. Likelihood to disclose to a friend, compared to a parent, was greater for Asians than Whites, $F(1, 231) = 37.29, p < .001$. Likelihood to disclose to police, compared to a parent, was greater for Asians than Whites, $F(1, 231) = 21.93, p < .001$. Likelihood to disclose to mental health professional, compared to a parent, was greater for Asians than Whites, $F(1, 231) = 7.41, p = .01$. White participants were more likely to tell a friend than medical and mental health professionals than Asians. Specifically, likelihood to disclose to a friend, compared to medical personnel, was greater for Whites than Asians, $F(1, 231) = 11.20, p = .001$; and likelihood to disclose to a friend, compared to a mental health professional, was greater for Whites than Asians, $F(1, 231) = 6.73, p = .01$. Other significant interaction differences were not found by race.

[INSERT FIGURE 1]

Alcohol condition by disclosure source interaction. A significant interaction between disclosure source and alcohol condition was found, $F(3.59, 828.09) = 3.36, p = .01$. Consistent with our hypothesis, the alcohol-absent condition was more likely to disclose to police than alcohol-present condition, $p = .04$. However, no differences were found for the remaining disclosure sources by alcohol condition (see Figure 2). Post-hoc tests were performed comparing likelihood to disclose to different sources between those who read alcohol-involved rape scenarios and those without alcohol. Significant differences were only found between police and

other sources and all in the same direction: as compared with other sources, likelihood to disclose to police was greater for those in the alcohol-absent condition than in the alcohol-present condition. Specifically, likelihood to disclose to police, compared to medical personnel, was greater for those in the alcohol-absent condition than in the alcohol-present condition, $F(1, 231) = 7.97, p = .01$. Likelihood to disclose to police, compared to a friend, was greater for those in the alcohol-absent condition than in the alcohol-present condition, $F(1, 231) = 4.29, p = .04$. Likelihood to disclose to police, compared to a parent, was greater for those in the alcohol-absent condition than in the alcohol-present condition, $F(1, 231) = 4.11, p = .04$. Likelihood to disclose to police, compared to a mental health professional, was greater for those in the alcohol-absent condition than in the alcohol-present condition, $F(1, 231) = 9.83, p = .002$. Other significant interaction differences were not found by alcohol condition.

[INSERT FIGURE 2]

Race by alcohol condition by disclosure source interaction. There was no significant three-way interaction between race, alcohol condition, and disclosure source, $F(3.59, 828.09) < 1, ns$.

2 x 5 Repeated-measures Analysis of Covariance with Asian sample

To examine the role of cultural factors, with only the Asian sample, a one-way mixed model repeated measures analysis of covariance was conducted to examine the categorical predictors of alcohol (present or absent) and the six continuous cultural covariates (parental influence, rape myth acceptance, loss of face, egalitarian gender roles, and interdependent and independent self-construals) as well as social desirability on likelihood to disclose the rape scenario to five disclosure sources (friend, parent, police, mental health professional, and

medical personnel). Again, all multiple tests were corrected for using the Benjamini and Hochberg False Discovery Rate (Benjamini & Hochberg, 1995).

The between-subjects factor of alcohol condition on likelihood to disclose was not significant, $F(1, 96) < 1$, *ns*. Except for social desirability, rape myth acceptance, and egalitarian gender role attitudes, the following covariates were significantly related to likelihood to disclose: parental influence, $F(1, 96) = 10.69$, $p = .001$, loss of face, $F(1, 96) = 5.89$, $p = .02$, interdependent self-construal, $F(1, 96) = 5.41$, $p = .02$, and independent self-construal, $F(1, 96) = 9.97$, $p = .002$.

Mauchly's test indicated that the assumption of sphericity had been violated ($\chi^2(9) = 18.92$, $p = .03$); therefore degrees of freedom were corrected using Greenhouse-Geisser estimates of sphericity ($\epsilon = .92$). A significant interaction between disclosure source and alcohol condition was found, $F(3.66, 350.86) = 3.54$, $p = .01$. Similar to the entire sample, for the Asian sample, the alcohol-absent condition was more likely to disclose to police than alcohol-present condition, $p = .02$, and no differences were found for the remaining disclosure sources by alcohol condition.

Covariates by disclosure source interactions. With only the Asian sample, there was no significant main effect of disclosure source on likelihood to disclose, $F(3.66, 350.86) < 1$. Significant interaction effects between the within subjects factor of disclosure source and covariates parental influence attitudes, $F(3.66, 350.86) = 6.59$, $p < .001$, and independent self-construal, $F(3.66, 350.86) = 3.11$, $p = .02$ were revealed.

Post-hoc tests further examined interactions with parental influence and likelihood to disclose to each source among Asian Americans. The relationship between parental influence and likelihood to disclose to police was not significantly different from the relationship between parental influence and likelihood to disclose to a parent, $F(1, 96) < 1$, *ns*. However, parental

influence was negatively associated with likelihood to disclose to a parent and unrelated to likelihood to disclose to a friend, medical personnel, and mental health professional; each of these relationship comparisons was significantly different, $F(1, 96) = 17.76, p < .001$, $F(1, 96) = 11.61, p < .001$, $F(1, 96) = 5.19, p = .03$, respectively. Similarly, parental influence was negatively associated with likelihood to disclose to police and unrelated to likelihood to disclose to a friend, medical personnel, and mental health professional; each of these relationship comparisons was also significantly different, $F(1, 96) = 17.26, p < .001$, $F(1, 96) = 13.63, p < .001$, $F(1, 96) = 5.99, p = .02$, respectively. See Figure 3 for a graphical depiction of the relationships between parental influence, which was median-split into high and low ($Mdn = 4.21$), and likelihood to disclose to each disclosure source. Remaining comparisons of relationships between likelihood to disclose to each source and parental influence were nonsignificant ($F(1, 96) < 1, ns$).

[INSERT FIGURE 3]

The interaction between independent self-construal and disclosure source was similarly examined with post-hoc tests. The difference between the relationships of independent self-construal and likelihood to disclose to a parent versus independent self-construal and likelihood to disclose to a friend were significantly different, $F(1, 96) = 9.98, p < .001$, such that independent self-construal was positively associated with likelihood to disclose to a parent and unrelated to likelihood to disclose to a friend. Similarly, the difference between the relationships of independent self-construal and likelihood to disclose to police versus independent self-construal and likelihood to disclose to a friend were significantly different, $F(1, 96) = 14.05, p < .001$, such that independent self-construal was positively associated with likelihood to disclose to police and unrelated to likelihood to disclose to a friend. See Figure 4 for a graphical depiction of

the relationships between independent self-construal, which was median-split into high and low levels ($Mdn = 4.92$), and likelihood to disclose to each disclosure source. Remaining comparisons of relationships between likelihood to disclose to each source and independent self-construal were nonsignificant ($F(1, 96) \leq 3, ns$).

[INSERT FIGURE 4]

DISCUSSION

Using an acquaintance rape scenario with a manipulation of alcohol involvement, the current study sought to demonstrate differences in likelihood to disclose a rape between White and Asian American college women and identify cultural constructs that contribute to likelihood to disclose to help understand ethnic differences in disclosure tendencies. Support for hypotheses was mixed. As hypothesized, Asian American women were less likely to disclose the rape than White Americans to a friend, parent, mental health professional, and medical personnel; however, both groups were equally likely to disclose to police. As hypothesized, the presence of alcohol in the rape scenario was associated with decreased likelihood to disclose, but to police only. As hypothesized, for both groups, likelihood to disclose to a friend was greater than to all other sources, and likelihood to disclose to a parent was lower than to a friend. Also consistent with our hypotheses, more so for Asian Americans than White Americans, likelihood to disclose to a parent was less likely than disclosure likelihood to all other sources. Lastly, among Asian Americans, the cultural constructs of parental influence and independent self-construal interacted with disclosure source on likelihood to disclose the rape.

For the overall sample of college women, likelihood to disclose to a friend was more likely than to the remaining four disclosure sources, and likelihood to disclose to a parent was less likely than to a friend. This finding is consistent with recent work showing that Asian

American college women conceptualize friend and parent disclosures very differently (Koo et al., 2011), and both White and Asian American women disclose rape more frequently to a friend than to a parent (Koo & George, 2011). Rape researchers perhaps should no longer consider conceptualizing “informal sources” as inclusive of both friends and family for college women or at least distinguish between parents and other family members in order to accurately capture disclosure behavior to specific sources.

Providing empirical evidence for previous speculations (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2006), this study found that Asian American college women were less likely than White Americans to disclose the hypothetical rape to a friend, parent, mental health professional, and medical personnel. This finding is consistent with recent qualitative and survey findings (Koo et al., 2011; Koo & George, 2011) and may help to elucidate the fewer identified Asian/Pacific Islander rape victims in national rape prevalence data (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998, 2006). Additionally, Asian Americans have been found to be less likely in general to utilize formal resources for assistance (e.g., Zhang, Snowden, & Sue, 1998); current findings provide additional support for this notion within the context of rape.

In qualitative interviews, Asian American college women stated that race-related issues were barriers to reporting a rape to the police (Koo et al., 2011), but the current study found that both Asians and Whites were equally likely to disclose to police. Interestingly, these same interviews can offer a possible explanation to this discrepancy of findings. Although telling the police was ultimately not considered an option for these interviewed women, initially though, they stated that after raped, an Asian American woman would report it to police but did so as a reflex-response. After considering the consequences of reporting to the police and race-related discrimination, they stated police would not be utilized. Thus, a plausible explanation of this null

finding in the current study is that it reflects a reflex-response to go to the police, but if given more time to realistically assess this option, Asian American women may have reconsidered their likelihood to disclose a rape to police; however this remains a speculative explanation.

Likelihood to disclose to different sources differed for Asians and Whites. Consistent with our hypothesis and with previous qualitative work (Koo et al., 2011), more so than White American women, Asian Americans were less likely to tell parents than all non-parent sources. Additionally, more so than Asian Americans, White Americans were more likely to tell a friend than medical and mental health professionals. This finding is likely reflective of cultural differences. Even amongst peers, Asian Americans find sex (an indisputable part of rape) to be a more taboo topic of conversation than for White Americans (Kim & Ward, 2007; Koo et al., 2011). Evidence also suggests that Asian American women emphasize upholding the image of being a virtuous woman more than White women (Koo et al., 2011; Mahalingam & Leu, 2005). Therefore, disclosing a sexual experience to a friend may be more risky for Asian women because they would also be disclosing a failure to live up to virtuous expectations and then break taboo by discussing it. Moreover, research with mostly White college samples has shown that sexual experiences may be seen as a normalized part of the college experience (e.g., Hittner & Kennington, 2008). Thus, more so than Asians, if Whites were more likely to normalize a rape as “sex” and more likely to discuss sex, then they would be more likely to discuss it with friends rather than perceive a need to seek formal services such as health professionals.

Consistent with predictions, the presence of alcohol in the rape scenario was associated with decreased likelihood to disclose but only to the police. Furthermore, those who were told they did not drink alcohol in the rape scenario were more likely to tell the police than all other sources more so than those who were told they drank alcohol. This finding is consistent with the

perception and documented tendency of law enforcement agents to blame a rape victim or negatively judge her more if she consumed alcohol than when she did not (Finkelson & Oswalt, 1995; Schuller & Stewart, 2000).

Unexpectedly though, disclosure likelihood to non-police sources was unrelated to alcohol condition. Likelihood to disclose rape to a friend (who would presumably also be in college) may be unrelated to alcohol consumption because college students have a consistent tendency to overestimate peers' approval of college drinking (e.g., Borsari & Carey, 2003; Neighbors et al., 2007). Similar to medical and mental health professionals who are trained to be **nonjudgmental**, if a rape victim assumes a fellow college student friend (or health professional) will not judge or blame her for drinking and then getting raped, then she would be understandably more likely to disclose to them. Additionally, given that excessive college drinking in general is highly visible and perceived as normative (Kitts, 2003), disclosing rape to parents may not be influenced by alcohol consumption for the overall college sample, consisted of slightly more Whites than Asians. Perhaps this null effect of alcohol consumption on parent disclosure likelihood for Asian American women once again reflects a reflex-response rather than a more well thought out response, where consequences of such disclosures would be realistically considered, as was the case in qualitative interviews (Koo et al., 2011).

A unique contribution of the current study was the inclusion of Asian American cultural constructs into examining rape disclosure likelihood, rather than only using race as a proxy for culture. The cultural construct of parental influence was negatively associated with likelihood to disclose to police and to a parent, meaning the more Asian Americans were influenced by their parents' perceptions of them, the less likely they were to tell a parent or the police about the rape. This evidence confirms qualitative data that found concern for maintaining and protecting

relationships with and well being of parents was an Asian American woman's primary concern and reason for not disclosing a rape (Koo et al., 2011). Moreover, many of the interviewed Asian American women thought reporting a rape to the police would result in parents finding out about a rape.

Another key cultural construct was independent self-construal: the higher Asian American women endorsed independent self-construal, the more likely they were to tell a parent or the police about the rape. Consistent with cultural theory and cross-cultural research (Yamawaki, 2008), reporting to police and telling parents is in line with seeking individual justice and preferences. Furthermore, given that rape nondisclosure to parents for Asian American women was described as prioritizing the relationship with and well being of parents over a woman's individual needs (Koo et al., 2011), the opposite appears to be true when disclosing to them.

Limitations of this study must be considered. A key part of the study was a hypothetical rape scenario and conjecture of disclosure behavior rather than actual behavior. It would be worthwhile to survey Asian American college rape victims, assess rape characteristics, and examine actual disclose behavior. Another possible study limitation is that nearly one-third of the original sample was excluded from analyses due to choosing not to answer or failing manipulation checks. Despite these exclusions, we had statistical power to conduct analyses. Grouping all Asian ethnicities into one category of "Asian" minimized the differences between the many Asian cultures. This is particularly limiting when considering cultural constructs that may be more or less applicable to specific Asian cultures, as well as Asian American alcohol use, which varies widely between Asian ethnic groups (e.g., Luczak et al., 2004). The same could be

said for other factors that were overlooked, such as mixed-ethnicity groups or generational issues. However, despite the grouping of this sample, a robust effect was found.

Despite these limitations, study results have several implications, particularly for developing culturally appropriate rape psychoeducation, prevention, and intervention efforts. First, Asian Americans are less likely to disclose rape than White women. Because a primary consideration of disclosure likelihood is concern for maintaining parental relationships and protecting parent perceptions of their daughters or community reactions to the rape, developing Asian American community-based rather than individual-based efforts that focus on supportive reactions to rape disclosures may be beneficial. Moreover, because we know college women tend to most frequently tell friends about a rape, developing peer support interventions may be most worthwhile to have a realistic impact on providing support for college rape victims. Recent work in health promotion has provided relevant ways to conceptualize peer interventions that can be directly applied to peer rape support (Simoni, Franks, Lehavot, & Yard, 2011).

There are several ways in which future research can expand upon the findings of the current study. First, given the possibility that null effects could be explained by Asian American college women's tendency to respond initially with a reflex-response, perhaps asking participants to first describe anticipated reactions a specific disclosure source would have and then asking them to rate likelihood to disclose to that source would be more reflective of true behavior and attitudes. Additionally, disclosure has been studied at varying levels where the depth and type of disclosure was considered (Ullman & Filipas, 2001a; Ullman & Filipas, 2001b); future research may want to measure disclosure in a more nuanced way with a diverse sample as well. In addition to cultural constructs included in this study, acculturation has been shown to influence rape attitudes for Asian Americans (e.g., Koo, Stephens, Lindgren, & George, 2011) and should

be considered when studying rape disclosure likelihood. Furthermore, significant correlations between cultural constructs and likelihood to disclose were found for both White American and Asian American women. In fact, more often than not, relationships between constructs and disclosure likelihood differed for Asians and Whites, indicating these constructs are influencing disclosure likelihood differently for different groups of women. Future work may want to parse out which constructs specifically influence rape disclosure for diverse women. Additionally, interdependence and loss of face were related to overall likelihood to disclose and both remain culturally relevant concepts for Asian Americans (e.g., Hall, Windover, & Maramba, 1998; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Perhaps future studies can prime interdependent self-construal or manipulate aspects of interdependence in a rape scenario with perpetrator-victim racial match or mismatch conditions and testing differences in disclosure likelihood among Asian American women. Moreover, Asian/Asian Americans have been shown to be less likely than other ethnic groups to utilize mental health resources (e.g., Sue, Fujino, Hu, Takeuchi, & Zane, 1991). The current study did not identify constructs that predict disclosure likelihood to a mental health professional. Future work must identify these constructs, such as stigma, community attitudes toward mental health professionals, or awareness of these resources and their purpose. Lastly, given the importance of cultural background of rape victims, researchers must look at ethnic groups other than Asians and Whites when studying rape disclosures.

To our knowledge, this is the first study that documents Asian American college women are less likely to disclose rape than White Americans and the first to incorporate alcohol, type of disclosure source, and cultural constructs to explain this difference in disclosure tendencies. Also an important contribution is finding that friend and family disclosures are conceptually different for college women, and thus, researchers may reconsider collapsing these two sources into the

same category of “informal support.” Lastly, these findings indicate that cultural background of rape victims must be considered when researching rape disclosure and providing treatments and support for the aftermath of rape for all ethnicities of women.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research was supported in part by the following grants: 1R01AA016281-01A2 PI: William H. George and 1F31AA018237-01A1 PI: Kelly H. Koo. This research was also supported in part by the University of Washington (UW) Institute for Ethnic Studies in the United States and The Graduate School Fund for Excellence & Innovation of the UW Graduate School. Lastly, we would like to thank Preston Kiekel, PhD for his invaluable statistical consultation.

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APPENDIX

Presented Acquaintance Rape Scenario

Imagine that you and your best friend, Jessica, are at your friend Alan's house party in the U-district. The three of you worked on a group project together two quarters ago and ever since then have become pretty good friends. You have been at the party about an hour and you've spent most of your time talking with Jessica and a few other people. The two-story house is pretty big, since Alan lives there with three other guys. As you, Jessica, and Alan are talking, you notice a song you really like but don't recognize comes on. You ask if anyone knows the song. No one knows who sings it or what it's called, so Alan suggests you check the iPod. Jessica agrees as she exclaims, "yea, find out please! And then tell me. I like it too."

You walk across the living room through a small crowd of people, and as you pick up the iPod, you hear a man's voice ask you, "Who sings this song?" You look up and see a face you recognize from campus.

You respond, "I was just about to find out." You tell him the artist and song title, and afterward, he says, "I'm Richard. Remember me from last quarter? My name's Richard Chang/Smith*. We talked a couple times about that crazy final project we had to do." You do remember: you remember thinking he was really cute, and you remember seeing him sitting behind the Asian American Student Association/Outdoor Activity Club* table on campus. You introduce yourself and ease into a conversation about the class you had both taken—the professor's quirks and how hard that project was. You soon discover that Richard is a good friend of Alan's from high school, and he's the same year as you. You're enjoying talking to him, which you're pleased with since you're single.

“Your cup’s almost empty. What are you drinking? I’ll get you another one,” Richard says.

[Manipulated to either, the alcohol condition:]*

“Cool. Thanks. A vodka tonic, please,” you respond as you drink the last sip of your vodka tonic.

“Nice. I’ll get another one too.”

[or the non-alcohol condition:]*

“Cool. Thanks. It’s just a coke, I’m the designated driver tonight,” you respond as you drink the last sip of your coke.

“I’m the DD for my friends too!”

Richard takes your hand as you walk through a crowd of people to the kitchen, and you watch as he fills up both your cups.

As you take a gulp of your drink, you look around and notice that by now the party is in full swing. The music is loud; people are yelling to hear each other; you hear a lot of excited loud laughter. A group of people has started dancing in the center of the living room. As you scan the party, you see your girlfriend, Jessica, talking and laughing with a group of people; you notice they all look pretty drunk. You make eye contact with Jessica who smiles and waves and walks over to join you.

You introduce Richard to Jessica. As the three of you are talking, a guy and a girl who are holding hands approach Richard and they all exchange hugs. As they talk amongst themselves about how it’s been too long since they’d all last hung out, Jessica asks you about the song you both had liked earlier. You can’t remember who sang it, and Richard chimes in with the artist’s name and says that Alan has the album on his computer and suggests you all go up to

Alan's room to listen to it and possibly burn you a CD. You all agree and walk upstairs together to Alan's room.

Inside Alan's room, Jessica teasingly comments on how messy Alan's room is. Richard and you both laughingly agree as Richard moves the mouse around to wake the computer up. Jessica sits on the bed and you join her. You can hear the music and the hum of all the voices from downstairs.

As Richard is scrolling through mp3s on the computer, Jessica receives a text message from a friend who has just arrived at the party and is looking for her. Jessica announces she's going downstairs to look for her friend, just as Richard says he's found the mp3s he was looking for. You decide to stay with Richard to listen to some music, and Jessica says she'll be right back.

Richard plays an mp3 and sits on the bed beside you. You continue to talk as you both drink your drinks. By now, you've both had a few cokes/vodka tonics* and you're feeling pretty relaxed/somewhat drunk and you notice he looks somewhat drunk too*. You feel comfortable with Richard. As the two of you talk, he moves closer to you, leans forward and kisses you softly. You kiss back for a few seconds, as Richard puts both arms around you and holds you tightly. He continues to kiss you and then opens his mouth so that you can feel his tongue in your mouth. You realize this is moving too fast for you, so you pull away and say, "let's go back downstairs."

Richard responds, "It's okay. I'm not going to hurt you," as he continues to kiss you.

As you're struggling to get away, Richard slides his hand inside your shirt and begins to fondle your breasts. "No, stop!" you cry out and try to push him away. Ignoring your protests, he begins to unbutton your shirt and a few buttons rip off as you try to turn away. You exclaim,

“Stop, please, don’t!” and manage to slap him across the face. “Just relax!” Richard responds. Kissing you so that your mouths are in continuous contact, he moves his hand to the inside of your thighs. His other arm is wrapped tightly around you, pinning your arms to your side. You cry out again more forcefully, “Stop! Don’t make me do this!”

Richard presses his forearm against your neck making it difficult for you to breathe. Then he pushes your skirt up to your waist, removes your underwear, and quickly unzips his pants and pulls them down. You thrash your body around, trying to get loose. Richard increases the pressure on your neck and presses the full weight of his body on yours. Managing to get one arm loose, you hit him on the chin with the palm of your hand and start to push his face away. While you struggle, he penetrates you with his penis and intercourse occurs.

*Manipulated variables

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations

Variable	Asian Americans		White Americans	
	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Cultural constructs				
Egalitarian gender roles	111	4.85 (0.67)	131	5.09 (0.67)
Independent self construal	111	4.85 (0.81)	131	4.91 (0.72)
Interdependent self construal	111	5.20 (0.65)	131	4.99 (0.69)
Loss of face	111	3.22 (0.53)	131	3.13 (0.46)
Parental influence	111	4.71 (1.03)	131	3.49 (1.28)
Rape myth beliefs	111	2.52 (0.89)	130	2.07 (0.85)
Disclosure likelihood to				
Parent	110	3.29 (2.04)	131	4.90 (2.13)
Friend	110	5.09 (2.13)	131	6.09 (1.41)
Police	109	4.93 (2.17)	131	5.26 (1.89)
Mental health professional	108	3.84 (2.18)	130	4.42 (2.03)
Medical personnel	108	4.34 (2.15)	131	5.22 (2.03)

Note. Bolded rows indicate significant differences between racial groups.

Table 2. Bivariate Correlations of Cultural Constructs and Disclosure Likelihood by Source

	Friend	Parent	Police	MHP	Med	PIQ	RMAS	LOF	TESR	INTER	IND
Friend	— (109)	.04 (109)	.01 (108)	.004 (107)	.28** (107)	-.02 (110)	-.27** (110)	-.13 (110)	.42*** (110)	-.03 (110)	.23* (110)
Parent	-.21* (131)	— (109)	.49*** (109)	.24* (107)	.34*** (108)	-.40*** (110)	-.16 (110)	-.19 (110)	.09 (110)	-.14 (110)	.26** (110)
Police	-.03 (131)	.50*** (131)	— (107)	.25** (107)	.40*** (107)	-.35*** (109)	-.14 (109)	-.10 (109)	.07 (109)	-.12 (109)	.28** (109)
MHP	.04 (130)	.12 (130)	.14 (130)	— (106)	.38*** (106)	-.07 (108)	-.08 (108)	.03 (108)	.07 (108)	-.05 (108)	.04 (108)
Med	.11 (131)	.25** (131)	.43*** (131)	.21* (130)	— (108)	-.01 (108)	-.27** (108)	.07 (108)	.22* (108)	-.05 (108)	.09 (108)
PIQ	.08 (131)	-.32*** (131)	-.28** (131)	-.14 (130)	-.04 (131)	— (111)	.09 (111)	.36*** (111)	.02 (111)	.11 (111)	-.12 (111)
RMAS	-.02 (130)	-.22* (130)	-.24** (130)	-.22* (129)	-.17 (130)	.25** (130)	— (111)	.18 (111)	-.34*** (111)	.09 (111)	-.15 (111)
LOF	.09 (131)	-.11 (131)	-.08 (131)	-.03 (130)	-.06 (131)	.15 (131)	.10 (130)	— (111)	-.19* (111)	.54*** (111)	-.37*** (111)
TESR	.02 (131)	.07 (131)	.18* (131)	.23** (130)	.16 (131)	-.21* (131)	-.49*** (130)	-.03 (131)	— (111)	-.21* (111)	.15 (111)
INTER	.04 (131)	-.13 (131)	-.19* (131)	-.15 (130)	-.13 (131)	.18* (131)	.10 (130)	.37*** (131)	-.13 (131)	— (111)	.01 (111)
IND	-.03 (131)	.06 (131)	.26** (131)	-.04 (130)	.18* (131)	-.15 (131)	-.01 (130)	-.38*** (131)	.14 (131)	-.04 (131)	— (111)

Note. Values below the diagonal apply to the White sample and values above the diagonal apply to the Asian sample. Numbers in parentheses are sample sizes. Friend, Parent, Police, MHP (mental health professional), and Med (medical personnel) refer to likelihood to disclose the rape scenario to each of these sources. PIQ = Parental Influence Questionnaire, RMAS = Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, LOF = Loss of Face scale, TESR = Traditional-Egalitarian Sex Roles Scale, INTER = Interdependent self-construal, IND = Independent self-construal.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Means for Likelihood to Disclose: Participant Race by Disclosure Source.

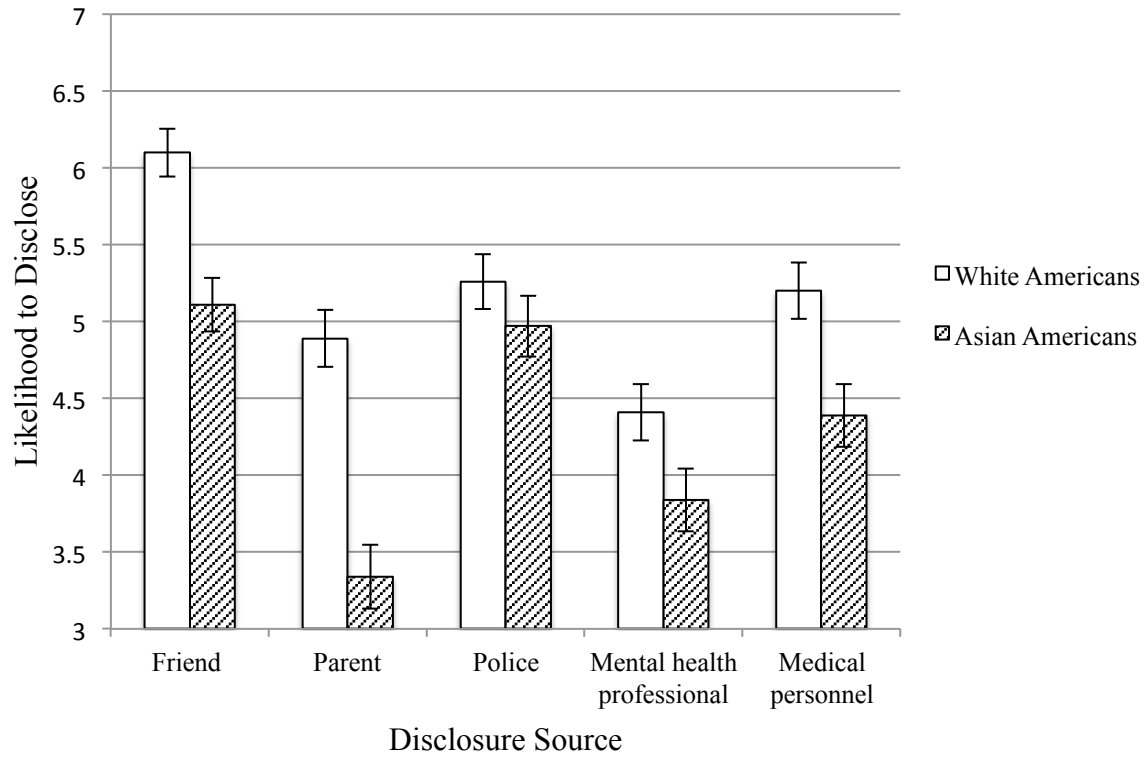
Note. For friend-disclosures, analyses were run with transformed variables, and displayed means reflect raw values.

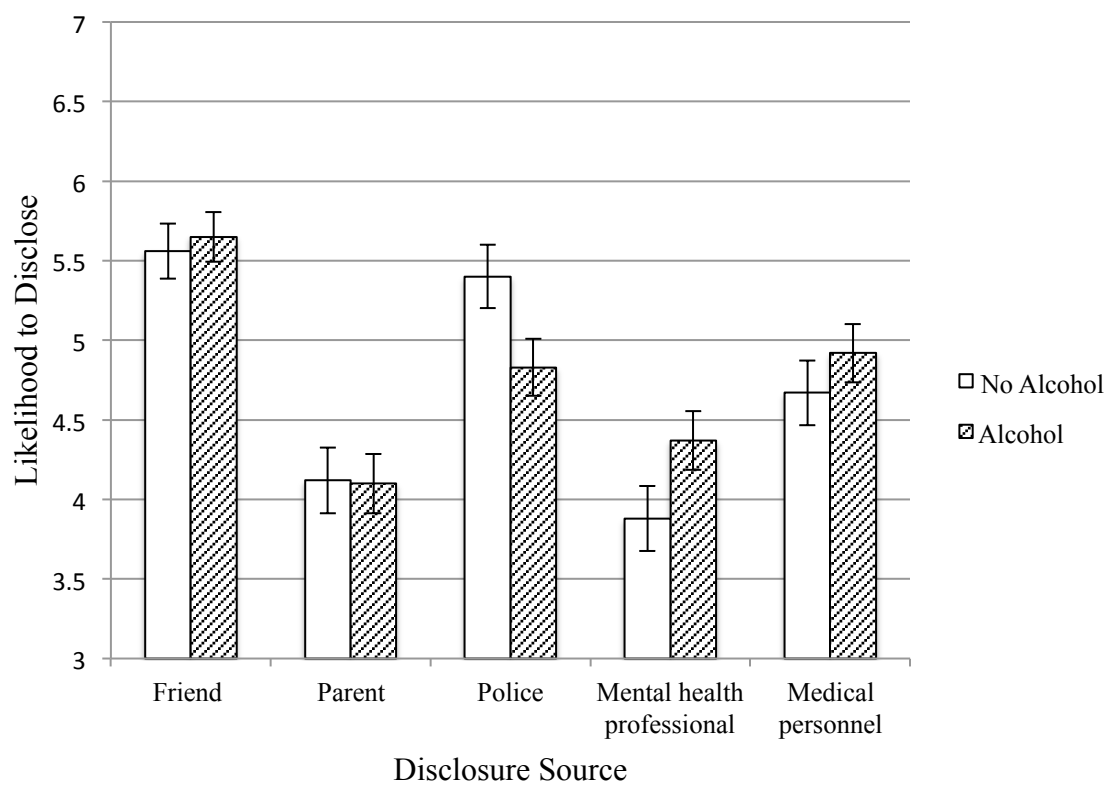
Figure 2. Means for Likelihood to Disclose: Alcohol Condition by Disclosure Source. *Note.* For friend-disclosures, analyses were run with transformed variables, and displayed means reflect raw values.

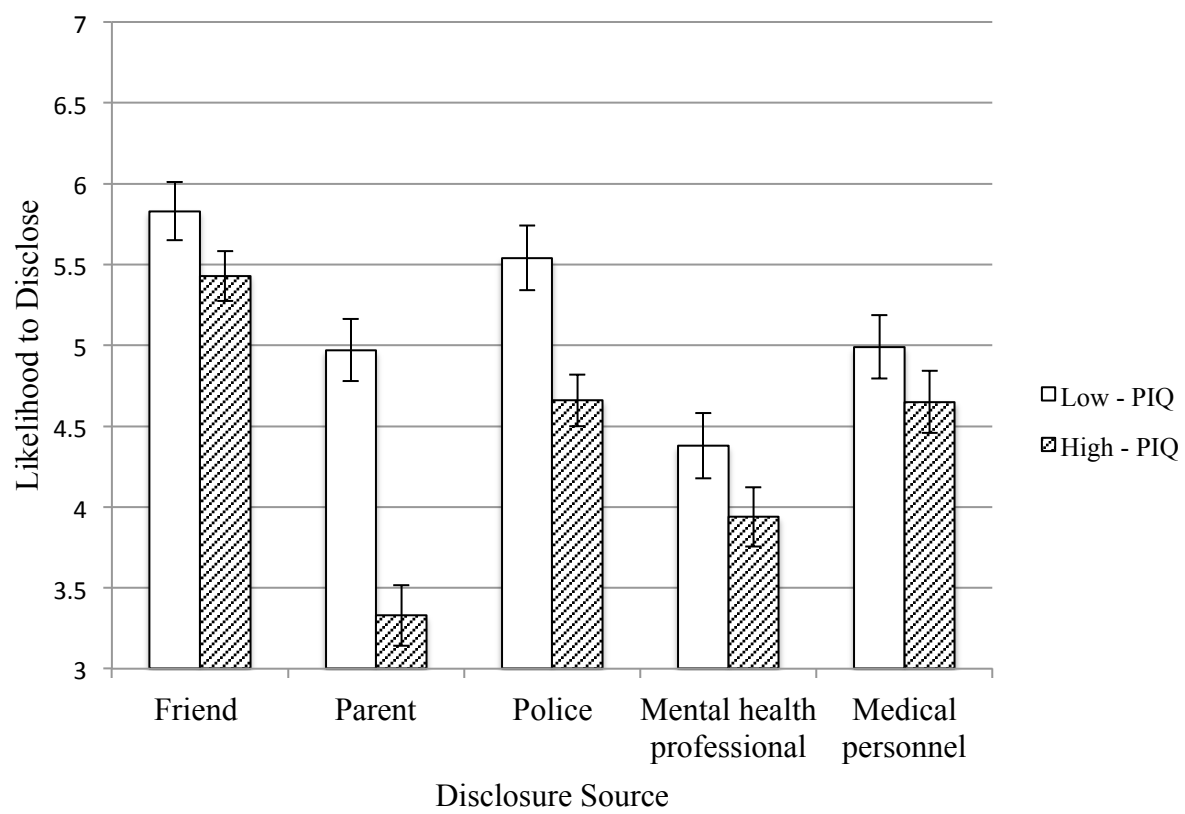
Figure 3. High and Low Parental Influence by Disclosure Source on Likelihood to Disclose among Asian American Sample. *Note.* For friend-disclosures, analyses were run with transformed variables, and displayed means reflect raw values.

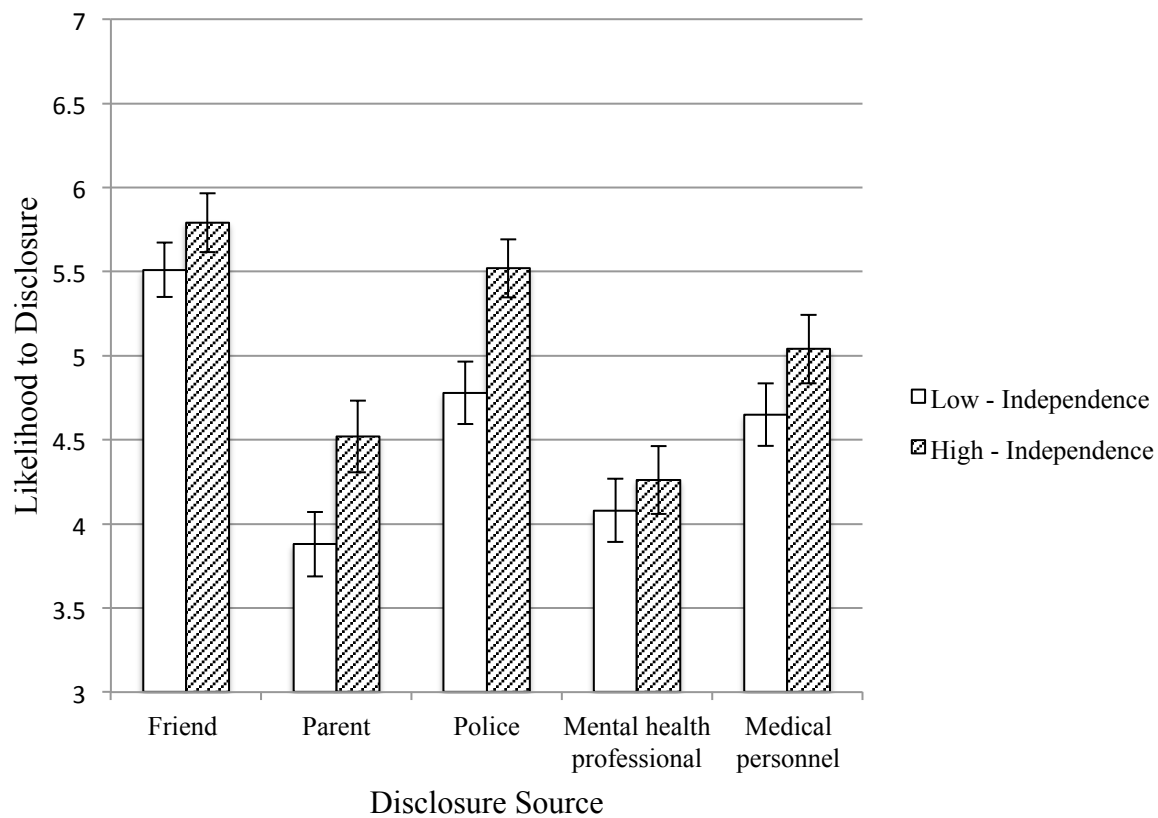
Figure 4. High and Low Independent Self-Construal by Disclosure Source on Likelihood to Disclose among Asian American Sample.

Note. For friend-disclosures, analyses were run with transformed variables, and displayed means reflect raw values.









Dissertation: Summary and Conclusions

Asian American women continue to be an understudied population with respect to rape and alcohol. Based on the results of this mixed-methods dissertation, it appears this is a problematic oversight given that Asian American college women are experiencing rape at comparable rates as White women but are more likely to stay silent about it.

In Chapter 1, qualitative interviews with 17 Asian American college women demonstrated that from the perspective of the members of this population, an Asian American woman would most likely to tell no one about a rape. These women described nondisclosure of alcohol-involved rape within several levels of culture, demonstrating that culture exists both within and outside the individual. The primary purpose of nondisclosure of rape was to protect the relationship with parents and nondisclosure to all sources ensured that parents do not discover the rape. Relationships would be harmed and reputations would be detrimentally affected if an Asian American woman disclosed a rape. Alcohol was described as exacerbating these negative consequences to disclosure. Ultimately, an Asian American college woman must contend with more than individual concerns of mental and physical health or justice when disclosing rape; she considers the consequences on relationships, particularly with parents.

Although not a representative sample, the survey of Chapter 2 presented comparable rates of sexual assault histories, indicating Asian American women require comparable research attention as other ethnic groups of women. Additionally, consistent with qualitative findings, this survey confirmed that disclosures to a friend were most frequent. Outside of friend disclosures, Asian American college women were half as likely to disclose rape than White American college women.

While Chapters 1 and 2 presented data based on the experiences of Asian American college women, Chapter 3 presented a study that standardized rape characteristics with a detailed hypothetical rape scenario. Using a different methodology, this study confirmed that there is indeed a difference in disclosure between Asian and White women. In response to this rape scenario, Asian Americans were less likely than White Americans to disclose this rape to four out of five disclosure sources: a parent, friend, mental health professional, and medical personnel. However, the presence of alcohol in the rape scenario only decreased the likelihood of disclosure to police. This study also uniquely included cultural constructs examining likelihood to disclose rape to various sources. In line with cultural theories, the more Asian Americans were influenced by their relationship with and concern for their parents, the less likely they were to tell a parent or the police about the rape. Also in accordance with cultural theories, the higher Asian American women endorsed independent self-construal, the more likely they were to tell a parent or the police about the rape. Lastly, this experimental study confirmed survey and interview data that revealed parents and friends should not be conceptualized similarly in the category as “informal sources” of social support for college women, especially Asian American college women.

This dissertation documented empirical evidence for Asian American college women’s decreased tendency to disclose rape using three different research methodologies. Not only do Asian American women indicate they are less likely to disclose rape than White women in abstract interviews or in survey data, but also when comparing likelihoods to disclose a standardized rape scenario. The cultural contexts of nondisclosure of rape indicate that conceptualizations of mental and physical health as individual do not appear to match Asian American women’s conceptualization, which frames health within the context of relationships

and how it will affect others. Perhaps lower rates of resource and service utilization by Asians/Asian Americans (e.g., Sue, Fujino, Hu, Takeuchi, & Zane, 1991; Zhang, Snowden, & Sue, 1998) can be explained at least in part by the lack of consideration of these values. Questions about the field of psychology conceptualizing “support” largely from an individualistic perspective must be addressed in the context of rape support. Future research may want to take the current dissertation findings into account to develop culturally appropriate and effective rape prevention and support efforts so that we are best serving the needs of this community.