



Body and Mind

A Working Storybook of Asian American
Female & Non-Binary Student Voices

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Policy Tracks: Media & Communications, Arts & Literature
December 14, 2022

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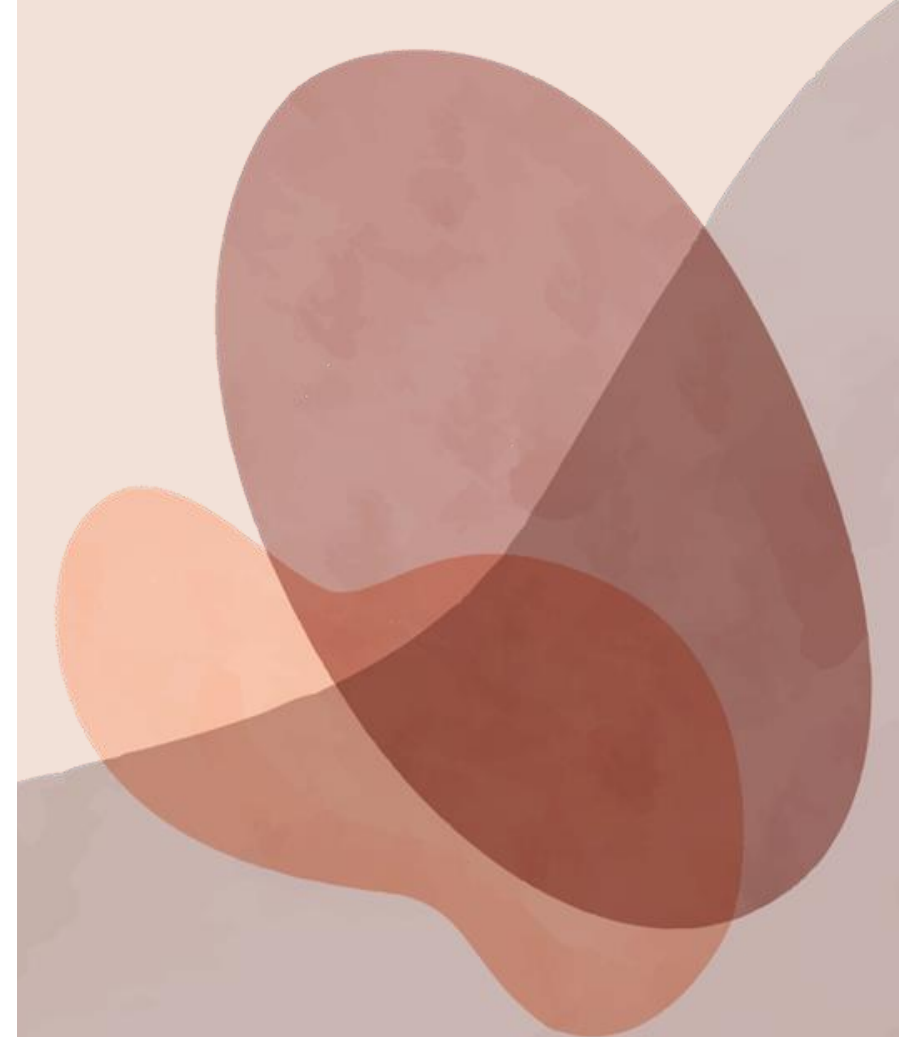
Institute for Women's Leadership

The Leadership Scholars Certificate Program is a two-year selective, interdisciplinary certificate program that prepares Rutgers undergraduate women to be informed, innovative, and socially responsible leaders.

Leadership Scholars design and implement social action projects to expand their understanding of issues and problems and to develop leadership skills.

This project gives Scholars the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained about leadership, advocacy, and social change with the practical and experiential knowledge they have developed about a particular policy issue or problem through the field site placement. It also further develops leadership skills by giving undergraduates the opportunity to *practice* leadership *through* action.

To find out more please visit the Institute for Women's Leadership's website at <http://iwl.rutgers.edu>.



Addressing the Problem



<https://time.com/3475962/asian-american-diversity/>



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I._Y._Yunioshi



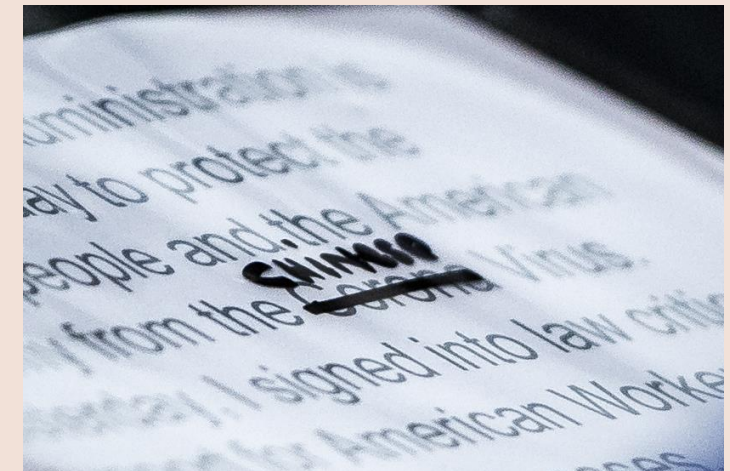
<https://www.reuters.com/news/picture/americans-rally-against-anti-asian-hate-idUSRTXAXEN3>



<https://slspotlight.com/opinion/2021/05/24/asian-american-women-face-a-unique-crisis/>

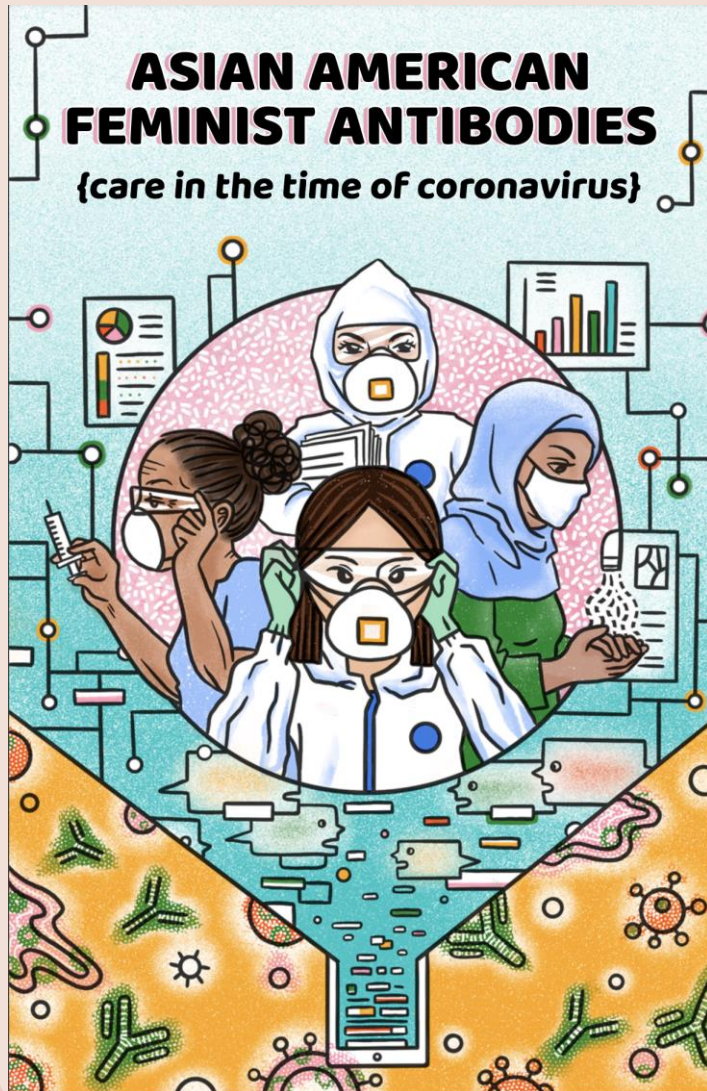


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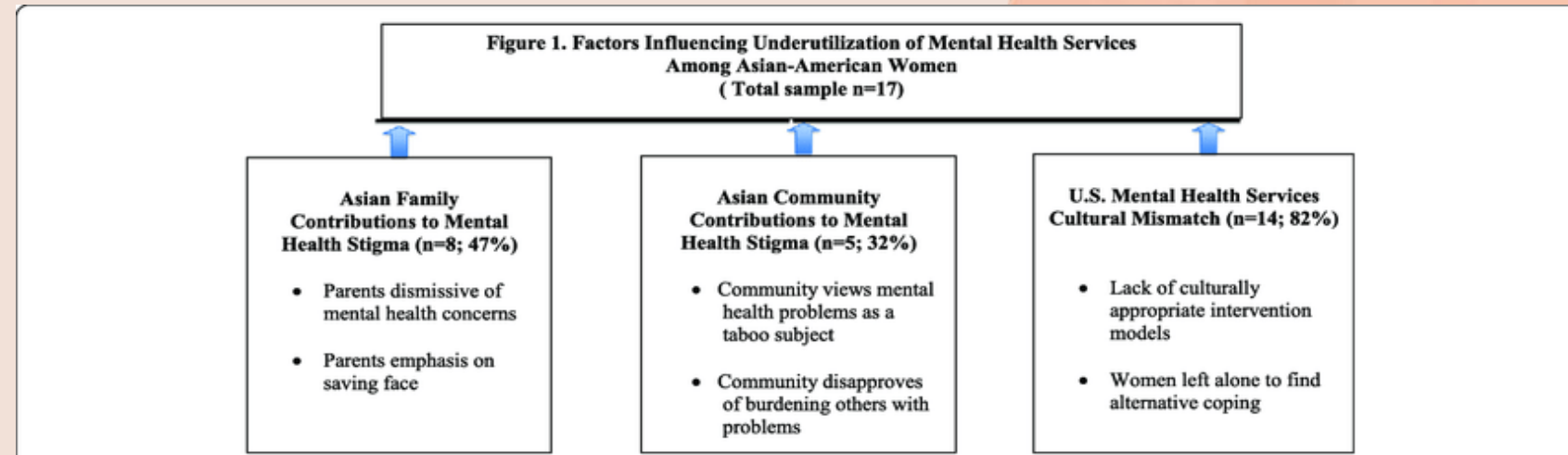


<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/19/coronavirus-outbreak-trump-blames-china-for-virus-again.html>

Intellectual & Conceptual Foundations



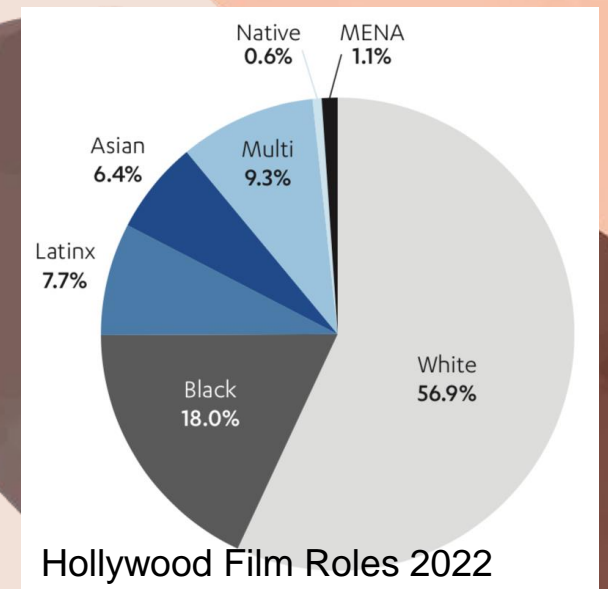
<https://www.asianamfeminism.org/>



<https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-015-1191-7>



<https://www.pewresearch.org/race-ethnicity/2022/08/02/what-it-means-to-be-asian-in-america/>



<https://deadline.com/2022/03/ucla-hollywood-diversity-report-2022-findings-1234985280/>

Mission Statement

- Address the lack of accurate, nuanced representation of Asian American women and non-binary people's stories in American media and arts
- Increase the recognition of Asian American creators whose art is frequently devalued and delegitimized.

Call for creative submissions

Creation of a digital zine compiling submissions

Feminist Leadership



Photo by Polina Kovaleva: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/a-slogan-written-on-post-it-notes-posted-on-a-white-surface-8709443/>

- Focusing on amplifying marginalized voices
- Highlighting the intersections between gender, race, class, and sexuality
- Specifically spotlighting APIDA women and non-binary students
- Recognizing and compensating creators for their work

Timeline

SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Met with advisor, Dr. Bae• Drafted an outreach list of organizations and partners• Decided on our zine platform, Canva• Finalized budget spending plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrote an email template for outreach• Designed the outreach flyer• Created a “Body and Mind” email• Created a Google Form for submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalized project deadline• Sent out outreach emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed zine layout• Connected with personal networks• Compiled submissions and put zine together• Set up website (Wordpress)

Outreach, Partnerships, & Promotion

BODY AND MIND

Amplifying
Asian-American
Female & Non-binary
Student Voices



CALLING ALL ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN & NON-BINARY CREATORS

SHARE YOUR STORY

We are looking for Asian American women creators to share their stories and perspectives on the body and the mind through any and all means of creative expression—digital art, photography, poetry, music, and so much more.

Creators will be published in a digital zine on a website to be disseminated for public view and will be compensated for their work.

"Body and Mind" is a project that serves to address the lack of accurate, nuanced representation of Asian American women's stories in media and arts.

Our goals are to

- create
- uplift student voices
- build empathy and community
- recognize Asian American women's contributions to the arts

We are reclaiming the narrative space and want to inspire a new generation of Asian American storytellers to speak up.

Submissions:



bit.ly/bodymindstory

Questions? Contact us!

✉ bodymindstorybook@gmail.com

Name:	Contact Information:
Asian American Cultural Center	Dr. Jacob Chacko, Director Jacob.chacko@rutgers.edu
Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities (SJE)	sje@echo.rutgers.edu
Rutgers' Association of Philippine Students (RAPS)	raps.eboard@gmail.com
Association of Indians at Rutgers (AIR)	airboard.rutgers@gmail.com
Association of Punjabi Students at RU	associationofpunjabis@gmail.com
Japanese Visual Culture Association	ru.jvca@gmail.com
Korean Students Association	rukoreanstudents@gmail.com
Tawainese American Student Association (TASA)	rutgers.tasa@gmail.com
Vietnamese Student Association (VSA)	rutgersvsa@gmail.com
Hong Kong Student Association	rutgershksa@gmail.com
IWL Social Media - Emily Haran	emharan@iwl.rutgers.edu
Honors College–Newsletter	Dominic Nalbandian
Asian Affinity Group	Groupme - Justin Lee
LGBTQ+ Affinity Group	Groupme - Nico Toepfer
Asian American Studies Initiative / Comparative Critical Race & Ethnic Studies	Allan Isaac, Andrew Urban, Sylvia Chan-Malik
Institute for the Global Study of Racial Justice	Dr. Carlos Decena - messaged Cassie
Douglass Residential College/ Douglass Newsletter	drcadvancement@echo.rutgers.edu

Creative Submission Portal

Name *

Short answer text

School *

Short answer text

Brief Personal Bio *

Long answer text

How would you describe your project? *

Long answer text

As an Asian American woman/non-binary student, how does your project relate to the theme of Body and Mind? *

Long answer text

Link to your project

Long answer text

File upload for project

 Add file

 View folder

If you feel comfortable doing so, please submit a photo of yourself

 Add file

 View folder

Would you be interested in joining a virtual community (like Discord) of artists and creators to build community and discuss your project? *

- Yes
- Maybe, need more information
- No

Would you be interested in attending our event launch party in Spring of 2023? *

- Yes
- Maybe, need more information
- No

Zine



Body and Mind

A Storybook of Asian American Women
and Non-Binary Student Voices

Foreward

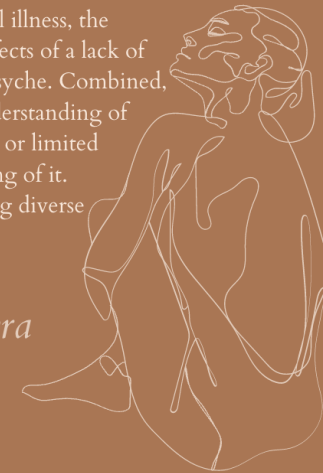


Our social identities and lived experiences inform the issues that we feel most strongly about, and, as Asian American women, we are hyper-aware of the minimization of issues that our community faces and of the silencing of Asian American women's voices. We too—a first-generation immigrant from the Philippines and the biracial child of two immigrants from Greece and Korea—have grown up in a nation where we do not see ourselves reflected in the media that we, and all of our peers, consume. We have been conditioned to be ashamed of our identity and are told we have nothing to complain about.

In focusing on the body and the mind as framing subjects of Asian American women's submissions, we highlight issues that affect our community in a very physical way. By eliciting a sensorial experience, the personal and the intimate become public, and the shame that we have been burdened with becomes subsumed as readers get a glimpse of the contradictions between body and mind that Asian American women and non-binary individuals are forced to perpetually reconcile. The political and historical context of the Asian American female body includes uncomfortable conversations about hypersexualization, fetishization, and weaponization.

The mind captures the internal battles that are faced without outlet or grievance as it pertains to the stigmatization of mental illness, the generational trauma of historical memory, and the effects of a lack of accurate storytelling on the Asian American female psyche. Combined, we get a holistic, fully physical and psychological understanding of the Asian American experience that is not caricatured or limited to one particular person or community's understanding of it. Asian America is not a monolith, and by incorporating diverse perspectives, we are challenging beliefs that all Asian Americans are one and the same.

- Johanne & Peristera



The body is a blade

By: Iris Nguyen

Bà nội taught me a garment is forever a banner on this body mẹ gave me. To banish white, always a surrender, a fabric for funerals. Tonight, every missing sister is reborn a stone in me, whetting every pleat, dressing me with the threat of blades undrawn. I've left my razor to rust on the bathroom floor and when the hair comes back I'll stop fighting it, let my skin crawl with all the fierce beauty of a bramble stem instead. I'm unbuttoning all my stitches, finger-painting my lips anew, and this is how I want them to see me: red-toothed scorn. Queen of double-takes and a thousand strangers' fumbled greetings. All I need is a man's stare to be the first hate his child knows. And if the estrogen makes me invisible, I'll paint my shadow green for my people to know I'm still safe in this city of eyes but when they break this shell don't embalm it. Just wear it down to ashes at my funeral, so everyone who loved me can see the name I've chosen outlast her boyish body.

title borrowed from Michelle Zauner



Growing Pains

By: Gia Hân Vũ



"When you are young, the world feels huge and all you want to do is learn more about it. The first community I ever became apart of was public school, before that I was lucky to feel safe at home with my brother as the reliable play pal and best friend. The youngest version of the girl in the picture is seen to be dressed fully in traditional attire (ao dai) and smiling brightly and as she grows older the radiance is gone. As you grow up, the world starts to show its true colors and you learn quickly that people can dislike you simply for the way you look. Clothing is a form of expression at any age and I have always loved curating outfits. I have several memories of trying so hard to figure out what the popular kids were wearing because the more you looked like them, the more you were praised.

But that didn't matter, because at the end of the day even if I wore the same outfit as them, all the way to the crackle nail polish, I was different from them, because I was Asian. The only other community that I was apart of besides school was Vietnamese church. But even at Vietnamese church, I was too Americanized and uncultured, adding to the never-ending saga in adolescence of having no sense of who you're supposed to be. This mindset lasted from elementary school all the way up until the first week of college. When I finally started to feel a sense of freedom from judgement, I explored styles that I thought were interesting and which also led to introspection.

In this time I realized not only was I curating my outfits, but also my mannerisms and behavior. I eventually found what felt the most like me which incorporated different aspects of being born in America but still celebrating Vietnamese culture, but its still something I'm going to work on for the rest of my life. Nobody can define who you are except for yourself and it's your lifelong journey to keep it that way."

Zine

Things We Loved and Lost

By: Amanda Kang



Two embroidery hoops connected with a red thread. One side is connected to a man, hunched over and riddled with blood and scars. The other leads to another man, playing the dizi, and winds around his head to flow into his red hair ribbon. This piece references the Chinese drama, *Chén Qīng Lìng*. The red embroidery thread plays upon the Chinese mythological concept of a red string of fate that connects two individuals destined to meet each other. This project represents how despite our individuality, our bodies and minds are interconnected with other bodies and minds in the world.

Mind Over Body

By: Johanne Vidola

Inspired by Zora Neale Hurston's "How It Feels To Be Colored Me"

I am a fat feminist but I offer nothing in the way of extenuating circumstances except for the fact that I was the only overweight female in the fifth grade class of Lindeneau Elementary School whose grandmother on the mother's side was not a fan of McDonald's.

I remember the day I became a fat feminist. Or rather, I remember the day I became fat—the feminist in me came later. Up until I was eleven years old I never exposed myself to the glory that is the internet. A shy yet friendly fifth grader, I was surrounded by a plethora of different people, different personalities, different bodies. Small, tall, skinny, chunky, wide, narrow. This community is an exceptionally diverse community. Fifth graders and elementary schoolers alike paid no attribution to physical appearances when making friends. Friends were friends with their friend's friends, whose friends they were also friends with. During this period in my life, the differences in people only mattered in that these differences enhanced their personalities. The differences in each person became quirks, and these quirks allowed them to embrace themselves and others in any shape.

Changes came in myself and in my surroundings when I was eleven years old, when I moved across town and transitioned from Lindeneau Elementary School to Herbert Hoover Middle School. Cliques formed. Differences divided. The internet became my best friend and worst enemy. I felt the stares of others piercing through my thick skin, and this awareness magnified as I spent most of my time admiring the skinny female celebrities and models while comparing myself—my future self—to them. I was no longer the friendly fifth grader of Lindeneau Elementary, I was now a chubby middle schooler in a new school surrounded by new people and who struggled to make new friends. This revelation came to me in certain ways—in the school cafeteria and in the mirror, I became different.

But I am no longer tragically fat or plump or chubby. The initial insecurities that crept up on me soon faded into the realization that my physical differences fail to restrain me from my intellectual or social capabilities. I forget the lump around my hips and the chafes around my thighs in my aspirations for becoming a strong woman in STEM with a passion for travel and technology.

Someone is always in my ear and in my head reminding me that I am a part of the reason why people consider America the "obese" nation. They say I need to lose more weight, eat less, exercise more, look more like her, the less-than-normal skinny girl on magazine covers who people envy. These demeaning comments now fail to register insecurity in me. Size is merely a number, a letter, or a label.

Impact and Evaluation

Launching
Website

Hosting
Release Party

Educating

Evaluating
Analytics

Incentivizing
Creators



<https://www.ideastream.org/news/asian-american-women-lead-stop-asian-hate-march-in-cleveland-s-asiatown>

Reflections

Community Building



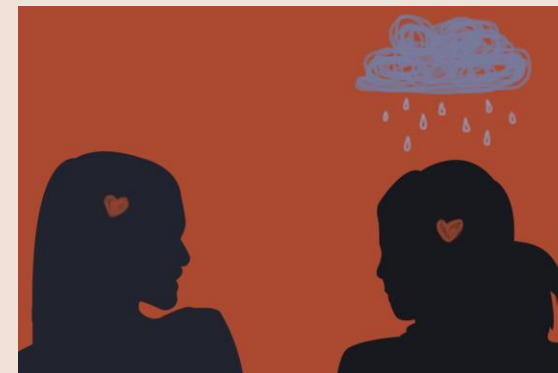
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Art & Storytelling



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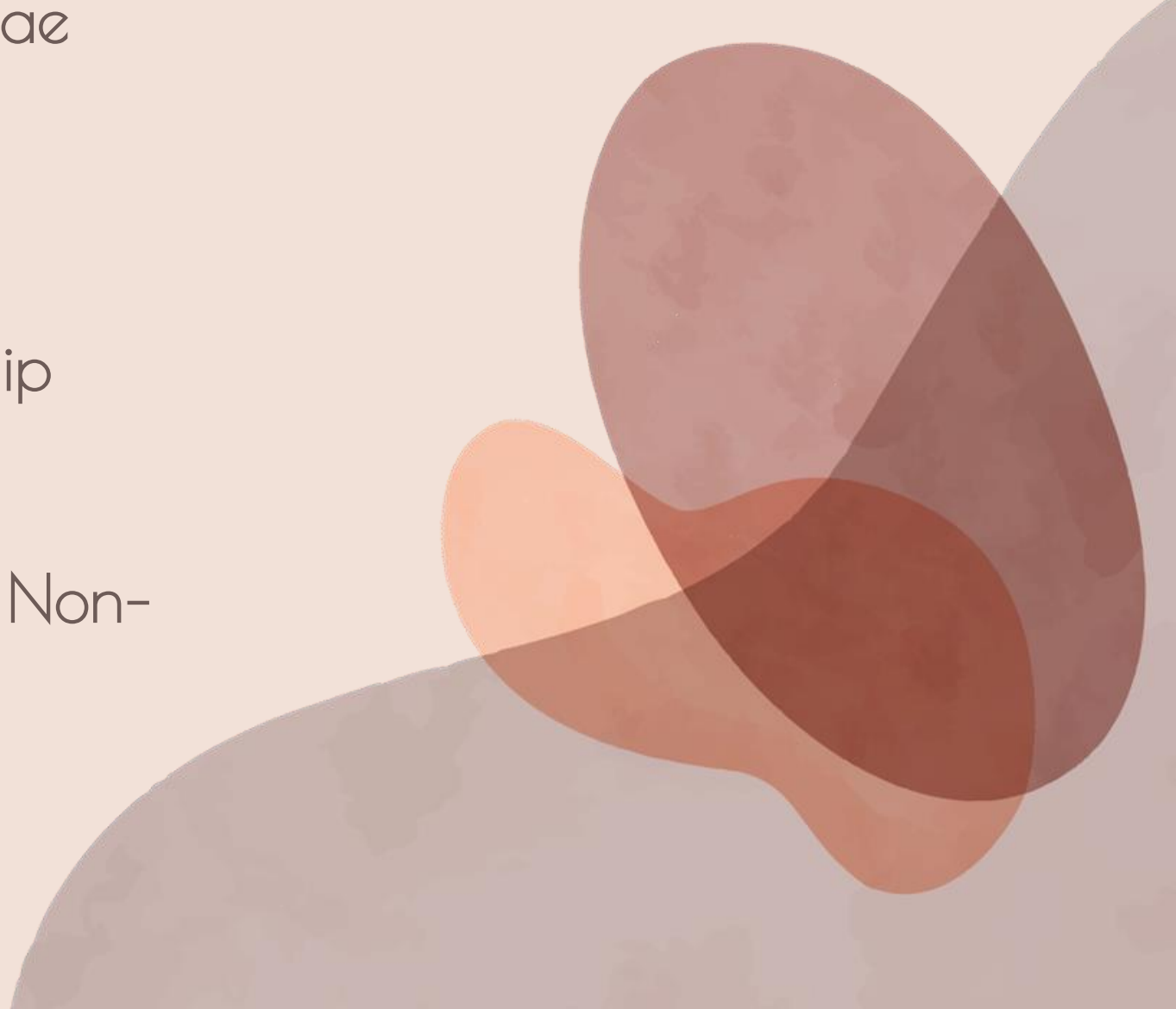
Empathy



<https://www.fliqeeditorial.com/opinionpieces/the-toxic-side-of-empathy>

Thank You!

- SAP Advisor: Professor Minju Bae
- Professor Trigg
- Sasha Taner
- Institute for Women's Leadership
Scholars and Staff
- Asian American Women and Non-
binary Creators
- Campus Partners



Citations

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