

## **KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS**

### **Race and culture issues in mental health and some thoughts on ethnic identity**

Suman Fernando, MD (Camb), Hon. Senior Lecture in Mental Health, European Centre for Migration & Social Care at the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK

'Race' and cultural issues in mental health services (largely based on British statistics), such as the high rates of compulsory treatment given to black people, disproportionate rates at which 'schizophrenia' is diagnosed among some minority groups, and relative exclusion of people seen as being 'minority ethnic' from talking therapies are well known. This paper discusses what the underlying problems may be by considering the long history of racist ideologies and practices in psychiatry; the culture of psychiatry and western psychology; and current processes of diagnosis and assessment in mental health services.

Fixed personal identity has a high profile in western psychology but the reality for most people in modern multicultural societies is of flexible and changeable identities. Strong ethnic identity is an advantage for protecting self-esteem and personal wellbeing but 'too much ethnicity' may have negative effects on social cohesion and respect for other people ('other-esteem'). Ethnic monitoring of mental health services is useful for locating possible group inequities; but ethnic categories should not be personalised to designate personal identity.

### **Contemporary multiple heritage couples, individuals, and families. A generation with diverse views and varied experiences**

Kelley Kenney, PhD, Full Professor, Kutztown University, USA

Mark Kenney, Adjunct Professor, Chestnut Hill College/DeSales University, USA

Multiple heritage couples, individuals, and families are a rapidly increasing population, whose histories have changed dramatically over the past fifty years. The presenters will discuss their lives and experiences, as well as those of other contemporary multiple heritage couples, individuals, and families. The complexities of the multiple heritage experience will be discussed from a generational perspective, highlighting the diverse views and varied experiences of members of the population. Implications for counsellors will be shared.

## **Homogamy Outlaws? Interracial Couples' Dominant and Subordinate Discourses in Response to Racism and Partner Differences**

Kyle Killian, PhD, RMFT, Associate Professor, York University, Toronto

Qualitative interviews with interracial couples reveal their strategic responses to racism in the public context and to racial and ethnic differences in the relationship context. This presentation discusses how interracial couples both resist and comply with the prevailing ideology of homogamy through their use of dominant and subordinate discourses. An analysis of discourses employed by couples and helping professionals highlights marginalized "truths" that are crucial to effective clinical work with interracial couples.

## **To be indivisibly indigenous: The choices of mixed-blood Native people**

Bonita Lawrence, Associate Professor, York University, Toronto

Elders have often taught that mixed-blood Native people can choose to be Indigenous, or white, but to mix the two ways of life results in destruction of the individual. Being Indigenous is indivisible, and therefore the primary question for mixed-blood Native people is "Am I Indigenous". From this question flow others, related to walking an Indigenous path as a mixed-blood Native person.

## **Negotiating mixedness in the Danish context of 'homogeneity': Intermarried couples, children of mixed parentage & Psychosocial well being**

Rashmi Singla, Associate Professor, Roskilde University, Denmark

My presentation covers some psychosocial aspects of intermarried couples and children of mixed parentage in Denmark. Scandinavian countries are characterized by egalitarian principles and 'homogeneity' on one hand and increasing, polarization between us & the others as well as ethnic diversity on the other, especially in Denmark. Though the number of partnership formations, across the ethnic borders, is relatively small yet it is on increase. However, intermarried couples and children of mixed parentage are almost invisible as a Statistical category and psychosocial services.

In Danish context, these couples and children challenge the stereotype binary and at the same time face challenges - possibilities and difficulties in relation to their self understandings, family and networks due to their "mixedness" in interplay with the broad society and transnational relations. This talk is based on an ongoing research project about intermarried couples, where

one of the partners is from South Asia and the other a native Dane. Some praxis based experiences are also included. I would focus on the life world of these couples and children in which their gendered positions intersect with socio economic position, ethnic 'mixing', and life course phase.

## **DAY 1 PRESENTATIONS**

### **Parenting children from another culture**

Jason Brown, PhD, Professor, University of Western Ontario, London, ON

Foster parents provide the majority of out-of-home care for children who come into contact with child protection authorities. Often, they care for foster children who have different values, beliefs and traditions than their own. Foster parents have described a range of benefits and challenges in their role as caregivers to children from a different culture. The purpose of the paper is to provide an overview of findings from recent research on this topic and describe strategies that counselors may consider in their work with culturally diverse foster families.

Specifically, the presentation will include findings from two studies by the presenter with licensed Canadian foster parents asking: what are the "benefits" and "challenges" of fostering children from a different cultural background than your own? The results of individual interviews were analyzed using Concept Mapping to identify the underlying concepts. Based on the results of these studies and other relevant research, implications for counselling practice will be presented.

### **Balancing Act: Assessing transracial applicants from an anti-oppressive framework**

Susan Crawford, MSW; Director & Founder, Blend Education & Training Inc.

Transracial adoption continues to be a debated practice in child welfare. For prospective applicants who choose to adopt transracially, either domestically or internationally, it is the responsibility of the agency and/or practitioner to ensure that assessments are comprehensive. Working from an anti-oppressive framework can present many issues regarding placement decisions, but can also invite opportunities for new learning and growth given the current realities in placement options. This workshop will introduce a 2-day pilot training program created by Blend Education & Training Inc. that can assist agencies and practitioners to develop an assessment model for prospective transracial families. The program, through self-reflective exercises and collaborative work, challenges participants to create an inventory for assessment through an anti-oppressive lens and develop a working script of questions and probes to guide applicant assessments using semi-structured interviewing techniques. Success of transracial placements relies largely on the family's commitment to create meaningful connections to a child's racial and cultural identity. However, it also relies on the knowledge, skills and expertise of practitioners during the assessment and evaluation phase to determine eligibility.

## **The Identity Development of Mixed Race Individuals in Canada**

Monica Das, MEd., University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB

The purpose of this study was to explore the identity development of mixed race individuals in a Western Canadian context. The case study methodology was used to guide the overall procedure and participant selection. A thematic analysis was used to analyze patterns in the data. Four individuals of mixed race parentage were interviewed and five themes emerged: (a) the influence of family, (b) the influence of childhood experiences, (c) the influence of physical appearance, (d) the influence of racism, and (e) the influence of adult experiences. The detailed explorations of the participants' experiences add to the Canadian literature on mixed race identity development, which provides several counselling implications and directions for future research.

## **Challenging taxonomies: Identity & multi-ethnic sexual minority youth**

Lauren B. McInroy, B.Ed., OCT, MSW candidate, University of Toronto

Shelley L. Craig, PhD, LCSW, University of Toronto

This presentation will discuss the complexities of articulating the sexual and racial identities of Multi-Ethnic Sexual Minority Youth [MSMY], including Multi-Racial MSMY. Some have argued that a cultural shift in North America has normalized same-sex attraction and resulted in sexual minority youth [SMY] having greater access to discourses on sexual identity, as well as increasingly complex sexual identity taxonomies within which to articulate their same-sex attraction (Cohler & Hammack, 2007; Savin-Williams, 2005). However, research also indicates that MSMY may negotiate and define their sexual identities differently from their Caucasian counterparts. Our presentation will discuss these competing discourses on SMY, and MSMY in particular.

Our research, undertaken at an agency serving GLBTQ youth in an urban context, suggests that this supposed shift in the negotiation and categorization of sexual identity may not be occurring for MSMY, including multi-racial adolescents. Further, the sexual and ethno-racial self-identification of the adolescents in our study also challenges much of the scant research currently available on MSMY in particular. Counter to suggestions in recent literature, our study participants continue to self-identify using the classical taxonomy of gay, lesbian and bisexual. In our presentation we will suggest possible reasons for these dissimilarities, including geographic, cultural and socio-demographic factors. This research is particularly important as MSMY may be at increased risk of negative outcomes as a result of their dual-minority identity status. The presentation will discuss implications for clinical and organizational practice, in areas such as assessment and cultural competency, with specific attention to the Canadian context.

## **Personal reflection experiences: A Southeast Asian therapist with African American clients in the therapy room**

Noor A. Rosli, PhD candidate, Marquette University, USA

This paper is about personal reflection experiences that experienced by an international student who is from Malaysia. The presenter will be sharing her experiences doing clinical work at one of the outpatient clinics in Wisconsin, USA. Most of the presenter's clients are African American who are among children, adolescents, and adults. In this paper, the presenter will focus on discussing her difficulty understanding the African American essence, the words that they use, emotion expression that they share with the therapist (presenter), facial expression, gesture, posture, and tone of voice. Language barrier also will be part of the discussion in this paper. Trust and their perception about the presenter (the therapist who is different from them) also will be included in this paper. The presenter personally finds it a challenge to understand clients who have different values, beliefs, and norms from us. Indeed, the presenter learns and gains so many experiences from her clients. Knowledge that the presenter gains from her clients during counseling sessions is more than what can be obtained from reading a book.

## **Aboriginal & Black mixed raced peoples in Canada: Looking at identity, culture & education**

Christine Smillie-Adjarkwa, PhD candidate, University of Toronto

This presentation will showcase the findings of a literature review conducted on Aboriginal & Black Mixed Raced Peoples In Canada: Looking at Identity, Culture & Education, which is part of my PhD dissertation in AECP, (AECD) at OISE, University of Toronto. In this presentation I will discuss the experiences of racially mixed Aboriginal and Black peoples in Canada and the impact of those experiences on their racial self-characterizations and identity; how this population participates in cultural activities within both groups and together and the common problems and promising practices for this population in regards to education. As an Aboriginal woman taken in by the Black community as a young teen and through the life experience of raising three Aboriginal/Black children (who are now adults); as well as through marriage and community involvement in both cultures, I feel I offer a unique view into this growing population in Canada.

## **No, Really Where are you From?**

Theresa Smith, MA candidate, University of Toronto

Sarah Grzincic, M.Ed. candidate, University of Toronto

What does it mean to be mixed race in a place where interracial marriages are on the rise? In Toronto, a city that prides itself on its multiculturalism why are mixed race individuals still being coerced into predetermined categories of identity? No, Really Where are you From? examines how the experiences of 10 First generation mixed race Canadians challenge the social constructs of race, emphasizing the human need of belonging to a collective identity. The notion of World history as personal history is explored; individuals' identities are intimately intertwined in repercussions of colonialism, immigration and globalization. NRWAYF blurs the lines of static racial groups, elevates the consciousness that humans are more alike than different while affirming mixed race identity. Employing an Arts-Informed Life History approach, imagery and narrative are used to illustrate how participants view themselves and perceptions of how they are viewed by others. The authors have chosen a qualitative research method implying that narratives can be effectively used to understand the spectrum of diversity of each participant's life experiences. Quantitative data is often unable to capture the richness of racial diversity pushing these individuals towards the periphery of social inclusion leading to further marginalization.

## **Narratives and lived experiences of men in interethnic/ interracial relationships - preliminary findings of a focus group**

Marguerite Sookoor, EdD candidate, University of Toronto

Roy Moodley, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Toronto

North America's complex and problematic history of race relations, miscegenation laws, immigration policies and ideologies of multiculturalism have shaped our perceptions, attitudes and behaviours towards interethnic and interracial relationships. The paucity of metissage research has led to reinforcing mythologies about ethnicity, race, sexuality, gender and identity. Mixed race and interethnic partnerships are seen as exotic, erotic, or pathological. In Canada, very little research has been done on the lived experiences of individuals in interethnic relationships. This symposium will explore the preliminary findings of a focus group - of heterosexual and gay men in mixed race/ interracial / interethnic relationships. Six men engaged in an open discussion about their lived experiences of being in mixed race and interethnic relationships. Society's perceptions, family attitudes, children and identity, religion and family rituals, masculinity and sexuality, and personal pathologies were some of the themes that emerged. In this symposium, we show edited video excerpts of these six men in conversation to explore trends, commonalities, differences and problematics of being in mixed race and interethnic relationships. In this symposium we want to

create a forum for open dialogue and discussion regarding the Group of Seven (sexual orientation, gender, race, class, disability, religion and age) identities and their intersectionality in mixed race and interethnic relationships.

**Working with white women's transition from a white identity to a bicultural identity: implications for therapists working with white women in interracial relationships**

Pat Ward, PhD candidate, Manchester University, UK

An important aspect of an interracial relationship is each partner's 'journey'. This workshop provides an overview and focus on the white woman's identity development.

Whilst many professionals and theorists have discussed the notion of developmental identity models, there is little evidence of the process of racial identity development of white women in interracial relationships. In interracial relationships, white women typically embark on a journey of self discovery of what it means to be white- a concept many have not considered as part of their early socialisation. Without the opportunity to consider these issues this may impede development and the ability to withstand and challenge the impact of racism. In order to overcome the impact of racism on the relationship, she needs to proceed through a number of development stages. Empirical studies do not appear to address this or recognize the validity of the stages of identity development of a white woman in an interracial relationship shifting from white to bicultural. Examples from research will be offered as a means of illustrating this process.

This workshop is open to anyone who has an interest in the topic of interracial relationships. This may include white women who are themselves in interracial relationships or counsellors interested in working with white women in interracial relationships. It is hoped that a positive dialogue will take place and a better understanding of the relationship and social pressure issues will follow, particularly how the white woman's identity evolves in the context of social pressure. This understanding will lead to the most effective intervention being utilised by counsellors and a growing awareness of 'self' and the impact of 'other' in women who are themselves in interracial relationships.

The initial experiential exercises will consider what contributes to the development of 'racial' identity, individuals own experiences, the messages received about self and 'others' and what helps and what hinders that process. A small case study scenario will be used to initiate discussions about perceptions of white women in interracial relationships. The workshop will feedback selected research undertaken on white women's experiences in the context of a white identity framework. This will be followed by small group discussion about the notion /usefulness of

thinking about a developmental process when considering white women's experiences. There will also be some dissemination of some initial themes that have emerged from a recent pilot study with a group of counsellors and their perceptions of white women in interracial relationships.

### **A narrative inquiry into the lived experiences of Chinese-White heterosexual couples within a Canadian context**

Rosa Wu, PhD candidate, University of Toronto

My doctoral thesis will explore the lived experience of Chinese-White heterosexual couples within a Canadian context. The Chinese population in Canada has grown substantially in the last 25 years, now representing the second largest minority group in Canada. As the Chinese population continues to increase, there is greater opportunity for Chinese individuals to form intimate relationships with someone who is not a visible minority group member. Yet, there are virtually no studies exploring the relationship experience of Chinese-White couples in a Canadian context. Studying interethnic couple relationships is important not only because they reflect another aspect of the diversity of families in Canada today, but also because of their potential impact in terms of social inclusion and identification with one visible minority group or more, particularly for subsequent generations.

Approaching from a strengths-based perspective, this study would provide a much needed updated perspective to the traditionally pathologizing and problem-focused literature on interethnic relationships. Due to the unique set of challenges and stressors that many interethnic couples face in their daily existence, there is perhaps much to learn from these couples and the distinctive ways they maintain a long-term relationship. Moreover, findings may also be of value to professionals and scholars in family studies, race and ethnic studies, and sociology. Finally, this study aims to minimize the stigma that the scientific and scholarly community may harbour regarding interethnic couples and celebrate the success of long-lasting relationships in an era where high divorce rate is a common trend.

### **Mixed race in-Queery: Investigating intersections of race, gender, and sexuality**

Jin-Sun Yoon, Senior Instructor, University of Victoria

Sylvia Raju, MSW candidate, University of Victoria

This psycho-educational workshop explores the intersections of social identities with a focus on race, gender, and sexuality particularly as it relates to those of "mixed race." It is evidenced that queer racialized youth are more at risk for bullying in Canadian society, which is rife with

homophobia, sexism and racism. Practitioners require a sophisticated understanding of how complex intersections of identity operate in the lives of mixed race queer youth to support optimal development. This dynamic experiential workshop design will be particularly relevant for those practitioners working with a diverse youth/young adult population. Participants will have an opportunity to evaluate and critique contemporary practices aimed at supporting youth through risk-reduction approaches: bully-proofing, anti-homophobia campaigns, Gay/Straight alliances, racial identity development models, and most recently the “it gets better” movement. Through a participatory methodology, participants will develop effective strategies for practice within organizations and community. Together participants will explore what a liberating space looks like for racialized queer youth and how interventions can be enhanced through mindful practices that include principles of intersectionality in order to best facilitate change.

## **DAY 2 PRESENTATIONS**

### **Similarities and differences between Yoruba Traditional Healers and Native American and Canadian Healers**

Mary Olufunmilayo Adekson, PhD, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Culture plays a significant role in who clients consult for their mental health needs. This presentation will look at the similarities and differences between Yoruba Traditional Healers and Native American and Canadian Healers. Traditional healers have unique roles to play in psychotherapy and medicine and within their own ethnic group/tribes and without. Since the speaker, a Yoruba woman, has done some in depth research on both populations this will not be a difficult task. As a young girl growing up in Nigeria, the speaker directly experienced the healing arts of Yoruba Traditional healers --- and later as an adult researched the interpersonal techniques used by Yoruba traditional healers and also looked at the art of healing and medicine among various American and Canadian Natives. The presentation will bring out the richness of interactions with various healers from these two different and unique native populations.

### **The mixing of racial and spiritual identities: a meeting on sacred ground**

Mary Olufunmilayo Adekson, PhD, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Michael John Gargano, Master's candidate, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Maria Collar, Master's candidate, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Babatunde O. Adekson, PhD candidate, University of Rochester, New York

This presentation deepens the discussion of integrating spirituality into the psychotherapeutic relationship. The presenters develop a conceptual framework from which counselors, therapists, and graduate students in training will 1) recognize their biases towards other religious or spiritual traditions 2) understand the importance of spirituality and religion as an integral component of racial identity 3) take into consideration effective spiritual or religious intervention that are culturally relevant. They propose several strategies for becoming a religious and spiritual sensitive counselor. The presenters will conclude with a discussion about the potential benefits for addressing religious or spiritual issues in psychotherapy and the need for further research.

## **A qualitative investigation of coping with depression in the phase of acculturation in South Asian Muslim immigrants living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)**

Saadia Akram, EdD candidate, University of Toronto

In this presentation the nature of coping mechanisms among South Asian Muslim immigrants living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) who have been in Canada from three to five years and experienced acculturation challenges and depression will be discussed in detail. Thirteen immigrants (seven females and six males) were interviewed to share their stories of personal experiences of settlement and acculturation in Canada. These interviews were analyzed using the grounded theory approach to develop themes and sub-themes to understand and interpret data. The findings reveal that the research participants experienced a number of socio-personal, socio-cultural and religious-spiritual challenges which made them depressed and they sought out particular kind of support and coping mechanisms which helped them to settle, integrate and belong to the Canadian culture. Recommendations are made to inform mental health professionals to incorporate these coping mechanisms in delivering culturally sensitive services to the target population. Study implications and recommendations for further studies in the area of settlement and adaption of newcomers in Canada are discussed.

## **Melt in the pot or boil in the[medical] bag? A critique of UK mental health practices and suggestions for a more universal healing psychology and psychotherapy**

Waseem Alladin, PsyD, Clinical Psychologist, UK

In the UK, it is claimed that multiculturalism has failed. Minority ethnic groups are now expected to assimilate to the British way of life to show their allegiance. This presentation critiques current mental health practices in the UK. Illness representations are still dominated by the medical model even in mental health, sneaked in through the Trojan horse of evidence-based medicine. An illness representation model, suitable for both black and minority ethnic groups and the mainstream, has been available for some time (Alladin,1993,1999,2008,2009). There is therefore a way of achieving unity in diversity, without losing our individuality or sense of community. Perhaps we should get away from medicine and cure and focus more on healing and caring. The future directions of mental health for all, not just Black and Ethnic Minority Groups, requires integration of spirituality and traditional healing into conventional medicine. Perhaps the time is ripe for a more universal psychology and psychotherapy. Some suggestions are outlined for debate.

## **The aftershock of trauma case studies: Relating to mental wellness & resilience after the earthquake in Haiti**

Denise Angelle, Founder, WORLDSTRENGTH Arts Organization, Toronto

Case studies of personal experiences working with Haitian individuals affected by the earthquake on January 12, 2010 shown through a series of photography slides. A period of 3 weeks after the earthquake to 9 months after the earthquake is covered. A diversity of age, gender & social status within the Haitian culture is revealed, including primary and secondary trauma from injury, amputation, homelessness, loss of business, some orphaned, abandoned, and those who survived untouched physically but touched psychologically. The presentation will cover the resulting aftershock of trauma in the various lives and many examples of resilience in the Haitian culture including ways they practice to overcome and bring about mental wellness, such as interdependence, communication, faith, arts, etc.

## **Decolonization and diversity: mental wellness for Aboriginal peoples in Canada**

Eileen Antone, PhD, University of Toronto

Julie Kang, M.Ed. candidate, University of Toronto

This presentation is a culmination of our literature review examining core aspects of models of healing that have been articulated by Aboriginal researchers as key to decolonizing mental health for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. We have examined programs available to Aboriginal peoples in Canada, which are built on decolonized models of mental health. Recognizing the great diversity in histories, experiences and understandings of healing within Aboriginal communities (inclusive of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples), we focus on common experiences and perspectives shared by Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Based on an understanding of colonialism as the central cause of trauma with ongoing intergenerational effects, we discuss positive models of 'wellness', consisting of four interrelated concepts: holistic, community and family-centered, culturally safe and self-determined approaches to mental health. A particular focus of this presentation is on the concept of cultural safety in relation to mental health services for Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

## **Migration, trauma, and pressures of the singular**

Michel'e Bertrand, EdD candidate, University of Toronto

Zahra Murad, PhD candidate, University of Toronto

Trauma theories that inform Western professional mental health care often draw on ideas of dual-information processes to explain the dynamics of post-traumatic symptoms and to outline a path to recovery. Traumatic incidents are understood to be frozen within experiential systems of

information processes, that is, in wordless images, sensory experiences, bodily perceptions, and walled off partially or fully from rational-linguistic systems of apprehension and expression. In order to resolve this, healing is often equivocated with ideas of integration, and of achieving narrative coherence manifested by specific kinds of sentimentousness. The hope is that this integration, this coherence, relieves the compulsion toward re-experiencing. The question we come to is this: what ideas of singularity, of inscription, subordination and re-inscription of difference, reside in this approach? We approach this question through the experience of migration. We employ discursive analysis in examining autobiographical moments where the "freezing" of traumatic incidents that took place in early formative years in another country is compounded by a migration to Canada, the timing of which bears a particular kind of developmental significance [in Western terms], for e.g in adolescence or early adulthood. How does the "authentic" or "originary" "ethnic" self, coinciding with the younger self that lived the trauma in an ethnicized country of origin, come to expression in the new context? How is that expression experienced and received? How does the splitting off of different trajectories and traumatically "frozen" self-organizations - bi/multi-ethnic identities, child selves and adult selves - come to intersect, interrupt and inform each other in the pressure towards "integration" and "narrative coherence"? How do dominant Western notions of singularity, of subordination of difference, inflect how these multiple self-organizations are "read", treated and "resolved"?

### **Racism in Canadian academic Psychology.**

Zack Cernovsky, Ph.D., Professor, University of Western Ontario, London, ON

Canadian academic racism is most blatantly represented by J.P. Rushton, a professor of psychology, notorious for his repetitive publications to support his theory of genetic inferiority of blacks (low IQ, prone to mental illness and crime, oversexed, and multiplying at a fast rate). Rushton has developed his theory on the basis of archaic methodology (e.g., measuring head circumference by tape as a substitute for IQ tests), substandard use of psychological statistics, grandiose generalizations from inadequate samples and from low correlation coefficients. He misrepresents anthropological work of prominent scientists such as Beals et al. (1984). His literature references are unreliable. For example, as reported by Weizmann et al. (1991), Rushton misled his readers by falsifying his literature reference to an article on racial differences in sexual characteristics published in the *Penthouse Forum* by listing that journal as "Forum: International Journal of Human Relations." Some of his data naively relied on self-reports of students asked to estimate the length of their erect penis and the intensity of ejaculation. Most recently (in his lectures as posted on YouTube), he educates the public that American Indians have an average IQ of 85, Hispanics an average IQ of 90, and he places East Indians and inhabitants of the Middle-East at a similarly low level and implies that their inferiority is

genetic. While free speech is a democratic privilege, his work is not to be mislabeled as scientific.

### **Self-perceived stress in Canadian ethnic minorities based on availability of social resources**

Nurun L Chowdhury, BSc. Hon. candidate, Memorial University

Lifetime prevalence of mental illness in Canada is currently 20% and some research indicates that immigrants are at higher risk of mental disorders due to high levels of stress. Stress has been positively correlated with depression and other mental and physical health risks. With the visible minority population of Canada expected to exceed 8 million by 2017, it is important to understand factors that safeguard the mental health of this growing sector of Canadians. The current project utilizes remote access data from the 2003 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) to establish the difference in the mental health of Canadians and immigrants. Further, it investigates the role of social resources in terms of mental health outcomes for Canadian immigrants. The project looks at age, sex and marital status of immigrants, length of stay in Canada, sense of belonging to their community, self-perceived levels of stress and access to social support (tangible support, positive social interaction, emotional/informational support and affection). Immigrants were found to have significantly stronger sense of community belonging and lower levels of self-perceived stress. Age and emotional/informational support were the significant predictors of self-perceived stress. Such research may help in the development of public policies to alleviate stress on new immigrants and ensure a healthy population.

### **Intersecting oppressions: Black-Asian conflict in educational settings**

Simon Chung, PhD candidate, University at Albany

Jerome Farrell, PhD candidate, University at Albany

Regardless of the heterogeneity in ethnicity and social class, the perception of East Asians continues to be shaped by the model minority stereotype particularly as it pertains to academic achievement and work ethic (Thompson & Kiang, 2010). Due in part to a portrayal as a “North American success story,” wide achievement and socioeconomic gaps within East Asian groups go unnoticed (Maseus & Kiang, 2009), and historical acts of discrimination are largely unaddressed in North American pedagogy (Wing, 2007).

With mounting economic struggles and rising political tensions with East Asian financial superpowers, Asian communities have been subjected to an increase in overt racism. Assumptions of foreigner status and model minorityship are often cited as contributing to

animosity between East Asian and Black communities in particular (Lew, 2007). The pervasive belief in a meritocracy serves only to exacerbate negative attributions about Black individuals, while simultaneously minimizing systemic barriers they face (Kwate & Meyer, 2010). Intergroup racial conflict in educational settings are likely a reflection of broader societal dynamics, where the view of Asians as thriving and Blacks as struggling may suggest tensions to be particularly salient in this context.

While reports of inter-racial violence between students of these groups have received increased attention, institutional and public reactions have in many ways fueled tensions and further perpetuated negative stereotypes about both groups. In this symposium, participants will be encouraged to consider the multitude of cultural, political, and systemic factors contributing to this growing concern. We hope to facilitate specific dialogue on 1) *systemic contributors to inter-minority racial tension and intersecting oppressions* 2) *social distance as a byproduct of cultural difference and divergence* and 3) *the responsibility of educational institutions in both perpetuating social injustice and compelling change*. Educational administrators, teachers, students, and therapists will be asked to identify their potential roles in this process.

### ***Kwam khem keuang: Indignation in a cross-cultural clinical context***

Nathalie M.H. Dinh, PhD, Professional Chief of Psychology, St. Mary's Hospital Center, Montreal

Culture is an essential variable of diagnosis and treatment. A cultural perspective draws attention to the social context within which symptoms arise, are given meaning, and are managed. Ethno-cultural work on illness narratives suggests that most people can provide culturally-based explanations for their symptoms. While these explanations are inconsistent with biomedical theory, they relieve patient distress by allowing the patient to create meaning for symptoms. Exploring the characteristics, context, and antecedents of the symptoms enables the patient to convey them to the clinician who may have a divergent explanation of sickness. This case study uses the Cultural Formulation Guidelines of the DSM-IV created for clinicians to elicit a narrative account of the illness experience from the patient. It examines how the patient, a Laotian, diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, used social indignation (“kwam khem keuang”) as an explanatory model after he underwent a traumatic amputation. In explaining his illness through a cultural idiom, the patient was able to reveal both personal meaning of repressed anger and frustration, expressing them in a cultural context that was acceptable to him. This cultural idiom, allowed the patient to reflect upon the structure of the health care system and the specific context in which symptoms and their possible origins are recounted and explored. It also clarified to the treating clinicians some categories of experience and causal explanations that did not fit easily with western biomedical and psychiatric understanding. The case study illustrates how a cultural

approach to illness from the patient's perspective offers a reflexive stance on the clinician-patient interaction that allows for better patient care. The presentation is based on the following publication:

Dinh, N.M.H., & Groleau, D. (2008). Traumatic amputation: A case of Laotian indignation and injustice. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 32(3), 440-457.

### **Pentecostal worship: an historic overview of its relevance to the cultural framework of African/Black Americans**

Sandra Dixon, MA, Adler School of Professional Psychology, Chicago

Pentecostalism plays a significant role in the worship lives of many Black/African Americans. As a cultural group, Black/African Americans have experienced various forms of prejudices and injustices for many decades on many different levels: socio-culturally, racially, religiously and psychologically. The issue of mental and psychological wholeness for this subculture based on their religious practices has raised many questions for certain mental health professionals who provide psychotherapeutic services to this population. Historically, some researchers have made the postulation that Black Americans who engage in the emotional expressiveness of Pentecostal worship (*i.e. glossolalia – speaking in tongues*) are “ignorant, mentally unbalanced, primitive, rank fools and just plain different” (Washington, 1972, pg. 70). In contrast, other studies have challenged the preceding stance and yielded findings that show psychological stability among Pentecostal worshipers (Gritzmacher, Bolton & Dana, 1988). The cultural bias of the former viewpoint stands to be corrected; hence, a systematic literature review was completed on this subject area. Conclusively, the purpose of presentation is to critically analyze the relevance of Pentecostal worship to the cultural framework of African/Black Americans.

### **Institutional racism as a key conceptual framework for teaching clinical cultural psychiatry**

Jaswant Guzder, MD, Associate Professor, McGill University

Dr. Suman Fernando was a visiting professor for more than 10 years at McGill's annual summer transcultural psychiatry summer program in a course clinical methods in cultural psychiatry with Dr. C. Rousseau and myself.

This presentation will comment on influence of Dr. Fernando's seminal work on our teaching of clinical methods. In particular his annual lecture for our course opened a discourse on racism and institutional racism. This first visitor professor session proceeds after our initial our exploration of

each student's self framed cultural identity and interest in psychiatry. Introductory commentary is on the frameworks of systemic, social, spiritual, community, ethnicity, counter-transference and trauma issues at the interface of psychiatry and culture. Beginning the month of teaching seminars, Dr. Fernando's contextual lecture was usually appended with a BBC presentation on the agendas of race in a consultation process. The clinical vignette positions the post colonial British psychiatry context by following a tribunal process with an African patient. Dr. Fernando's conceptual historical framework and other dimensions of institutional racism have been a key conceptual framework for our seminars linked with the concepts of social suffering (Kleiman), psychohistoriography (Hickling) and the cultural competence literature. The complexity of the therapeutic space and the implications of cultural context in psychiatric practice or policy, has been part of our deconstruction of the delusion of neutrality in clinical practice.

### **Facing Muslim women in counselling**

Nazila Isgandarova, DMin, Adjunct Faculty, Emmanuel College, University of Toronto

Religion and ethnicity influence Muslim women's gender role attitudes in family. There is less attention given to this population group. A vast majority of research has focused on America's more established Christian and Jewish women. However, it is important to study how religion plays a crucial role in the adjustment process of Muslim women, especially in maintaining group identity and cultural traditions. I here argue that cultural interpretations of religion Islam reinforces traditional gender expectations to varying extents for Muslim women in educational attainment, presence of children, and age, depending on their unique historical and situational circumstances. However, background characteristics such as education, parenting, etc. have expected effects on women's gender ideologies. If education decreases their support for traditional roles, while parenting has the opposite effect or older women holding more traditional views on gender roles. Muslim women with longer relationship with the Canadian culture display more gender egalitarianism. They become familiar with pure Islamic teaching which is free from the cultural influences and that seems to have a positive influence in counselling. I here argue that when Muslim women are more aware of their rights in Islam, they deal much better with their marital and family problems and find new ways of protecting themselves, dealing with the abuse, changing their help-seeking behavior, or altering their traditional attitudes toward wife.

## **Exploring the underlying factors of self-immolation: A new deadly phenomenon amongst Afghan women**

Beheshta Jaghori, PhD candidate, McGill University

Almost a decade after the fall of the Taliban regime, Afghan women still do not seem to have made substantive progress in challenging oppressive customs, violence, and their traditional position in Afghan society. Although there are no reliable statistics on the prevalence of sexual or physical violence against Afghan women, the available indicators suggest that it is a major problem in Afghanistan. In addition, there is increasing recognition of yet another related tragedy among Afghan girls and women, namely, self-immolation. Self-immolation is the act of burning oneself as a means of suicide. Suicide was once a rare phenomenon in the Afghan culture. During the Taliban era, suicide by women experiencing severe depression became commonplace. Despite the dearth of reliable information on the scope of this practice in Afghanistan, there are indications that self-immolation is occurring at a notable and steady rate. This paper explores suicide by self-immolation amongst Afghan women and the underlying factors contributing to this new phenomenon.

## **Inferiorizing Indigenous communities and intentional colonial poverty**

Steven Koptie, M.Ed., University of Toronto

This paper is a reflective topical autobiography of a man seasoned by thirty years of community and crisis work. It has been written to encourage Aboriginal peoples to reflect on their lives and share their lived-experiences with others so that we can work together to break the colonial spell that has held so many hostage to their past.

Canadian Indigenous scholars valiantly search for stories of resilience and strength in contemporary Canada to demystify the tragic place of Indians in Canada. It is very much a journey of self-discovery and recovery of a positive identity and lost human dignity that allows the restoration of pride to succeed with the gifts Creation provides to Indigenous peoples. Cook-Lynn (2007) addresses this quest to locate safe places of connecting to those stories in her important work *Anti-Indianism in Modern America: Voice from Tatekeya's Earth*, where she writes about the obligation of Indigenous scholars to project strong voices to people who "believe in the stereotypical assumption that Indians are 'damned,' vanished, or pathetic remnants of a race" and "lets get rid of Indian reservations" or "lets abrogate Indian treaties." Instead of feeling inspired to find places of good will far too much energy is sapped escaping spaces of hate, indifference and inexcusable innocence. The cultural, historical and social confusion of a one-sided portrayal of Canadian colonization creates for researchers/witnesses at all levels of education huge gaps in

understanding the unresolved pain and injury of Canada's colonial past on Canada's First Nations. Indigenous students' experience within the academy can be a Charles Dickens tale. It is a tale of two extremes; the best of times and the worst of times mostly simultaneously as each glorious lesson learned carries the lonely burden of responsibility to challenge the shame and humiliation of each racist, ignorant and arrogant Victorian Age colonial myth perpetuated. Like *Oliver Twist* we want more than poverty. We are all being called to witness the struggle to reconcile brutal injustices that maintain tragic power imbalances, and disunity.

### **Disciplinary power and the globalisation of discourse about 'war trauma' as (mis)applied to Rwanda**

Athena Madan, CCC, PhD candidate, University of Toronto

Refugee war trauma is a poor adjunct to posttraumatic stress: it is constructed by larger, unspoken contexts of geopolitical power, and often assumes a generalised experience of war. This paper examines how present mental health policy can lack cultural and socio-political specificities within its diagnostic framework, leading to insensitive and even harmful treatment delivery for individuals. Drawing from case examples from my own practise with individuals (both children and adults) affected by the Rwandan genocide, I question the 'helpfulness' of posttraumatic stress treatment with this instance of refugee war trauma, and the filtering of power within a mental health care system. I then look at some of the cultural and socio-political assumptions within the dominant discourse on 'war trauma,' and how these have limited transferability to the Rwandan genocidal context. Applying a Foucauldian-inspired analysis of the discourse on posttraumatic stress, I explore how "trauma" is taken up across respective viewpoints, how such differences can significantly impact mental health treatment delivery, and how unchallenged adherence to present policy manifests a docile embodiment of disciplinary and geopolitical power (Foucault 2003). I ask: How does the dominance of PTSD, as a system of governance, shape the therapeutic encounter? What implications might this have on the therapeutic process? What cultural contexts are relevant for 'healing' in instances of Rwandan war trauma? What tensions to note as the advent of "trauma counselling" seeks more global application and transnational legitimacy?

### **Intra and interpersonal intersectionality in the formation of the therapeutic 'Third Space': Sourcing resiliency and resistance within the self and through therapeutic relationship**

Meaghan Moore, M.Ed., University of Toronto

Herein, the formation and impact of the 'Third Space' within the therapeutic relationship based on

the multicultural matrices of both the client and counselling practitioner alike are explored. Roy Moodley (2007) suggests that the ideal space in which a radical 'dialogue' of a critical multicultural nature might occur is within the 'Third Space' noting its capacity for all of: the liminal; a movement of the margins to the centre; empowerment; (re)inscription of cultural conceptual identities; and fluidity. Something akin to what Straker (2004) calls the "anti-analytic third" and how it might inform whether or not a site of intersectionality is understood by both client and clinician alike as a point of pathology or resiliency is explored.

Intersectionality, importantly, is understood to occur both on an *intrapersonal* (in so far as it informs all of personal identity, historical contextualization, and boundary drawing- oppressive and otherwise) and *interpersonal* level (as it occurs within relationship in the formation of the 'Third'- particularly, for the purposes of this paper, within a therapeutic context). I am further concerned with the negotiating of Moodley's 'Big Seven' categories i.e. gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, class, dis/ability, and religion (2007)- whether implicitly or explicitly within session- in the formation of a 'Third' which promotes and encourages a client's resiliency within and/or resistance in the presence of distress. Implications for the clinician's role in the defining and redefining of intersectionality- both the intrapersonal and interpersonal- and in the consequent 'Third' which arises are named.

### **Narratives and lived experiences of divorced African/Caribbean-Canadian women in a family: reflections, resilience and growth**

Renée Rawlins, EdD candidate, University of Toronto

The experiences of Black women are a source of knowledge. This study uses the lived divorce experiences of six Black women in a family from the African-Caribbean Diaspora in Canada. A unique approach is taken in this research as all the participants are family members and they are also related to the researcher. This qualitative autoethnographic research examines the issues faced during divorce and the resiliency factors that helped them cope with the adjustments of divorce from a Black Feminist perspective.

Black women share a history of resiliency in the face of adversity. In the face of divorce, a shared group of resiliency factors existed among the Black women in the research. Individual resiliency factors that were prevalent in this study included independence, perspective, and sense of responsibility. Interpersonal resiliency factors that were shared among the participants included having a strong support network and spirituality. The findings from this study contribute to theoretical knowledge about divorce and resiliency among Black women with implications for counselling interventions geared towards Black women and families.

## **Indigenous mental health and psychotherapy: Exploring integration**

Suzanne L Stewart, PhD, Assistant Professor, University of Toronto

Despite disproportionately high rates of mental health problems in Native communities as compared to the rest of Canada, mental health services are under-used by Native peoples (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 2004). Research suggests that this is because most psychological services are based on non-Indigenous conceptions of health and healing (Health Canada, 2003). Overall, literature suggests that an Indigenous-based holistic model of psychotherapy is culturally appropriate because it can contribute to developing forms of health services and promotion that respond effectively to client identity needs created by the complex history and social context of Canada's Indigenous peoples. This presentation will examine the ways Indigenous concepts and practices of healing can complement aspects of Western psychotherapy, initiating a dialogue that emphasizes intercultural integration as a professional practice issue. The focus of the discussion will present the author's research, teaching, and clinical experiences related to the successes and challenges faced by Indigenous therapists who offer both Indigenous and Western forms of counselling to clients in mental health service agencies.

## **Experiential/rational model of religious identity development**

Suthakaran Veerasamy, PhD, Assistant Professor, State University of New York, USA

The basic premise of this model is that the development of religious identity is a product of the joint operation of the experiential and intellectual systems as defined by Epstein (1994) in his cognitive-experiential self-theory. Religious identity is posited to progress along six ego statuses and represent successively complex means of organizing religious identity:

1. *Concrete status* is characterized by the exclusively experiential processing of religious issues.  
Religion is viewed from a dualistic (black or white) and egocentric perspective.
2. *Relational status* involves the experiencing of religion more rationally and logically. However, the use of logic in interpreting religious issues is limited to ingratiating himself or herself with significant others.
3. *Confusion status* involves the period when a person feels anxious thinking about religion. There is a sense of disorganization and doubt pervading his or her thoughts regarding religion.
4. *Intellectualization status* is characterized by the exclusively intellectual appraisal of events and

data related to religion. Any aspect of religion that cannot be explained logically and rationally is mocked or outright rejected.

5. *Exploration status* is characterized by a search for the personal meaning of religion through a rational and experiential appraisal of events and data that have had an impact on one's religious identity.
6. *Acceptance status* involves a realization that in order to fully comprehend and appreciate religion, there needs to be an appreciation for both the experiential (faith) and the intellectual (reason). One is comfortable and accepting of his or her religion, because he or she has experientially and intellectually resolved the place of religion in his or her life.

### **The politics of meaning in counselling in a multicultural setting**

Njoki Wane, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Toronto

The unprecedented pace of global change with continual relocation and diversification of the population has created significant social change in society. There is a pressing need for educational organisations to reflect and respond to the diversity of the population and social change. Today many are questioning the inadequacy of social, educational and political practices that do not speak adequately to the variety of human experiences or to the diverse history of events and ideas that have shaped human growth and development. The presentation addresses questions of the politics of inclusive in a counseling setting and what that means for both the students seeking academic assistance and the counselor from a racialized group. Is it enough to incorporate materials and examples from marginalized groups in order to make a counseling session inclusive? This presentation is based on my lived experienced as an Academic Skills Counselor at a University setting in Canada. In the presentation, I provide examples of moments of surprise/silence, followed by rituals of boarder crossing. The analysis addresses the complications involved in defining silences, surprises and learning moments. The tensions involved in such alternative pedagogical practices are problematized and explored from within the context of the academy and the associated constraints therein (Tatum, 1999). The objective of the presentation is to theorize the significance of incorporating different ways of knowing and of valuing non-traditional approaches in academic counseling. I argue that I can thus strive towards a more inclusive academic counseling, one that is more representative of the communities in which we work.

## **The evolution of illness representations: a critical examination of static conceptualizations of mental illness**

Humair Yusuf, EdD candidate, University of Toronto

There is considerable research documenting the influence of culture on representations of mental illness and variations in representations of mental illness amongst different ethnic and cultural groups (for example, Baumann, 2003; Landrine & Klonoff, 2001). Yet most models of illness representations (for example, Becker, 1974; Ajzen, 1991; Diefenbach & Leventhal, 1996; Alladin, 1999), describe them as dynamic and constantly changing rather than static constructs. This study uses qualitative methodology (Smith, 1996) to compare representations of illness in terms of identity, causation, duration, consequences and controllability (Leventhal, Brissette & Leventhal, 2003) between rural and urban Pakistanis and Pakistani immigrants to Canada. The findings of this study provide insights into how representations of mental illness, along with treatment expectations and coping strategies, mutate and evolve through the experience of migration, establishment of a post-9/11 diasporic identity in the West, interaction with other cultures, and exposure to and participation in the biomedical model of illness. Implications for counselling and psychology and directions for future research are discussed.

## **POSTER PRESENTATIONS**

### **An assessment of the effects of mental health stigma on the help seeking tendencies of marginalized African Americans**

Babatunde O. Adekson, PhD candidate, University of Rochester, New York

This review examines the deleterious impact of institutionalized as well as intra-culturally sanctioned stigma that alters the help seeking tendencies for a large cohort of marginalized African Americans. These phenomena are also significant barriers to the wellness paradigm in terms of mental wellness for a growing cohort of African Americans, considered marginalized as a result of their socioeconomic status, educational attainment, the communities where they live and work, etc. As a result, it will be important for Psychiatric and behavioral health professionals to effectively understand the cultural variations in attitudes, beliefs and behaviors associated with mental illness in order to implement strategies to increase access to care for African Americans in the United States.

### **Leadership Influence on Cultural Competency in Mental Health Clinics**

Arlene Arias, PhD candidate, University of Harford

Public service organizations are concerned about culturally competent service delivery in terms of customizing counseling and services that meet the needs of a diverse population. Large behavioral health organizations create cultural competency policy that is often transmitted by upper level administration. The context for this study (in progress) centers on public organizations and the need to provide quality mental health treatment to a growing ethnically diverse population.

The purpose of this study (in progress) is to explore and describe the relationship between clinicians' self reports of their cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003) and their reports of their team leaders use of influence strategies (Yukl, 2005) that promote their engagement in culturally competent service delivery in local mental health authorities. The belief is that administrators and leaders who are more closely connected to direct service providers, including counselors, should be thinking about how they influence culturally competent service delivery. These leaders would be most knowledgeable about influencing direct service clinicians who engage in the actual implementation of culturally competent service delivery. Policy alone is not sufficient. This study is a quantitative survey design. Two surveys will be administered that measure leader influence tactics and clinician cultural intelligence.

### **The use of folklore as a culturally sensitive intervention for the Hispanic individual**

Maria Collar, Master's candidate, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Michael Gargano, Master's candidate, St. Bonaventure University, New York

Considering the mixed heritage, belief system, and cultural values of the Hispanic population it would be best to utilize counseling techniques encompassing ideas, practices and treatments maintained by these cultures. Conflicts between values reflected in traditional counseling theories and practices of Hispanics present a barrier towards attitude and underutilization of mental health services. There is an incongruity when comparing belief systems and values of this population to traditional counseling theories. This presentation explores the current need for developing culturally sensitive intervention techniques and proposes the use of Folklore therapy as a vital technique. Folklore therapy, as represented, includes the utilization of indigenous practices, rituals, aversion and therapeutic alliance based on principles from client-healer relationships. Overall, treatment places emphasizes on holistic approaches, knowledge and principles used by native healers.

### **The Transracial Parenting Initiative: A Canadian program to support foster and adoptive families**

Susan Crawford, MSW, Director & Founder, Blend Education & Training Inc.

The Transracial Parenting Initiative (TPI) is a Canadian based pre-assessment training program for new and prospective foster and adoptive parents. It was a 3-year project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, and is currently provided by Blend Education & Training Inc. This workshop highlights the research phases and major findings of the survey and focus group results of over 100 adoptive and foster parents. It also introduces participants to the 10-hour curriculum which builds on current Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) and anti-oppressive practice training. TPI introduces families to the issues related to transracial parenting and provides opportunities for self assessment using interactive learning techniques from a strengths based perspective. The training DVD "Ready. Willing. Able?" which accompanies the curriculum will also be featured as part of this workshop. As the only program of its kind in Canada, TPI shows how specialized training programs that cater to the specific needs of prospective adoptive and foster applicants can help practitioners assess motivation, preparation and readiness to parent transracially.

## **Biracialism and face recognition: an investigation of the other race effect and other race experience**

Chelsea Durber, BA, University of Victoria

People tend to show a recognition advantage for own-race faces compared to faces of another race. Known as the *other race effect*, this phenomenon has been suggested to stem from a lack of contact with other racial groups and can result in severe consequences such as stereotyping and victimization. It is unclear in the cross-cultural literature, however, whether biracial people exhibit an other race effect. In this study, we compared the recognition memory of monoracial Caucasian, monoracial Chinese, and biracial Caucasian-Chinese participants to a variety of Caucasian and Chinese faces. In addition, every participant answered a questionnaire concerning their social and personal contact with Caucasian and Chinese people. Further, the biracial participants compared how often they saw their Chinese and Caucasian relatives. Our results revealed that both the Caucasian and biracial participants were significantly better at recognizing Caucasian faces, while the Chinese participants were equally as good at recognizing both Caucasian and Chinese faces. Notably, the pattern of recognition was mirrored by participants' self-reported experience with Caucasian and Chinese people. Finally, the biracial participants reported seeing both their Caucasian and Chinese relatives equally as often in a year. Overall, these results demonstrate that regardless of whether an individual is monoracial or biracial, peer experience plays one of the most critical roles that can influence the other race effect. As such, future research could examine the role of peer influences on facial recognition with the aim of reducing cross-racial recognition biases and stereotypes and promoting cross-racial recognition.