



# 10<sup>th</sup> Critical Multicultural & Diversity Counselling & Psychotherapy Conference

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto  
252 Bloor St W, Toronto, ON M5S 1V6  
June 20 – 23, 2023

## ABSTRACT BOOKLET *As of June 19, 2023*

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# PRESENTER ABSTRACTS

Tuesday, June 20, 2023

## Opening Ceremony

Dr. Verne Ross (Cote First Nation; Assistant Professor at University of Toronto)

## Opening Keynote Presentation

***Critical Social Justice in Psychology: Are we truly decolonizing the discipline?***

Dr. Anusha Kassan

**Chair:** Dr. Lana Stermac

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 3:30 – 5:00 PM

Conversations of feminism, multiculturalism, and social justice have been a critical part of the development of the discipline of counselling psychology for well over 50 years. Yet, clients, communities, students, and psychologists who have been (and continue to be) socio-politically minoritized and racialized face numerous barriers and challenges when engaging with the discipline. Despite a large body of research that demonstrates ways in which psychology can be practiced, taught, researched, and applied in more inclusive ways, traditional approaches prevail, and as such, continue to uphold the status quo. Due to my own diverse upbringing and lived experience along with meaningful mentorship, I have been on a quest for critical social justice in psychology for 20 years. Unfortunately, this journey has been arduous and discouraging, and I believe it has only yielded minimal change. In this keynote address, I will share some historical developments related to feminism, multiculturalism, and social justice in counselling psychology. I will share my own experiences and struggles, advocating for more inclusivity and critical change across multiple areas of the discipline (e.g., training programs, psychology organizations, governing bodies, etc.). I will invite attendees to consider their own positionality and responsibility to leverage bold shifts in order to ensure that psychology is responsive to diverse individuals and communities. In doing so, I will discuss and critique the role of western, colonial systems, inside and outside of psychology.

**Respondents to the Opening Keynote:** Dr. Deone Curling & Naseem Rine-Reesha

Anusha Kassan has been an intellectual force in the field of social justice. Her research has significantly impacted social justice research and practices influencing academics, students, and practitioners. Here we will be having an intimate conversation about her life, work and decolonization by exploring how she creates and passes on the knowledge that fosters her survival, resilience, and resistance.

**Keynote Address**

***Cross-Cultural Psychology: Past, Present, Future***

Dr. Edwin J. Nichols (Founder of Association of Black Psychologists)

**Chair:** Dr. Lana Stermac

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 5:00 – 5:45 PM (Tuesday, June 20, 2023)

The focus of the Keynote address is to acknowledge the great strides made in the field of Cross-Cultural Psychology. We shall examine the Past and Present, for lessons to be learned. The Future is to meet the Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, in which there is forced world migration and economic globalization.

## Wednesday, June 21, 2023

### Keynote Panel

#### **Decolonizing Mental Health Practices: Insights from Indigenous and Black/African Communities**

Dr. Suzanne Stewart, Dr. Njoki N. Wane, Dr. Sophie Yohani

**Chair:** Dr. Becky Chen

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 9:15 – 10:00AM

### Keynote Presentation

#### ***Decolonizing Indigenous Identity: What is it and how is it understood within self-identification, colonial violence, and mental health***

Dr. Suzanne L. Stewart

Indigenous peoples in Canada have specific education and mental health needs due to colonial history and current determinants of health; identity and self-identification have become pressing issues for school boards, universities, and communities. The presenter shares data from three urban Indigenous research projects, with data collected from 2012 to 2022, that highlight the issues and challenges of Indigenous identity and illuminates strengths and solutions, based in Indigenous knowledges, for mental health researchers.

### Keynote Presentation

#### ***Is it possible to decolonize Mental Health practices? An Afrocentric perspective.***

Dr. Njoki Wane

Mental health is a huge challenge for all communities throughout history. However, in the last three years, due to COVID-19, this has been a major issue to resolve or to deal with. COVID-19, unmasked the uneven provision of services to various communities. In this presentation, I will argue that mental health practices have focused on Eurocentric paradigms and not provided any room for discussion in relation to other ways of knowing. I will situate my discussion on how people of African ancestry; from a historical stance, have provided services and received services from members of their community. I will focus on counselling practices within and among people of African ancestry. My arguments will be based on Tedia's (1922) quote: *"For the study of Indigenous Knowledge and decolonization, the consideration of the relationship between society, history and knowledge production leaves one with the need to consistent inquiry, never accepting received knowledge as complete, and continually interrogating the reasons behind this."*



### Keynote Presentation

Dr. Sophie Yohani

Black/African communities are generally reluctant to participate in Eurocentric mental/ health research and practices, particularly when addressing topics that are considered sensitive due to mistrust rooted in colonialism and racism. Recent research on "actions that will improve mental health equity" and "culturally responsive and accessible approaches to health research" with Black/African communities provide valuable insights into our profession's limitations and guidance for re-envisioning mental health practice. The East African proverb, *Nguzo moja haijengi nyumba* "a single pillar does not build a house," will guide my brief reflections on the findings from these studies, and position that a more profound commitment to practices that honour collaboration, connectedness, cultural knowledge, and collective healing is necessary for the project of decolonizing mental health practice

### Keynote Panel

#### Decolonizing Eurocentric Psychology & Resisting Pathology

Dr. Robinder (Rob) Bedi, Dr. Kaori Wada, Dr. Roy Moodley

**Chair:** Dr. Alex L. Pieterse

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 10:00 – 10:45AM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

### Keynote Presentation

#### *Culturally-Adapted Therapy as Colonization?*

Dr. Robinder (Rob) Bedi

This talk will argue that, under certain common circumstances, the well-meaning application of clinical mental health counselling and psychotherapy, even when culturally adapted, promotes continued coloniality and colonization both within Western countries and in non-Western countries. It draws on a frame of counselling and psychotherapy as cultural healing (i.e., the traditional healing practice of the EuroAmerican West) rather than as an acultural and cross-cultural scientific and evidence-based treatment (despite strong efforts by the World Health Organization to export Western psychological treatments in the name of social justice and equity). More specifically, this conceptualization views counselling and psychotherapy as a product of Western culture that is imbued with Western morals, values, norms, and conceptions of the self, among other criteria. From this perspective, counselling and psychotherapy are seen as being developed and initially advanced in Western countries to address concerns common to Western populations in a culturally-consistent manner using culturally-normative explanatory models of mental illness to achieve culturally-congruent positive outcomes. The application of Western therapy theories to non- or lesser Westernized individuals propagate Western epistemologies, ontological assumptions, traditions of understandings, and culturally-conditioned visions of what a person should be like, such as making a distinction between thoughts and feelings, valuing

emotional expression, defining what a healthy relationship is, and outlining culturally-determined criteria for mental health.. Rather than being beneficial or even mildly disruptive, the cultural incompatibility of psychotherapy with some non-Western cultural customs, norms, and moral traditions has led to very harmful, iatrogenic consequences for those who are not highly westernized. Based on Both Frank and Frank's common factors model of healing and Wampold's Contextual Model of Psychotherapy, applying counselling or psychotherapy to non-Westernized individuals will be less effective than providing culturally-congruent traditional healing practices. The client may "agree" to be provided culturally-adapted counselling or psychotherapy but the practitioner must be cautious that they are not taking advantage of a client's conscious or unconscious colonial mentality (e.g., "West is best") and further devaluing a client's non-Western cultural heritage. Progress towards decolonization in counselling psychology will require greater acceptance and promotion of traditional healing practices, often at the expense of the provision of counselling or psychotherapy.

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***Medicalization of grief: A critical global mental health***

Dr. Kaori Wada

Grieving too much and too long is now classified as a mental disorder, with the inclusion of Prolonged Grief Disorder (PGD) into the ICD-11 and the DSM-5-TR. Both the DSM-5 and ICD-11 acknowledge that the diagnosis necessitates grief responses beyond the individual's social, cultural, and religious norms. However, the PDG emerged from research predominantly on Caucasian populations mostly by Euro-American researchers and has been validated within an epistemic culture marked by power imbalances. In this presentation, I will problematize argue that PGD will likely have the colonial effect of homogenizing how people grieve and relate to grieving individuals around the globe.

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***"Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon" (Frantz Fanon). Is there another way out of this catastrophic trauma?***

Dr. Roy Moodley

In the *Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Frantz Fanon states that "decolonization is *always* a violent phenomenon". Fanon has been criticized for being a 'prophet of violence' by some, others argue that this statement is philosophical. Controversial at the time and even now, decolonization is much more complex than just a violent process to colonial trauma. According to Fanon, decolonization cannot be achieved, "as a result of magical practices, nor of a natural shock, nor of a friendly understanding". For Fanon, decolonization as a violent process is 'a cleansing force' which frees the colonized from 'inferiority complex, despair and inaction, and restores self-respect'. Using Fanon's story as a case example, I will discuss the consequences of engaging in the decolonization process. Not of the arm struggle in the war of liberation but of the psychological and personal outcomes that inevitably follows when engaging in the process of decolonization. If decolonization, as Fanon argues, "is *always* a violent phenomenon" could the ensuing anger arising from colonial trauma run the risk of resulting in 'decolonial melancholia' if, instead of being projected back onto the oppressing force through violent, it is turned inwards? Using psychoanalytic theory (Lacan's *Borromean Knot*), I will explore how representations of de/colonization re/turns to the body as the only way to navigate 'decolonial

melancholia'. My contention is that Fanon's end of life experience offers a poignant example of how this violence of de/colonization becomes interiorized as 'decolonial melancholia' - inhabiting his body, his bones, his marrow. I will argue that for Fanon colonial trauma is embodied somatically leading to leukemia and premature death. If decolonization is about restoring the honour, dignity, and integrity and the creation of a new human, as Fanon stated, then violence philosophically or not, appears to be an inevitable outcome. Is there another way out of this catastrophic trauma for those who engage in the decolonial project? What are the implications of thinking decolonisation as a 'non-violent' process? Are 'reconciliatory' non-violent conceptualisation of decolonisation doomed to produce even more (internalised) colonial violence/trauma?

### A note on *seminars*

Seminars are indicated throughout the program, typically following a keynote panel. In each seminar, keynote speakers will break off and host small-group discussions or workshops that focus more on engaging the audience in experiential ways (e.g., putting theoretical ideas into practice).

### Poster Session

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 12:00 – 12:45 PM (during lunch break) — Wednesday, June 21, 2023

### Poster Presentation

***LGBTQ+ Individuals of Middle Eastern and North African origin and Sexual Identity Development: A Mixed-Methods Approach***

Rawan Hedefa

This study explored the unique psychosocial and cultural challenges that Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) LGBTQ+ individuals (N=97) experience and their impacts on their sexual identity development. The study employed mixed methods. The former component of the study focused on measuring different variables pertaining to MENA LGBTQ+ people's familial beliefs, cultural beliefs, and self-beliefs. We conducted exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with principal components analysis and Promax rotation to identify the constructs measured by these different variables. We developed three distinct measures: Self: Sexual Orientation Struggles & Resilience Measure, MENA Culture & LGBTQ+ Measure, and MENA Family & LGBTQ+ Measure. It was hypothesized that the different familial and cultural challenges would directly impact the individuals' sexual identity development. Indeed, significant positive correlations were found between the different factors in the quantitative data. In the qualitative component, the participants reflected on challenges with their sexual minority identity and their resilience in overcoming them through open-ended online questionnaires. This data was analyzed through thematic analysis and Nvivo. The quantitative data, alongside the



qualitative stories of the participants, ultimately highlight the importance of providing culturally adapted and resilience-based resources for MENA individuals facing challenges with sexual identity.

**Poster Presentation**

***Career Human Agency Theory and Career Progression of Women in Healthcare***

Jessica Ilton

The purpose of the current poster is to propose career counselling strategies that can be used for working with women in healthcare. Women make up the majority of global front-line healthcare workers, however they continue to be notably under-represented in leadership positions. Women face multi-layered external barriers in achieving leadership positions in healthcare. Furthermore, women of colour, women with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ women experience compounded marginalization, resulting in even fewer minority women being represented among senior leaders and executive roles. In addition to policies and organizational strategies that focus on closing this gap, there is a need to support women themselves in navigating these barriers. Career theories can be helpful in developing career counselling strategies for women in healthcare leadership. Chen's (2015) Career Human Agency Theory (CHAT) is a new meta-theory that expands upon existing career theories and models. Career human agency is considered the innate human potential and capacity to self-regulate and manage the external world by intentionally working towards an optimal outcome. There are four key dimensions to CHAT including career intentionality, career forethought, career self-reactiveness, and career self-reflectiveness. CHAT aims to empower clients to exercise their agency, help facilitate greater awareness, insight, self-knowledge, and adaptability, and discover points of resilience and strength. It is proposed that by integrating career human agency theory with culturally sensitive career counselling, career counsellors can support women in healthcare to navigate external barriers in career progression.

**Poster Presentation**

***Conceptualizations of Identities in Bisexual, Pansexual, and Plurisexual Communities***

Clara McNamee

Plurisexual people – individuals who are attracted to multiple genders – are at increased risk for mental health concerns. Internalized sexual stigma, that is, the internalization of negative attitudes towards one's sexual orientation, is a key contributor to plurisexual mental health. However, extant scales of this construct are few and lack appropriate content. This study aimed to understand individuals' attitudes towards their plurisexuality, and translate this into questionnaire items. Qualitative interviews were conducted with n = 13 plurisexual people and n = 3 mental health clinicians. Reflexive thematic analysis yielded three themes: (1) Validating vs. Doubting Myself – self-affirmation to combat identity uncertainty, (2) Owning My Truth vs. Avoiding It – accepting plurisexuality as a core part of oneself versus denying it, and (3) Celebrating vs. Shaming Myself – viewing plurisexuality as an overall positive versus negative force in one's life. Implications for conceptualizations of internalized sexual stigma and quantitative scale development are discussed.

**Poster Presentation**

***Exploring Child Language Brokering Using a Social Justice Framework and Arts-Based Engagement Ethnography***

Michelle Zak, Farah Charania

Between January 1, 2016, and May 11, 2021, Canada admitted over 1.3 million immigrants, adding to a total of 8.3 million landed immigrants. Among these newcomers, one in ten was a youth or young adult, many of whom left their home countries in search of a better life, escaping conflict, poverty, or political oppression (Statistics Canada, 2022). However, adjusting to a new society can be challenging, as immigrants often feel the loss of social networks, cultures, and a sense of belonging (Oppedal et al., 2020). Further, the way families participate in child language brokering (CLB) can impact the functioning and growth of everyone in the household, both positively and negatively (Suva et al., 2021; Amer et al., 2021; Katoue & Kassan, 2021). With the government planning to expand immigration to Canada (Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, 2023), it is critical for researchers to explore the experiences that affect the psychosocial well-being of newcomers (Cila & Lalonde, 2015; Hua & Costigan, 2012; Oppedal et al., 2020).

This research focuses on the phenomenon of CLB (Tse, 1995), experienced by newcomer families in Canada. It aims to engage with families who have had to use CLB to adjust to life in Canada, using an arts-based engagement ethnography (ABEE; Goopy & Kassan, 2019; Kassan et al., 2020) methodology grounded in principles of social justice (Stewart, 2014; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Carspecken, 1992). Participants will use cultural probes to document their experiences, followed by individual, and collective interviews (Mukred et al., 2020). The ABEE method enables them to express participants through various art-based media, rather than relying solely on verbal means of expression. This research is guided by two research questions: (a) How do members of a newcomer family in Canada experience CLB, individually and collectively? and (b) How do these experiences influence their positive integration into Canadian society?

This poster will provide a conceptual overview of this research project, describing the central phenomenon of study, guiding social justice framework, and ABEE methodology. Implications for research with other underrepresented groups will also be highlighted.

**Poster Presentation**

***Change in Black Youth's Conceptualization of the Mental Health Effects of Cannabis on Psychosis After Playing Interactive Video Game (SERIES)***

Kimberly D'Silva

**Background:** High THC (Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol) levels in cannabis affect adolescent brain development and increase the risk of psychosis. Adolescents might benefit from research that helps them understand this cannabis-psychosis link. However, most are unaware, particularly Black racialized youth. This study explores changes in the conceptualization of the mental health effects of cannabis use on psychosis before and after playing the Back to Reality SERIES—interactive video game about cannabis use and psychosis. **Methods:** Accounts of lived experiences related to cannabis use and psychosis were gathered from qualitative interviews. Participants who met the criteria for a psychotic and cannabis use disorder played a control game and SERIES; order of gameplay was randomized. Post game 1, participants completed a knowledge quiz about cannabis and psychosis.

Post game 2, participants were interviewed about their gameplay experience. **Results:** 5 participants from varied racial backgrounds were recruited. The difference in quiz scores was not statistically significant. Thematic analysis revealed that SERIES helped them reflect on personal experiences and gain a deeper understanding of psychosis symptoms. **Conclusion:** SERIES is a valuable psychoeducational tool. **Impact:** SERIES can inform youth (particularly from racialized backgrounds) about care pathways and encourage help-seeking.

### Keynote Panel

#### Honouring the Life and Legacy of Clemmont Vontress

Dr. Andre Marseille, Dr. Bryan R. Ellis, Carla Grey

**Chair:** Dr. Roy Moodley

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 12:45 – 2:00PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

### Keynote Presentation

Dr. Andre Marseille

This segment of the presentation focuses on Dr. Clemmont Vontress and evolution as an Existentialist. Dr. Marseille will talk about his path to existentialism through his 18 year relationship with Dr. Vontress. Also, he will talk about how his relationship with Dr. Vontress has impacted his professional interests, career and personal life choices. Finally, Dr. Marseille will talk about a book chapter that he wrote based on Vontress work in multicultural theory.

### Keynote Presentation

#### *Living His Existential Philosophy: Dr. Clemmont E. Vontress, the Man and His Wisdom*

Dr. Bryan Ellis

Born on a rural farm to sharecropper parents during the Great Depression, throughout his life he had to navigate the American color line, living both inside and outside the Veil. In the face of the limitations of the United States racial politics, his work highlighted the experiences of marginalized individuals and communities as he grappled with the major issues and movements of his day. Later in his life, he would be recognized by the University of Toronto, Howard University's National Black Counseling Psychologists, and the American Counseling Association, respectively, for his contributions to Cross-Cultural counseling, Existential therapy, and West African traditional healing. This presentation on Dr. Clemmont E. Vontress will focus on the man, the ways in which he applied Existentialism to his own life, as he had to navigate love and loss, life and death, fear and courage, and science and spirituality. For Vontress, Existentialism was basic, an everyday philosophy that



could be used to navigate life's challenges. In this presentation, I will share personal stories of him, especially during his latter years, and wisdom he shared to help me navigate my own life.

### **Keynote Presentation**

Carla Grey

As early as 1962, African American psychologist and researcher Dr. Clemmont E. Vontress began publishing papers on the impact of racism and social structures on the psychotherapeutic relationship between the therapist and racialized clients in general and black males in particular (Vontress, 1962). Sixty years later, for the very first time, the American Psychiatric Association published a statement stating mental health practitioners need to direct attention to culture, racism and discrimination in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual – 5 – TR (DSM 5 TR).

Dr. Vontress' enduring legacy to psychotherapy and counselling is creating a discussion about the effect of racism and socioeconomic inequalities on clients in their psychotherapeutic interactions with therapists.

This presentation will address the following questions: 1) How do Black male psychotherapists work with Black men? 2) What are the issues, concerns and experiences that Black men bring to psychotherapy? 3) What kind of therapeutic interventions do Black male therapists use in psychotherapy with Black men? 4) What are the outcomes to psychotherapy with Black men? The research, practice, and theory of Dr. Vontress will be used to analyze the outcomes to these questions.

### **Keynote Panel**

#### **Bereavement and Suicide: Multicultural Research and Interventions**

Dr. Olga Oulanova, Kai Forcey-Rodriguez, Shannen Rowe

**Chair:** Dr. J. Roy Gillis

**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 12:45 – 2:00PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***Suicide Bereavement and Postvention Support in Canada and Beyond***

Dr. Olga Oulanova

The trauma of losing a loved one to suicide coupled with the challenging sociocultural context of suicide bereavement result in some survivors reporting significant difficulties following their loss. Consequently, different types of suicide postvention efforts have emerged to support survivors. One form of suicide postvention is peer support wherein individuals bereaved through suicide become

peer counsellors and assist others who have suffered a similar loss. These peer counsellors play an important part in suicide postvention. This talk will provide a brief overview of the literature on postvention efforts in different parts of the world and, drawing on qualitative research with Canadian suicide survivors, elaborate on the role of peer counselling in suicide bereavement in the Canadian context. The path from suicide survivor to peer counsellor as well as the rewards and challenges associated with supporting others in the aftermath of suicide loss will be discussed.

#### **Keynote Presentation**

##### ***Bereavement & Suicide – An Autistic Person’s Story (Personal Experience & Research)***

Kai Forcey-Rodriguez

Grief and loss of all forms are part of all of our lives just as much happiness, triumphs, and my profound lust for cheese. This presentation will discuss my own experience as an autistic person and research about bereavement and suicide utilizing four significant tragic events in my life (losing my uncle on 9/11/01, losing a close friend to suicide at 17, and losing two childhood friends in the past 2 years) that I vividly recall due to a savant area in memory. We will also discuss the support I received and didn’t receive and the importance of collective care and individualized care for autistic people. Experiences of grief and trauma related to grief gone unsupported in conjunction to masking increases our risk for self-harm and suicide. Given that autistic people have the high likelihood of experiencing trauma, neglect, or abuse at any point or consistently throughout their lifetime it is extremely important to use trauma informed CBT and exploring modes of collective care through promoting the philosophy from Femme Theory--Softness--when working with families to ensure that emotional needs are met and that family members are supported.

#### **Keynote Presentation**

##### ***Approaching a Cultural Understanding of Suicide and Complex Death Among Older Indigenous Adults: Perspectives of Indigenous Elders***

Shannen Rowe

Indigenous communities across Canada are disproportionately affected by suicide. Despite substantial increases in suicidology research within a Canadian context, the prevalence of Indigenous deaths by suicide continues to be much higher than the general public. Further, cultural factors associated with suicide rates are often overlooked. In this study, Indigenous Elders in Canada were interviewed to explore their understanding of death and dying, particularly in relation to suicide. Through Reflexive Thematic Analysis, three key themes were identified: Indigenous Conceptions of Death and Dying, Christian Influences on Views of Suicide, and Indirect Suicide. The theme of Indigenous Conceptualizations of Death and Dying included the subthemes of Spirituality and Life After Death, highlighting the importance of spiritual beliefs in Indigenous culture and knowledge systems. The impact of Christian influences on views of suicide was also explored, with participants discussing the complex nature of the relationship between Christianity and Indigenous peoples.



Finally, the theme of Indirect Suicide was identified, referring to deaths resulting from behaviours that do not necessarily fit within the conventional definition of suicide. Overall, this study highlights the importance of honouring Indigenous cultural knowledge in research related to suicide prevention in Indigenous communities and indicates a need to rethink conventional definitions of suicide to include a deeper understanding of complex death and spiritual dimensions.

#### **Keynote Panel**

#### **Resilience Among People of African Descent Across the Diaspora: Intervention and Considerations for Multicultural Counselling Professionals**

Dr. Sandra Dixon, Stephen Okoli, Natacha Pennycooke, Dr. Edna Aryee

**Chair:** Dr. Deone Curling

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 2:00 – 3:15 PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

In recent years, there have been growing calls for a paradigm shift in multicultural counselling education and practice to consider alternative ways of knowing and being across various social-cultural contexts. This shift will centre the lived experiences and ways of being of diverse ethno-racial groups like people of African descent; they are not monolith but comprise of persons from a multiplicity of backgrounds and intersected social identities in multicultural curricula and practice. These individuals consider themselves to be part of a global community called the African diaspora. People of the African diaspora are dispersed throughout the world due to such factors as colonization resulting from slavery, voluntary migration, and economic mobility. Many of these individuals have been impacted by racial trauma and other forms of social injustice in Western societies like Canada, the Caribbean, and the United Kingdom.

Our panel discussion draws from research projects with people of African descent across varying historical, geopolitical and socio-cultural milieus. Together, our work provides a unique lens to better understand what contributes to coping and resilience among this population amidst post-migration factors and mental health outcomes. Considerations for cultural adaptation of psychological interventions are explored for multicultural counselling professionals working with this population.

#### **Keynote Panel**

#### **DisAppearances of DisAbled Selfhood**

Dr. Tanya Titchkosky, Elaine Cagulada, Madeleine DeWelles, Dr. Efrat Gold

**Chair:** Dr. Sophie Yohani

**Location:** 12-199

**Time:** 2:00 – 3:15 PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

Discussing chapters from the new *DisAppearing: Encounters in Disability Studies*, the four presenters will show how the self is composed in tension with cultural understandings of disabled subjectivity. Selfhood is explored as constituted in relation to narratives of anorexia treatments (DeWelles), stories of police interactions with d/Deaf racialized people (Cagulada), hegemonic processes of identifying with medicalized visions of despair (Gold), and bureaucratized notions of inclusion informing university practice today (Titchkosky). We draw out the meaning of disability in relation to the self as well as the meaning of the self in relation to disability. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962: 186) suggests, our gestures, words, bodies, senses, and selves are “...intermingled with the structure of [...] worlds,” and each presenter engages with these worlds as they relate to disability-identity. The overall aim of this session is to encounter what a disability studies perspective offers questions of selfhood.

#### **Keynote Panel**

##### **Trauma-Informed Care in Practice**

Dr. Keisha Greene, Dr. Ellen Gutowski, Dr. Linda Iwenofu

**Chair:** Dr. Olga Oulanova

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 3:30 – 5:00 PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

#### **Keynote Presentation**

##### ***Managing the impacts of racial trauma through fostering resilience/resistance***

Dr. Keisha Greene

This panel discussion is aimed at helping clinicians learn skills around how to work with clients who present with racial trauma (also referred to as intergenerational trauma and racial stress) in the therapy space. Through discussion, session participants will develop a deeper understanding of the unique and nuanced experiences of Black Canadians and the ways in which Canadian society perpetuates a narrative of being a post-racial society, while also being built on a foundation of racist ideals. Being able to discuss and assess for racial trauma can help clients to gain deeper insight into the impacts of their experiences. In this panel discussion, clinicians will also learn the ways in which resilience/resistance can be fostered within the therapy setting to help clients to navigate and process their experiences to reach a space of post-traumatic growth.

**Keynote Presentation*****An Integrated Approach to Care for Women affected by Intimate Partner Violence and Serious Mental Illness***

Dr. Ellen Gutowski

Women experience high rates of serious mental illness and intimate partner violence. Worldwide, 35% of women report lifetime exposure to intimate partner violence (Oram et al., 2017) and some estimate 97% of people living with serious mental illness have prior violence exposure (Goodman et al., 2001). There is a clear link between these two concerns. Women living with a psychiatric disability are at elevated risk of victimization by a partner (Van Denise et al., 2019) and being victimized is associated with developing mental health conditions (Golding et al., 1999). Yet, women living with serious mental illness have historically had their traumatic histories discounted in psychological research and practice (American Psychological Association, 2022). Thus, increased attention to the connection between intimate partner violence and serious mental illness in behavioral healthcare interventions for women is needed. This presentation will offer an integrated model for addressing these two concerns in practice with women.

**Keynote Presentation*****Anti-racist counseling and psychotherapy with Black children and families: Lessons from clinical practice***

Dr. Linda Iwenofu

Black children and youth face multiple barriers to adequate mental health care. Systemic and practitioner-related barriers such as anti-Black racism, poor practitioner cultural competence and limited representation of Black mental health practitioners are important contributing factors. Dr. Iwenofu will discuss lessons learned about anti-racist practice based on her clinical experiences as a Black psychologist providing counseling and psychotherapy to culturally diverse Black children, youth, and families in Canada. Drawing from critical race and socioecological systems theories, Dr. Iwenofu reflects on how practitioner and client intersectional identities, in addition to perceptions and experiences of anti-Black racism, influence counseling and psychotherapy process and outcome. Opportunities for increasing cultural competence in professional practice with children, youth and families will be explored.

**Keynote Panel****Mental Health at Intersections of Culture, Gender, and Sexuality**

Dr. Bhisham Kinha, Jenny Hui, Dr. J. Roy Gillis

**Chair:** Dr. Rob Bedi



**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 3:30 – 5:00 PM (Wednesday, June 21, 2023)

**Keynote Presentation**

***Queer South Asian-Canadians in Counselling and Psychotherapy: The Influence of Multiple Identities on the Therapy Experience***

Dr. Bhasham Kinha

The intersecting generational, ethnoracial and sexual identities of second-generation South Asian sexual minorities produce unique and compounding stressors to their mental health and well-being. Despite having to contend with a constellation of stressors, these individuals appear to underutilize mental health supports. For the members of this community who do seek mental health services, little is known about their mental health needs and treatment-seeking experiences by way of existing research and practice literature. Aiming to address the current paucity of knowledge in this area, my work explored the counselling and psychotherapy experiences of thirteen queer South Asian-Canadian (cisgender) men and women using qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. I will elaborate on research findings suggesting that the multiple identities of these clients were central to their counselling and psychotherapy experiences, namely as they informed presenting issues, shaped counselling dynamics, and eventually guided many of them towards therapeutic relationships both in and out of the therapy space.

**Keynote Presentation**

***“We Rise Together”:* Exploring the Lived Experiences of East Asian Bisexual Youth in Canada**

Jenny Hui

Over the last several decades, research by and about 2SLGBTQIA+ people and racialized people has flourished. Yet East Asian bisexual youth exist at an intersection of invisibility in literature. My study qualitatively explored the lived experiences of East Asian bisexual youth in Canada, through interviews with 10 youth (aged 23–29). Four core themes emerged from the data to capture how these youths developed their identities, encountered minority stressors, coped with stressors, and celebrated uniquely positive aspects of their lived experiences. The findings of this research underscore the vibrancy and complexity of East Asian bisexual youths’ lives. My presentation will also present clinical implications and future directions for this research.

**Keynote Presentation**

***Exploring the Multi-Dimensionality of the Sexual Orientation-Gender Identity Matrix: Implications for Clinical Practice and Research***

Dr. J. Roy Gillis



This presentation will review historical representations and understandings of sexual orientation and gender identity to critique their simple, and often highly stigmatized, understandings of sexuality and gender. The historical repression of same-sex attractions and enforcement of gender norms will be explored from its origins in the conservative interpretation Judeo-Christian biblical texts and religious prohibitions. The adoption of these religious beliefs and the belief in the “superiority of the European religious beliefs and cultural practices” reached its zenith in the acts of colonialism and religious conversions that led to the eradication of diverse and traditional gender identities existing among some Indigenous nations of Turtle Island. The relatively recent notion of communities that are based on sexual orientation and gender identity self-labelling will be highlighted, and their sense of community based on stigmatized and oppressed identities will be explored. The impact of queer theory will also be acknowledged for its theorizing about the fluidity of sexual orientation and gender identity labels, and for demanding that we consider changes that occur in these identities over time, different expressions of identities in different places and situations, often as a consequence of safety, contexts, the desire not to self-label, and the expansion and creation of new sexual orientation and gender identity self-labels. Additionally, culturally-bound and Indigenous understandings of sexual orientation and gender identity will be highlighted, as well as intersectional analyses, to facilitate a more complex and multi-dimensional understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity diversities.

**Thursday, June 22, 2023**

**Parallel Paper Session**

Stephanie Day, Amira Dirie, Aliakbar Abbasi Garmroudi

**Chair:** Dr. Deone Curling

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

**Research Paper Presentation**

***Collectively Dreaming Toward Indigenized School, Clinical, and Counselling Psychology Education and Training***

Stephanie Day

Indigenous Peoples comprise a significant portion of the population whose mental health needs must be appropriately addressed, and schools are important contexts for this service provision. The author presents findings from a culturally-grounded, strengths-based, qualitative, Two-Eyed Seeing study that engaged with current and previous Indigenous graduate students from Canadian mainstream and Indigenized counseling psychology programs to explore their graduate school experience and dream for the future of psychological education and training. Community-led analysis with aspects of qualitative thematic analysis guided a collective results narrative. Eight findings emerged including:



(1) the importance of relationality in education and training; (2) the significance of experiential learning (i.e., land and art-based, ceremonial, interpersonal relations); (3) diversity in knowledge sharers and inclusion of elders in psychology education; (4) critical decision-making about cohort member inclusion (i.e., all indigenous cohorts vs. mixed); (5) mandatory Indigenous pre-requisite courses; (6) cultural humility; (7) teachings about how to be a good person rather than how to be a good counselor; and (8) interviews for program entry. These findings are discussed in the context of future practice, education, and training of school, educational, counselling, and clinical psychologists. Considerations and areas of future research are discussed.

#### **Research Paper Presentation**

##### ***An Invitation to the Infinity Room: Exploring Intersubjectivity, Identity, and the Right to Humanity within the Therapy Space***

Amira-Deka Dirie

The paper, "An Invitation to the Infinity Room," explores the implications of the "Group of 7" identities and unpacks the ways concepts of self are articulated, emerged and fleshed out. Through juxtaposing embodied ways of being against the metaphysical and embodied elements of corporeal existence - how has psychotherapy understood healing the self? In answering that, this paper challenges how psychotherapeutic frameworks can push beyond Western epistemologies. By examining the multiplicities of a client's self, psychotherapists can recognize how clients exist within the tensions and harmonies of their embodied experiences and guide them toward holistic healing. The paper utilizes several intersections of the Big 7 identities and through a lens of critical race theory, analyzes multiple contemporary and colonial ideas of personhood. In what ways can we challenge how we understand clients and the scope of ourselves beyond a static listing of identity markers? Unfurling through histories of anti-Black and gendered violence, as well as contemporary conceptions of secular wellbeing in the face of marginalized faith identity, this paper aims to immerse readers in the crux of tensions. Moreover, this paper acknowledges the need for a radical and critical multicultural framework of psychotherapy that reimagines how healers understand themselves and their clients - and the infinite possibilities within intersubjectivity. How can psychotherapists address the nonlinear timeline of traumatic renditions of Othering for people who exist within intersectional identities, and have been rendered 'Other' by the same discipline they are seeking refuge in? By recognizing the complexity of identity and embracing the Other, the report works to settle in the tension - to carve out a way that psychotherapists can provide effective healing to their clients and work towards a more nuanced futurity of well-being and community.

#### **Research Paper Presentation**

##### ***Liberation Psychology and Social Change: An Introduction to Ignacio Martín-Baró***

Aliakbar Abbasi Garmroudi

In this research paper, the Liberation Psychology's foundational theorists, such as Martin-Baro, Comas- Diaz, and Mark Burton are discussed. It also focuses on the Latin American movement against decolonization as the most influential factor in creating Liberation Psychology and continues to analyze Martin-Baro's Liberation Psychology as an objective analysis of oppressive social conditions that oppress psychology. This research paper also describes how Liberation Psychology challenges dominant psychology through offering a collective perspective. It also suggests critical thinking to identify real social problems which then promote social justice action that aims to



diminish oppression and support fairness, equality, and justice. Liberation Psychology draws attention to collective healing instead of giving too much attention to the individual. Critical thinking in Liberation Psychology is the key component to describe the process of learning and increasing awareness of the sociopolitical context and taking action to challenge oppression. As per Liberation Psychology, critical thinking is rooted in creative solutions, and promoting liberation from oppression.

### **Parallel Paper Session**

Lisa Chinchamie, Mercedes Umana Garcia, Gia (Gaayathri) Geetha

**Chair:** Dr. David Paul Smith

**Location:** Room 9-105

**Time:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Racial Trauma, Spirit Injury and the Deskilling of Foreign Educated Racialized Immigrant Women (FERIW) in Canada***

Lisa Chinchamie

This paper frames the Labour Market Integration (LMI) space as a site of violence where race plays a central role in the eviction of Foreign Educated Racialized Immigrant Women (FERIW) from the category “qualified” in Canada. Drawing on critical race, postcolonial, and feminist anti-colonial theoretical frameworks, I examine how delegitimization through deskilling carries real material and socio-economic consequences. The intersectionality of race, ethnicity, gender, class and immigrant status result in Foreign Educated Racialized Immigrant Women (FERIW) becoming “ghettoized” into low paying, precarious, low-end jobs, and for many of these women, low income and poverty. However, this violence of eviction from the category “qualified” within the LMI space also results in racial trauma and spirit injury. A review of the literature shows that naming the deskilling of Foreign Educated Racialized Immigrant Women (FERIW) as violence and theorizing it as racial injury and spirit injury in the labour market integration space remains an under-researched area of scholarship. Applying this theoretical lens to the LMI space has important implications for public policy, as well as anticolonial counselling and healing strategies to recognize and address the trauma of deskilling and devaluation, inflicted on racialized immigrant bodies.

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Beyond Resilience: An intersectional analysis of posttraumatic growth in the lives of immigrant, refugee and non-status people living with HIV/AIDS***

Mercedes Umana Garcia



The current mixed methods doctoral research study examines the conceptualizations and experiences of trauma and growth of fourteen participants who identified as immigrants and/or refugees to Canada and living with HIV/AIDS. Quantitative measures in the presentation provide a glimpse into the impact of traumatic experiences along with coping, and growth in the lives of the participants in the study. Additionally, the presentation will discuss the following themes identified from the transcripts of the 2 1/2 to 3-hour qualitative interviews completed by the participants: (1) the importance of intersectionality and multiple subject positions, (2) strategic distancing (3) re-scripting past and present experiences, (4) the intersectional components of HIV-related stigma they experienced, and (5) lack of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources to deal with the complexities of living with HIV/AIDS and complex traumatic experiences. Recommendations stemming from this research will discuss factors that promote or hinder the processes of growth that can occur while living with HIV/AIDS and being exposed to traumatic experiences. The influence of transgenerational and transnational dimensions, histories of migration and settlement, HIV-related stigma, and the social determinants of mental health on the experiences of growth and resiliency of these individuals will be highlighted and contextualized.

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Second-Generation South Asian Immigrants: Investigating the Role of Acculturative Stress and Attachment***

Gia (Gaayathri) Geetha

In effort to better understand the unique needs for South Asian (SA) clients in a psychotherapeutic space, this research explores the different aspects of the SA identity in Canada, and the links between some of the collective experiences within this identity. The intention of exploring these connections is to better understand the impact of these dynamics, to better address them in a therapeutic space with SA clients. As migration and displacement were common experiences amongst this group, acculturative stress was identified as one factor that impacts the well-being of immigrants and their children. This research focused on one outcome variable as a measure of well-being in adulthood for second-generation SA immigrants (SGSAI): Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (RRS). Lastly, to better understanding how the parent-child dynamic is impacted by the demands migration, attachment was explored as a mediator between parental acculturative stress (predictor) and RRS (outcome) in their adult children. This study used the measure of RRS to understand one aspect of well-being in adulthood for the SGSAI population.

SGSAI to participate in an online survey. Participants who successfully finished the survey, completed The Acculturative Stress Index, Attachment Style Questionnaire, and The Dyadic Adjustment Scale. Only participants who had identified as being in a romantic relationship were included in the analysis (n= 89). The path model was used to assess for links between these factors, it was run in four steps.

Results confirmed that acculturative stress was significantly associated with attachment, and that acculturative stress was associated with RRS. Results did not find that attachment mediated any of the relationships in the path model. Results suggest that acculturative stress has an impact on the quality of RRS in SGSAI.

Understanding the impact of these common dynamics can help clinicians map of the relevant pieces that impact the well-being of their SA identifying clients. By being informed of the long-term impact of parental experiences of migration trauma on life outcomes of their adult children, clinicians may be able to better validate, support, and hold space for their SA clients.

**Parallel Paper Session**

Esther Fu, Alvi Dandal, James Yuan

**Chair:** Dr. J. Roy Gillis

**Location:** Room 9-297

**Time:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

**Research Paper Presentation*****Relaxation of Birth Control Policy and Its Impact on Postpartum Well-being in China***

Esther Fu

Postpartum depression (PPD) is a significant public health concern, affecting women worldwide and leading to detrimental consequences on maternal and child health. This research proposal aims to explore the relationship between China's birth control policy and the prevalence of PPD, particularly examining the impact of policy relaxation on postpartum well-being. PPD prevalence rates differ across countries, with 11.6% reported in China. However, some studies suggest higher rates among mothers as the only child (56.7%).

China's one-child policy, implemented in 1979, aimed to slow population growth and improve living standards. Despite its success in curbing population growth, negative consequences emerged, including an aging population, imbalanced sex ratios, and potential mental health issues among singletons. In response to these challenges, China progressively relaxed the policy, permitting two-child and eventually three-child families in 2016 and 2021, respectively.

This study will investigate the association between the relaxation of the birth control policy and PPD prevalence in China, providing valuable insights into the impact of reproductive policies on maternal mental health. Although China's one-child policy and abortion restrictions in other countries appear contrasting, both involve limiting women's control over their bodies. By examining the link between birth control policy and PPD, this research will contribute to a broader understanding of reproductive policies and their effects on maternal well-being across different cultural contexts.

**Research Paper Presentation*****A Narrative Investigation of Asexual Identity Development and Well-Being***

Alvi Dandal

Over the past two decades, research on human asexuality has flourished. This research has focused on developing an accurate definition of asexuality, establishing the prevalence of asexual people, and describing the diverse characteristics and experiences within the asexual community. We contribute to this growing literature by investigating asexual identity development through a narrative identity framework. This framework proposes that one's identity takes the form of a life story that is composed of several important self-defining memories (SDMs). A robust body of research has documented positive associations between well-being and SDM characteristics. Informed by this literature, the current study asks two questions: (1) what is the thematic content of asexual people's SDMs, and (2) how are narrative



characteristics of SDMs (i.e., coherence, affective tone, and meaning-making) related to well-being? Participants included 379 self-identified asexual people ranging from 18 to 72 years of age ( $M = 25$ ,  $SD = 8$ ). Each participant provided a written narrative of an SDM that they considered important to their asexual identity. SDM narratives were inductively coded for thematic content and deductively coded for narrative coherence, affective tone, and meaning-making using established coding protocols. Participants also completed several well-being measures (e.g., life satisfaction, positive affect). In terms of results, first, we found that asexual people's SDMs tended to focus on four main themes: (1) past sexual and romantic relations; (2) learning about asexuality for the first time; (3) experiences of discrimination on the basis of one's asexual identity; and (4) coming out as asexual. Second, consistent with the broader literature, we found that well-being was highest among those participants whose SDM narratives were coherent, positive in affective tone, and contained deep self-reflective meaning. This study is the first to examine the content of asexual people's SDMs, contributing to increased visibility, awareness, and understanding of asexual identity development. The findings of this study are not only significant in their contribution to a growing knowledge base about asexuality but also could be practically helpful to clinicians and service providers working with asexual people.

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Shades among Shades: A Critical Poetics of Effeminacy***

James Yuan

Today, a dominant motif in queer artistic expression in the West is the triumphant feminine: she who is liberated, fierce, and tramples the oppressive masculine underfoot. It is especially salient in celebrations of effeminacy - the transgressive, non-conforming identification of men with feminine icons - in which the triumphant feminine champions a second, allied cause, that of queer liberation.

But, as an emblem of an ascendant form of relationality, what does the fierce woman or goddess mean?

Drawing from psychoanalytic, phenomenological, and Platonic theoretical frameworks, I identify the triumphant feminine as a recognizable symbol of an erotic relationality, where erotic subject holds power over erotic object, both literally and symbolically. The erotic subject, like the triumphant feminine, claims the absolute right to self-determination and to the destruction of would-be oppressors. The adoption of the erotic by queer artists may thus serve the salutary purpose of pursuing freedom from historical oppression.

I critique, however, the easy acceptance of this thesis by Western queer artists. Philosophers and social critics have argued repeatedly that an erotic mode of relation, by effacing its object, also annuls the capacity of subjects to discover otherness in the world, and thus to engage in any real outer perception or transformation. I argue that, in the case of the eroticism of Western queer identity, the result is to flatten, assimilate, or discount forms of otherness that are not indigenous to its own discourse. That is, it legitimizes one form of identity and one form of resistance which, however benevolently, it seeks to propagate over those of other cultures.

Another way of relating can be imagined; some of the thinkers I draw from call it love. The crux of love, as opposed to eroticism, is to discover the other, which means to surrender to the dissolution of a rigid identity and of the absolute right of self-determination. Thus, rather than project itself, it is transformed. I argue that a loving attitude, so defined, would unblind Western queer expression to the colonialism it often embeds, and I discuss the social and political intricacies of adopting this way of relating.

### **Interactive Experiential Workshop**

#### **Let's Get Curious Together: Fostering Autistic Mental Health and Well-Being**



Kai Forcey-Rodriguez

**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 9:00 – 10:00 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) and suicide are not new concepts. However, prevention and intervention strategies are evolving. Suicide is a leading cause of death in adolescents and young adults and is disturbingly high in the autistic community. While evidence about causes and risk factors for NSSI, self-harm and suicidal behavior in autistic people exist, there are significant gaps in research about preventative methods and care. With high chances of developing mental health disorders, autistic people have higher rates of experiencing self-injury of various types throughout their lives and increased cases of suicide than neurotypical people. Therefore this presentation explores what influences NSSI/Self-Harm and suicidality and other important mental health concerns in the context of autism spectrum disorders (ASD), starting with how the etymology of the term "autism" influences stigma cross-culturally, misconceptions about Autism, environmental impact including ableism and otherness, autism masking, the impact of person first and identity-first language, and ending with effective mental health support approaches. The implicit focus on causation and behavior identification in research needs to be addressed instead of comprehensive preventative strategy creation because, without slowing down, practitioners may miss an important detail that could have been the "answer" or the whole person.

### **Keynote Experiential Workshop**

#### **Cultural Competence in Counselling a Multi-Ethnic, Pluralistic, and Linguistically Diverse Population**

Dr. Edwin J. Nichols

**Chair:** Dr. Anusha Kassin

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 10:15 – 11:30 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

The role of the Cross-cultural psychologist is to demonstrate Cultural Competence in the treatment of clients that are multi-ethnic, pluralistic, and linguistically diverse. This requires the ability to extract from others, accept and utilize the uniqueness of their Weltanschauung, and problem-solving skills. The ramifications of global warming will be forced world migration: How does the immigrant cope with displacement, depression, and resettlement anxiety? *Local* populations face job relocation and global competition for contracts. They fear technological shifts which require advanced math skills, which they do not have. How do *Locals* cope with economic shifts to service jobs and the loss of their former socioeconomic middle-class status?





How do the *Locals* cope with economic and status change? Do they displace their hostility on the Other or household members? Do they seek relief in acts of substance abuse, or become depressed and suicidal? These are some of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century issues that face the Cross-Cultural psychologist.

### Poster Session

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 12:30 – 1:00 PM (during lunch break) – Thursday, June 22, 2023

### Poster Presentation

#### ***Enhancing culturally-sensitive and faith-informed mental health and social work practice for Muslims in Ontario: A Community-Based Partnership Study***

Saira Khan, Tamana Sultani, Shazzaneiy Mohamed Nalir

The Muslim population in Canada has doubled in the last two decades, becoming the second-largest faith community, with almost 1.8 million individuals identifying as Muslim nationally (Stats Canada, 2021). Despite this, mental health and social service programs tailored for Muslims remain minimal (Hamdani, 2015). The intersectional identities of race, culture, gender, sexuality, ability, and experiences of racism and Islamophobia create unique challenges for the Muslim community. The lack of precise and in-depth research on the mental health and social service needs and experiences of Canadian Muslims indicates a substantial knowledge gap (Weng, 2017; Shier and Graham, 2013; Saleem and Martin, 2018; Graham et al., 2009).

In 2021, researchers from the University of Toronto aimed to address this knowledge gap through community-based participatory action research (CBPAR) bridging researchers from 3 universities, and community partners from 7 mosques and 9 social service organisations (Strand et al., 2003). Focus groups were conducted with Muslims living across different cities in Ontario. This research was informed by intersectionality theory and a human rights framework. Through a CBPAR approach, four research questions were developed: 1) What are the experiences of Muslims accessing social services including mental health care? 2) What are the existing challenges/barriers to accessing these services? 3) What are the gaps in service provision amongst diverse Muslim communities in Ontario? 4) How can we improve mental health and social work practice/service provision for Muslims?

The poster will entail current findings from the focus groups conducted between May-December 2022 and will (1) outline the significance of the CPBAR approach in integrating critical conversations about decoloniality, racism, justice, and inequities pertaining to Muslims; (2) present qualitative findings on the current mental health and social service needs of the Muslim population; (3) highlight challenges faced by mental health practitioners in integrating Islamic faith-based approaches in service provision and (4) discuss recommendations and innovative approaches to integrate a culturally-inclusive, anti-racist, faith-informed lens for mental health and social work practice and research with the Muslim population.

### Poster Presentation

#### ***Autism, Stress, and Social Anxiety: Stakeholder Perspectives and Recommendations***



Jan Wozniak

Autism is a pervasive and heterogeneous neurodevelopmental condition characterized by atypical social communication, sensory processing, special interests, and repetitive behaviour patterns. Autistic individuals have high rates of psychiatric comorbidity, with social anxiety disorder being one of the most common. To better understand the co-occurrence of autism and social anxiety, this qualitative study is the first to investigate post-event processing and safety behaviours in adulthood. Notably, these constructs assess the cognitive, behavioural, and physical dimensions of social anxiety, which are variables that remain sparse and often misunderstood in the autism research literature. Postevent processing characterizes the tendency to engage in negative self-appraisals after social interactions, while safety behaviours represent overt and covert attempts to reduce anxiety or avert threatening social situations. Despite offering momentary relief, these responses often reinforce social anxiety over time. The authors used a community-based participatory framework to promote inclusivity, representation, and neurodiversity-affirming practices within adult neurodevelopmental research. Historically, autism research has suffered from limited attention to stakeholder experiences, preferences, and involvement. By reprioritizing first-hand accounts through a co-production model, the principal investigator, an autistic researcher and self-advocate, and two anxiety research co-authors, bridged pre-existing gaps between critical disabilities studies and clinical psychology subspecialties. Autism stakeholders were consulted during the study design and actively participated in providing rich experiential insight. This study recruited 16 Canadian autistic adults (ages 18-65). Participants completed a virtual semistructured interview and a series of self-report questionnaires to evaluate their experiences of social situations and levels of social anxiety. A reflexive thematic analysis was then used to summarize and model social patterns, behavioural responses, and confluent lived experiences. The results indicated that participants experience high stress, burnout, stigmatization, and debilitating social anxiety in daily life. When discussing recommendations for researchers, practitioners, and the general public, participants indicated an ongoing need for greater neurodiversity awareness, resource accessibility, social and sensory accommodations, autism-informed health services, and participatory research protocols. Future research should further clarify overlapping and ambiguous presentations of social anxiety among autistic adults, thus helping facilitate more accurate diagnoses and effective interventions and support services.

### **Poster Presentation**

#### ***Career Self-Determination Theory and the Canadian Immigrant Experience***

Emily Mastragostino

Career development for immigrant professionals carries personal, economic, and institutional challenges that complicate settlement and career development, including difficulties in financial security, discrimination and prejudice, mental health, and acculturation. Navigating these new waters can be difficult when considering the comprehensive life changes of settlement. Insufficient support is provided to this group of newcomers in Canada. Despite these barriers, immigrant career development narratives are rife with tails of strength and resilience.

Career self-determination theory (CSDT) is an emerging meta theory that captures this spirit of resilience, suggesting ways to enhance the human capacity for fulfillment and motivation in vocational satisfaction. CSDT proposes that career motivation, favourable career outcomes, and personal satisfaction are optimized through the fulfillment of three essential needs: career autonomy, career competence, and career relatedness. Utilizing CSDT, the present study provides a comprehensive framework for supporting immigrant professionals that is built through individual narratives and generous contributions of immigrants.

This exploration is grounded in interviews with professional immigrants. Interviews explore perspectives on personal identity, competence, education, and career, as well as interpersonal interactions, relationships, and support. The qualitative approach cultivates theory that empowers the community, both as a platform for disenfranchised individuals to define the theories that serve them and in utilizing constructivist grounded methodology to develop theory that is situated within real-world experiences. Ultimately, assisting a vulnerable population with few supports that has great potential to benefit Canada's economic, cultural, and professional landscape.

This analysis provides verification for the theoretical model of CSDT and enhances knowledge of professional immigrants' career development and vocational wellbeing. The essential needs proposed by CSDT, namely career autonomy, career competence, and career relatedness, are well represented within the group. Individuals demonstrated a natural propensity towards fulfillment of these needs, with fulfillment lending to greater satisfaction and wellbeing. Within the model of CSDT, the proposed subcomponents of each need stood out as strategies to fulfill overall needs, playing an essential role in the development of careers. This exploration provides avenues to further refine the theory and understand lived experiences of a growing subgroup of Canadians. As such, theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

### Poster Presentation

#### ***Playing to Learn: The Impact of a Psychoeducational Video Games on Knowledge Translation for Marijuana Use and Psychosis Risk in Black Youth***

Nima Karimi

**BACKGROUND:** The link between cannabis use and psychosis is well established. Educational video games can be used as a knowledge translation tool for substance use and mental health, yet culturally grounded interventions for Black youth are missing. The Back to Reality Series (SERIES) is a promising knowledge translation tool to educate youth about the relationship between cannabis use and psychosis.

**PURPOSE:** To qualitatively and quantitatively analyze whether SERIES can improve knowledge and shift perceptions on cannabis use and psychosis when compared to a control game.

**METHODS:** 20 participants experiencing First Episode psychosis and cannabis use disorder were interviewed between September 2021 and January 2023. Participants completed three Zoom interviews, during which demographical information, mental health experiences, and game experiences were collected. The Psychosis and Cannabis (PCT) quiz was used to assess the effectiveness of the SERIES video games in imparting knowledge about the connection between psychosis and cannabis, while qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

**RESULTS:** Participants who played the SERIES first performed significantly better on the post-game quiz than those who played the control game first (mean quiz score of 9.2, 95% CI [8.94-9.46] vs 8.1, 95% CI [7.49 – 8.71],  $p=0.007$ ). Thematic Analysis revealed participants' community perceptions on Marijuana use and attest to the potential ability of SERIES to increase knowledge on Marijuana use and psychosis amongst participants' support system. Additionally, the SERIES can impact personal attitudes and choices related to Marijuana use and presents a storyline that strongly resonates with the participants' experience.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The SERIES can improve knowledge and shift perceptions on Marijuana use and risk of psychosis. The SERIES has the potential to be used more widely as an educational tool amongst youth who use Marijuana and their support system.

### Poster Presentation



***Career Counselling for Individuals with ADHD using Career Self-Determination Theory Framework***

Sarah Colton

The proposed poster will present various career counseling strategies to address the unique vocational needs of individuals with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity- impulsivity that interferes with functioning in several life domains. Despite robust Canadian workplace legislation, individuals with ADHD report discrimination in the hiring process. Once on the job, individuals with ADHD are at a higher risk for adverse work events, including underemployment and workplace injuries. The poster presentation will detail how career counselors can attune themselves to the unique needs of individuals with ADHD. The poster will propose that career counselors apply the theoretical framework of Career Self-Determination Theory (CSDT). CSDT posits that people have an innate desire for autonomy, competence, and relatedness in their careers. When all are established, an individual is said to achieve career self-actualization. The poster will propose counseling strategies to promote career self-actualization for individuals with ADHD for each of the three components of CSDT. The poster will also identify accommodations and support strategies career counselors can apply to reduce the number of adverse career events experienced by individuals with ADHD.

**Keynote Panel**

**Telling the Story of the Self: Wisdom, and Blindness as Culture**

Dr. Rod Michalko, Dr. Michel Ferrari

**Chair:** Carla Grey

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 1:00 – 2:15 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

**Keynote Presentation**

***Blindness as Culture***

Dr. Rod Michalko

The story of blindness is a medical one particularly as it is told from within the scientific paradigm of the west. Science has become the dominant story and most other stories of blindness stem from this storyteller. The stories of blindness told by rehabilitation, by special education, and by the plethora of counseling approaches are mere off shoots of science’s story of blindness. We, blind people, live in the midst of these stories and many of us adopt these stories as our own. Some of us even join the storyteller of science and its followers by telling our stories, stories of overcoming, stories of the strength of the human spirit and stories of making something out of nothing. In the midst of all this

storytelling, though, blindness itself remains silent. This conversation attempts to release blindness into the fray of the myriad of stories told about it and itself become a storyteller. The story blindness has to tell us is not only the story of itself, but of its genesis, its creator—sight. Blindness has a particularly intriguing view of sight and it tells of how sight is not merely the biological apparatus of seeing that the story of science tells us. Instead, blindness tells a story of how sight is a way of life, a way of constructing a reality and it tells of how sight is a culture with its customs, its norms together with its constraints and creativity. Blindness tells, too, of how it (blindness) is an integral part of the culture of sight and it tells of how sight stories blindness as a distorted version of itself and of how sight silences blindness and keeps it out of view by storing it as a lack of sight and thus as a story of nothingness.

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***Self-Transformative Wisdom: Ancient and Modern Techniques***

Dr. Michel Ferrari

This talk will look at self-transformative practices in several ancient traditions that aim to educate for wisdom, including: Ancient Greek, Christian, Islamic, Hindu & Buddhist traditions. I will consider how they have been or might be incorporated into contemporary efforts at multicultural counselling. For example, CBT uses many techniques also advocated by Stoic philosophers and Dialectical Behavior Therapy integrates Buddhist practices: both can claim to be designed to cultivate wisdom. Other practices, however, have still to be incorporated into contemporary Western counselling and therapy. I will discuss published studies that examine the effectiveness of these practices, and our own ongoing work in the wisdom and identity lab to adapt these ideas for contemporary contexts to educate for wisdom, for example, among people who have experienced moral injury. In particular, I will consider whether such practices can help provide a more inclusive and therapeutic environment for immigrants to Canada.

### **Keynote Panel**

#### **Cultural Humility and Competency in Psychotherapy**

Dr. Deone Curling, Dr. Olga Oulanova, Dr. Marta Milani

**Chair:** Dr. David Paul Smith

**Location:** Room 9-105

**Time:** 1:00 – 2:15 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***Black Canadian women's experiences and coping with mental health***

Dr. Deone Curling



Centuries of racialized trauma have created collective suffering passed down from one generation to the other. Black Canadian women carry an intergenerational, multidimensional, and complex pain within their genes. Racialized trauma consciously and unconsciously can appear unannounced in the therapist's room, unrecognized by clients and unnoticed by practitioners, stagnating the healing process. Until conscious raising of intergenerational trauma occurs, healing cannot occur. This presentation will discuss Black Canadian women's intersecting identities and how it contributes to their unique experience of psychological distress and coping. The conversation will recognise the distinct and unique ways Black Canadian women experiences and cope with mental health. Healing becomes a relational phenomenon interconnected with self, family and community. A theoretical healing framework that addresses the intersecting themes of the strong black woman, mother-daughter relationships, and transgenerational trauma/resilience transmission. These themes illustrate the reality of Black women's mental health. Recognizing that the road to healing involves understanding these three themes and the concepts of community engagement and self-definition allows Black Canadian women to move to a place of healing intergenerational trauma.

**Keynote Presentation**

***Transforming Psychological Practice to Better Serve Minoritized and Racialized Communities***

Dr. Olga Oulanova

Major global sociopolitical and public health events of the past years have accentuated the inadequacies of Western psychological therapies—already well-documented in the past and even more apparent in the present—in addressing the needs of minoritized and racialized communities. Psychological practice faces an important opportunity for creative and revolutionary change if the mental health needs of future generations are to be addressed in ways that are equitable, ethical, and socially just. This talk explores the problems with Western psychological therapies by offering a critique of the colonial foundations of psychology and discusses specific shortcomings of psychological therapies in serving racialized and minoritized clients. Addressing these inadequacies entails decolonizing psychological therapies and assuming an intersectional stance—an approach where the clinician's intersecting identities are under scrutiny as much as those of the client—while embracing a social justice-informed and empowerment approach.

**Keynote Presentation**

***Challenges and Barriers on the development of intercultural competence***

Dr. Marta Milani

The development and assessment of intercultural competence is an issue of primary importance, especially in today's society, which became more and more complex and multicultural. Far from being merely an issue of methodological choice, it rather represents a theoretical, epistemological and, ultimately, an ethical challenge, given its impact on the people involved. The presentation aims

at outlining some critical challenges related to the development of the concept of intercultural competence as well as at giving some new perspectives to carry out its assessment in counselling and education.

### **Keynote Experiential Workshop**

#### **Culturally Competent Moments in Psychotherapy: An Experiential Workshop**

Dr. Ted Lo, Dr. Kenneth Fung

**Chair:** Dr. Ellen Gutowski

**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 1:00 – 12:15 AM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

It is important to become aware of cultural issues arising in psychotherapy. There are examples of systematic cultural adaptation of specific psychotherapy modalities for particular cultural communities. A complementary approach is to develop broadly applicable cultural competent skills, so that psychotherapists, regardless of the therapy model being used and the client's particular cultural background, can draw on tools to take culture into account in therapy. This workshop will focus on an integrative generic cultural competent approach to therapy, which increases the "cultural flexibility" of any therapist. This includes the use of cultural formulation as well as the adaptation of goal, process, and content of psychotherapy. We will practice using a pragmatic framework to mindfully attend to "cultural moments" in psychotherapy. This includes the practice of becoming aware of cultural issues arising from the therapeutic relationship including both transference and countertransference; the communications and interactional patterns of the client inside and outside of the therapeutic relationship; how the client relates to people, places, and things more broadly; and the client's cultural ideals and values. The workshop will create a space to enable workshop participants to collectively increase skills in "on-the-fly" cultural adaptation during the on-going stream and process of psychotherapy from moment to moment.

### **Keynote Panel**

#### **Beyond Interracial and International: Celebrating Interracial Relationships and Families in Canada and the United States**

Dr. Shivon Raghunandan, Dr. Marguerite Lengyell, Dr. Byron Miller

**Chair:** Dr. Roy Moodley

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 2:30 – 3:45 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)



The number of interracial and intercultural couples, families and children in Canada and the United States is on a steadfast rise. Although interracial relationships have numerous social and personal benefits for racially and ethnically diverse societies, many interracially-involved individuals and couples in the United States frequently experience racism and discrimination by those that oppose interracial romance. In Canada, the experiences of mixed-race couples and families are largely unknown, and therefore, there has been an overreliance on data from the United States to understand the experiences of interracial couples and mixed-race children. This presentation will critically reflect on the lived experiences of interracial couples in both Canada and the United States, including unique strengths and challenges, within the context of coloniality, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and endogamy. It will discuss racial/ethnic identity, interracial relationship and interracial family formation, the influence of multiracial children, as well as the social and psychological factors that impact the health of individuals in interracial relationships and their multiracial children. Implications for individuals, parents, families, educators, researchers and mental health practitioners will be explored, with an emphasis on the provision of culturally sensitive, competent, and affirming counselling and psychotherapy practices.

#### **Parallel Paper Session**

**Chair:** Dr. Andre Marseille

**Location:** Room 9-105

**Time:** 2:30 – 3:45 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

#### **Research Paper Presentation**

##### ***The Impact of COVID-19 on African/Black People's Mental Health***

Dr. Roberta Timothy

This paper will discuss some of the findings from the Black Health Matters COVID-19 project in relation to the impact of COVID-19 on the mental health of African/Black communities in Canada and globally. This two-year long project utilized an African/Black feminist (intersectionality), resistance education, decolonizing framework. Specifically, the research examined the COVID-19 impact on African/Black communities mental health, the role of anti-Black structural violence on African/Black communities' COVID-19 mental health outcomes; and African/Black communities' resistance.

This paper will examine the impact of intersectional violence on the lives of African/Black communities globally during COVID-19. Firstly, the context in which structural violence occurs in the lives of African/Black communities transnationally and its impact on mental health will be briefly established, from enslavement to the current day realities of global state sanctioned anti-Black racism, using Canada as an example. Secondly, the method used in the research to collect data on Black communities' experiences will be described. Thirdly, the main themes found in the research related to mental health will be presented. Finally, this paper will conclude outlining 5 ways to



support African/Black communities' continued resistance, addressing the adverse impact on mental health globally during the pandemic(s) that we face today.

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Race, Animality and Violence in Fanon and Coetzee***

Jonathan Russell

This paper will explore the elements of race, animality, and violence primarily in the post-apartheid works of J.M. Coetzee viewed through a critical reading of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*. Fanon sees the constant conflation of the racial other with animality and the body as essential to the subjectivity of anti-blackness and colonialism. However, his solution is not to gain recognition by asserting the rationality of Blacks. Fanon perceives European judgements of inferior rationality and animality as fundamentally ideological justifications to mask the irrational and absolute violence acted out on the colonized by the settlers. And thus, the degradation of racism justifies total war against the settler; not only for his material needs but also for their psychic health. In relation to this, the novels of J.M. Coetzee seem to move away from the clear anti-colonial themes seen in *Waiting for the Barbarians* to an increasing focus on animal liberation and care, in the novels *Disgraced* and *Elizabeth Costello*. But these books are always taking place in the background of the post-colonial conditions of Africa. The horrific trauma experienced in *Disgrace* erupts from the racial other which can be seen to take Fanon's position of total war against settlers, throughout the book the redemption arc is mediated through his euthanizing of dogs. The end of the novel presents this almost as a primitive sacrificial rite to expiate his guilt. Elizabeth Costello -also the name of the novel- has a contempt for the racial other which she seems oblivious too. I will articulate the psychic displacement between her animal liberation lectures and her overwhelming anxiety of alterity in the affectively charged African Sunday mass, causing her to faint. Her Anglo-Australian sensibilities are overwhelmed in the mass by the very elements of animality -the body, sweat, and cries- she affirms in her animal lectures.

### **Parallel Paper Session**

Asher Faerstein, Martín Luciani-Noli, Shaima Ahammed Thayyilayil

**Chair:** Dr. Olga Oulanova

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Privileging Clients' Phenomenological & Subjective Experience of Identity***

Asher Faerstein



In this essay, I discuss key issues of diversity, social justice, and critical multiculturalism with a clear intention of bringing to awareness the crucial elements of professional clinical practice. In the mental health field, there is inadequate awareness of identity as intersectional, relational, dynamic, and informed by systems of power (systems which do not become neutralized in the therapist's office). This lack of understanding is responsible for much of the harm done to clients in relation to diversity and multicultural practice. This essay places articles examining class, gender (transgender identity, specifically), and race in conversation with one another in order to produce an expansive set of ideas with which to approach issues in critical multicultural and diversity practice. This paper also asks: how can we, as clinicians, cultivate therapeutic spaces that interrupt, undo, and transform the damage caused by harmful experiences in mental health services such that clients do not have to brace for the impact of microaggressions and other kinds of insensitivity and incompetence?

#### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Healing Beyond Description – Undoing Fragmentation in Multicultural Counselling & Psychotherapy***

Martín Luciani-Noli

In this paper, I argue that in an attempt at inclusivity, multicultural counselling theory and practice unintentionally dilute complex human experiences by restricting its focus to individual identities and foregoing an intersectional worldview. The big seven identities (race, sexual orientation, gender, class, religion, disability and age) are substituted and disregarded for practical adaptations of multicultural counselling that polarize their focus and further fragment the client into individual parts to be studied, labelled, and described rather than holistically understood. Suddenly therapists must decide which marginalized identity demands the most attention, creating a contested arena of diversity where marginal groups become insular in their approach to theory and practice and clients are labelled in relation to their race, gender, sexual orientation, social class, disability, religion, and age, resulting in therapy services being delivered under specific categories. Not only do these binary multicultural paradigms ignore the intersectionality of these identities and how tension arises between them, but they facilitate a potential for oppression and divisiveness by uncritically emphasizing differences between minority groups rather than focusing on their similar predicaments of racism, subordination, and economic exploitation. Furthermore, biases arise that force the therapist to negotiate their capacity to serve the client based on their perceived level of relatedness and their ingrained discriminatory assumptions, deviating the client from their humanity as they become objectified as a product of their marginalized identity, unmoving beyond their socio-political descriptions. In essence, the client becomes a one-dimensional object that is either to be wholly relatable or cautiously approached. It is here that multicultural counselling attempts to douse the therapist's discomfort when working with the "unfamiliar" client by prescribing specific Eurocentric & colonial formulae catered to educating the therapist on "how" to approach, fix or treat the complex experiences of unrelatable identities, creating the potential for an expert trap that transcends the therapist into a state of assumed omniscience that risks fragmenting the client's personhood.

#### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Cultural & Spiritual Meanings of a Harmony-Seeking Self: Implications for Counselling People of Indigenous and Diverse Ethnic Backgrounds***

Shaima Ahammed Thayyilayil



The notion of healing is closely linked to the pursuit of harmony in most indigenous cultures. An expanding body of scholarly literature emphasizes the significance of considering this relationship particularly when addressing mental health and well-being in these populations (eg. Igbokwe, 2022; Ebigbo et al, 2020; Omuro-Yamamoto, 2001). Indigenous counseling approaches that focus on restoring harmony, such as Harmony Restoration Therapy (Ebigbo, 1995), Ho’oponopono based family therapy (Shook, 1985; Aresenault, 2000), Medicine Wheel inspired counselling interventions (Robertson, 2021) are a few examples that highlight the importance of re-establishing equilibrium and harmony in an individual's life towards wellness. Accordingly, one’s psychological wellness is a manifestation of harmony across multiple and interconnected domains including the self, social, ecological, and spiritual. The cultural ideal of maintaining harmony and the inclination to restore harmony when it is disrupted is also empirically substantiated by recent studies that highlight associations between harmony-seeking, interdependent self-construal and subjective well-being (Hocaoğlu & Işık, 2022). In light of this literature, it seems crucial to understand the spiritual and cultural meaning-making that underlies harmony-seeking beliefs and values as it manifests in a counseling context. Affective experiences such as shame, guilt, forgiveness, gratitude, fear, anxiety etc may be deeply anchored in an other-conscious, harmony seeking self-construal and thus may be experienced differently across cultural contexts. Appreciating these nuanced and implicit cultural meanings aimed at restoring harmony and balance may be important for effective counseling with culturally diverse and indigenous populations. Although the paper focuses on the importance of counselors being culturally competent in attending to clients' harmony-seeking inclinations in therapy, there is a parallel note on examining the prevailing Eurocentric or individualistic self-construals that position the individual as both the source and solution to problems.

### **Interactive Experiential Workshop**

#### **Creating Circles of Belonging**

Shauna Moore

**Location:** Room 9-105

**Time:** 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

Research shows that persons living with mental illness progress through diagnosis, diagnosis and recovery more smoothly and effectively when opportunities to engage and interact with peers and feel a sense of belonging. Being part of a safe and supportive circle can provide a space for sharing lived experiences, challenges and triumphs in one’s mental health journey. In this interactive session, we will learn about and practice using various community-building resources from multiple cultures to facilitate the building of circles of caring and belongingness to promote mental health.

### **Parallel Paper Session**

Shasha Oosthuizen; Naseem Rine-Reesha, Sara Azarshahi, Hayley Mangotich

**Chair:** Dr. Ellen Gutowski

**Location:** Room 9-297



**Time:** 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

### **Research Paper Presentation**

#### ***Self-Care Practices & Motives in Practicing Therapists***

Shasha Oosthuizen

The current study sought to explore the self-care practices that practicing therapists engage in and their motives for engaging in these practices. Participants were twelve therapists who completed an interview about the self-care practices they engage in and the motives that underlie their self-care practices. I used grounded theory to analyze the data. The study's findings demonstrated themes linked to conceptualizing self-care, self-care practices, and motives underlying self-care practices. Participants defined self-care as an ongoing process that involves creating time for oneself and ensuring good physical and mental health. Participants took care of themselves by engaging in psychological, physical, professional, social, and spiritual self-care practices. They reported having psychological, social, physical, professional, and spiritual motives for self-care. These results provide insight into the types of self-care practices and motives that may be most beneficial to consider when developing self-care interventions for therapists to prevent burnout and ensure ethical clinical practice.

### **Case Study / Paper Presentation**

#### ***The Rashomon Effect and Social Identity in the Clinic***

Naseem Rine-Reesha, Sara Azarshahi, Hayley Mangotich

In recent decades, research has slowly amassed that attempts to define the “Rashomon effect” and describe its implications for various disciplines. Professions related to psychotherapy have already received some attention in said research. This work focuses on the Rashomon effect as occurring between individuals; that is, it tends to regard situations wherein a practitioner and client or trainee and supervisor give differing accounts of the same interpersonal exchange. Meanwhile, psychologists and psychotherapists have become increasingly attuned to intersectionality—the notion that individuals each hold multiple intersecting social identities—especially since APA’s multicultural guidelines highlighted this issue in 2017. Intersectionality poses a new possibility for the Rashomon effect: an individual may give differing accounts of the same event depending on which identity is primed in a given situation. Understanding this intrapersonal Rashomon effect can aid in the development of needed concrete techniques through which practitioners can engage with issues of intersectionality. The proposed research presentation will provide a brief introduction to social identities as they are understood according to social psychology’s social identity theory, particularly in the work of M. A. Hogg and colleagues. It will then touch upon the non-linear dynamic system as a model to describe the relationship between social identities, a connection first proposed by Neil Altman. To conclude the theoretical component of the presentation, the relation of social identity fluidity to the content of repetitions within clients’ narrations in psychotherapy will be explained in terms of the Rashomon effect. Finally, two case studies will be presented to demonstrate how changes in a psychotherapy client’s description of their situation can be traced back to shifting experiences of social identity, as per the theory above.

### **Interactive Experiential Workshop**

## **Beyond Black Lives Matter: Exploring Cultural Responsivity with Adolescent Sexual Offending**

Elizabeth Evans, Lisa Bertin-Fabian

**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Thursday, June 22, 2023)

There is a plethora of research espousing the health disparities between BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) and their white counterparts (Farook, 2018). Within the profession of psychology, attention to culture as a variable in clinical practice was first mentioned at the Vail Conference of 1973 (Arredondo & Perez, 2006). Since then, Multicultural Guidelines and Competencies have been infused throughout the profession via guiding bodies such as the American Psychological Association (APA) and the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) Social Determinants of Health are frequently referenced when assessing and treating adolescents who have engaged in sexually harming behaviour, however, is consideration given for culture and race/racism as a main determinant? Despite the recognition of the validity of culturally-informed counselling, there remains a deficit of research examining culturally responsive perspectives. The generational resilience of the BIPOC community in navigating a system that historically does not validate their cultural identity or experience of racial trauma, has hidden a significant service gap that such invalidation has created. This workshop will identify what a culturally responsive approach is, and give a historical context for what has led to this approach. What we know about how multicultural responsivity impacts assessment and treatment for adolescents who have engaged in sexually harming behaviors and what we don't know will also be addressed. We will discuss the significance of implementing this approach at all organizational levels of service. Furthermore, in attempt to reconnect the system to the BIPOC community, we will discuss applications for engagement, assessment, and treatment (including reunification) of BIPOC adolescents who engage in sexual harming behaviours; by exploring the intersectionality of ethnicity, systemic racism and intergenerational trauma. Finally, we will discuss the deficit of research available, and what directions to look forward to in the future.

**Friday, June 23, 2023**

**Keynote Panel**

**Energy Healing & African Traditional Healing Practices**

Sandra Osazuwa, Dr. David Paul Smith, Dr. Njoki N. Wane

**Chair:** Dr. Alex L. Pieterse

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 9:15 – 10:30 AM (Friday, June 23, 2023)

**Keynote Presentation**

***'If We Build It, Will They Come?': Exploring Perspectives Towards Culturally Integrative Therapeutic Treatment Among Canada's African Community***

Sandra Osazuwa

Multiculturalism discourses have sparked interest in addressing health equity concerns among ethnic minority communities in applied psychology practice and scholarship. Often underserved and subjected to excessive pathologizing, there is a growing focus on developing culturally sensitive treatments to enhance the well-being and outcomes of ethnic communities historically marginalized within Western societies. One proposed solution involves incorporating traditional healing systems from various cultures with Western modalities through culturally integrative psychotherapeutic interventions. Although the (re)emergence of these ancestral systems can foster a newfound sense of awareness and appreciation of such approaches within contemporary contexts, it is essential to acknowledge the impact of cultural hegemony and Anti-Black racism within Western value systems and validation hierarchies. Recognizing the tumultuous relationship shared by Africa and the West, the research used a postcolonial framework to explore how Canada's African community might respond to efforts to culturally integrate African healing traditions (AHT) and Western psychotherapeutic systems. Using a constructivist grounded theory approach, semi-structured interviews of ten participants were conducted and analyzed thematically. The study's findings indicate that while most participants perceived the therapeutic integration efforts as beneficial for the African community, various internal and external resistance factors were identified, which could influence the community's reception and engagement with culturally integrative interventions. The research aims to shed light on the realities affecting mental health access and equity within Canada's African community by presenting this data while contributing interdisciplinary perspectives on culturally integrated treatment.

**Keynote Presentation**

***Energy Healing and Political Paradigmatic Resistance toward Traditional Healing***

Dr. David Paul Smith

Energy Healing is found throughout the ages and across cultures. It is truly a Universal concept. However, modern science rooted in a Materialist Realism tends to dismiss Energy healing as primitive, superstitions magic. This paper argues that the traditions of healing energy are amenable to scientific analysis and this will likely necessitate a paradigmatic shift in academia so that we can better understand the process. This shift will be hard won as political and hegemonic bias in science and the academy leads to restriction of resources for research and threats to scientists' reputations who are interested in pursuing these questions.

### **Keynote Presentation**

#### ***African Healing Traditions: Presenting a Conversation with Herbalists in Kenya***

Dr. Njoki N. Wane

African Indigenous healing traditions are not homogenous as Indigenous societies are very heterogeneous in nature. However, each society within the African context take into consideration the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual realities of a person seeking healing. The services provided by herbal doctors are unique and holistic in nature as they take the patients' total self into consideration during the treatment sessions. As more and more people begin to embrace alternative modes of healing, these renaissance aids the mainstream thinking by incorporating alternate knowledges to our non-holistic approaches, while concurrently aiding in the rebirth of self-dignity and self-worth among the holders of the old way. This presentation is based on research: *African Healing Tradition. A Kenyan Case Study*. The conversational data presented reveal that indigenous healing practices have survived despite popularization of Western medical practices. In addition, these practices do not only involve work that only corrects the internal imbalances through which disease can manifest within an individual but emphasizes the re-establishment of individual harmony with their environment and their relationship with the natural cycles to which all life is subject to. The proposed paper has two major goals: The first one is to examine what is African Healing Traditions; 2) How can we benefit from these traditions.

### **Keynote Panel**

#### **East Asian and South Asian Traditional Healing Practices**

Dr. Mami Yanai, Yaoxin Zhang, Aanchal Rai

**Chair:** Dr. Marguerite Lengyell

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 10:30 – 11:45 AM (Friday, June 23, 2023)

### **Keynote Presentation**



***Flourishing Souls through "Savoring" Pain: Applying the wisdom of traditional healing practices as therapeutic "Delicious Moments" in life and practice***

Dr. Mami Yanai

Through savoring the experience of pain in tragedy, rituals in traditional healing practices are often highly aesthetic and transcendently therapeutic because they induce multidimensional and multi-sensorial experiences. In this presentation, the theoretical background of "Delicious Moments" is briefly explained followed by the actual exercise for the audience to actually feel the process and learn the essence that can be applied into their clinical practices as well as daily life to promote therapeutic "Delicious Moments" to flourish one's soul.

**Keynote Presentation**

***Chinese traditional healing: A philosophical and holistic view of mental health***

Yaoxin Zhang

Mainstream psychological knowledge is challenged for being only based on European and American cultures and more and more scholars support the decolonizing perspective in psychology which makes space for indigenous knowledge and stresses enormous diversity in cultures. An in-depth understanding of healing traditions in other culture is necessary for the development of global psychology in the context of multiculturalism. Chinese healing traditions rooted in its collectivistic society and philosophical traditions, which is largely influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. These philosophical schools delineate three states of self: the relational self, the non-self and the authentic self. Chinese healing traditions provide a holistic way to conceptualize and treat mental health issues. The presentation will explore possible ways to integrate Chinese healing traditions into counselling and psychotherapy.

**Keynote Presentation**

***The Role of South Asian Traditional Healers in Counselling***

Aanchal Rai

The current study's aim was to explore and document the role of South Asian traditional healers residing in Toronto as it has been observed that South Asians tend to approach these traditional healers for assistance with their physical, psychological and spiritual distresses. These healers were interviewed about their background, training, the South Asian traditional healing processes and their thoughts on collaboration with Western Mental Health practitioners. The data was analyzed using Grounded Theory. The results revealed that these traditional healers closely followed the South Asian traditional healing theories and cultural norms in their practices. The healing processes reflected the ideas of holism, planetary effects and religious healing. The traditional healers also expressed eagerness to associate with the Western Mental Health care services to benefit their clients. The findings suggest that South Asian traditional healers play a major role in the lives of South Asians.





### **Keynote Panel Presentation**

#### **Awareness and Compassion in Action: A Contemplative Solution for Promoting Trust and Accessibility in Psychotherapy**

Dr. Denise Paneduro, Dr. Alicia Howard, Dr. Norman Farb

**Chair:** Dr. Deone Curling

**Location:** Room 12-199

**Time:** 10:30 – 11:45 AM (Friday, June 23, 2023)

Traditional contemplative healing practices have long been applied to promote healthy development, connection, prosociality, and wellbeing. Decades of scientific research and clinical work suggest that contemplative practices including mindfulness, compassion, and music supports regulation of the nervous system, shaping attentional habits to cultivate resilience to traumatic stress, loss, and pain. Given the continued calls to address the inequities of accessing appropriate, timely, and effective clinical mental health care, there is a compelling opportunity to explore the integration of equitable, accessible, and trauma-informed contemplative accounts of mental health and wellbeing in Western models of counselling, psychotherapy, and education.

In this panel presentation, you will explore research illustrating the potential and challenges of fostering greater awareness and compassion through contemplative practices, with an emphasis on the tension between brain systems supporting integration and dissociation in the face of stress. You will learn about the relative benefits of mindfulness, compassion, and music-focused practices in clinical care. You will be invited to experience a series of contemplative practices, which can be applied in clinical and education systems to encourage a deepened sense of trust, acceptance, and connection – all essential ingredients to provide authentic, compassionate, and effective clinical therapy. The implications of integrating a contemplative approach to enhance the therapeutic alliance and co-create a transformative empowering experience to promote recovery in the context of multicultural counselling and psychotherapy will be explored.

### **Parallel Paper Session**

#### ***Enhancing Psychotherapists' Awareness of Privilege***

Dr. Jason Brown & Dr. Marguerite Lengyell

**Chair:** Dr. Roy Moodley

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 1:30 – 2:30 PM (Friday, June 23, 2023)



Understanding the role of privilege in systemic oppression positions psychotherapists to engage in culturally oriented practice. In our study psychotherapists in southwestern Ontario were asked how they and colleagues can enhance their self-awareness of social privilege. A concept mapping analysis was performed on interview responses from 25 participants. Results included making yourself uncomfortable, embracing humility, learning from the community, being involved in social action, seeking critical knowledge, and finding like-minded others in the profession. The authors will discuss these findings and implications for training.

### **Interactive Experiential Workshop**

#### ***When Yoga Met Psychotherapy...***

Aanchal Rai

**Location:** Room 9-105

**Time:** 1:30 – 2:30 PM (Friday, June 23, 2023)

*We exist not alone; we exist within this universe.*

*We exist not single; we exist as a whole.*

Holistic healing has been a concept that has eluded the West for generations and is only recently being embraced and welcomed. Psychotherapy is a health field that also grapples when supporting clients from a multitude of backgrounds, philosophies and sentiments, which imply an urgent need of incorporating holistic beliefs in the western health system. Among many holistic and alternative forms of healing, Yoga, which is an Indian form of "mind-body-spirit unifying way of life" that can be incorporated into psychotherapy. In this workshop, learn the history of yoga, its branches, its benefits and possible ways in which it can accentuate psychotherapy today. Yoga and Mindfulness based exercises will be incorporated in the workshop, to allow us to experience a unique way of healing and overall betterment of our mental health. You can look forward to learning in-depth about Yoga, its benefits and experiential ways in which mind can also be healed.

### **Parallel Paper Session**

Shukri Hilowle; Hibah Sidat

**Chair:** Dr. Anusha Kassar

**Location:** Room 9-297

**Time:** 1:30 – 2:30 PM (Friday, June 23, 2023)



**Research Paper Presentation**

***De-Stigmatizing Mental Health within the Canadian Somali Diaspora***

Dr. Shukri Hilowle

The focus of this paper is to examine the cultural, economic, and linguistic barriers to accessing proper mental health care for Somali Canadian. One of the major issues that create barriers for people who need mental health support is the cultural and social stigma around admitting you suffer from mental health issues. While the Somali Canadians are not a monolith group, it is common to find in many households the reluctance to accept mental health support because it may increase social stigma of being labelled “waan” which means “crazy” in the Somali language. This can contribute social stigma which may be used to discriminate or even put the person at risk of being sent back to Somalia for religious and spiritual help. In addition, this label can create barriers when it comes to accessing marriage or being treated with dignity, as many may see the person as “cursed” or they may be treated as a “pariah.” Secondly, this paper will look at economic barriers when it comes to accessing proper therapy; this is an issue that many people who suffer from low-socioeconomic conditions, while this is improving with higher rates of educated Somalis in the West, it still is an issue for many Somali refugees to gain access to mental health support. Some may also not think it is priority when it comes to affording basic needs (rent, food, transportation, education cost, medical...). This plays a role in creating a culture whereby mental health is seen as not important for survival compared to other human needs. Lastly, one of the key areas that plays a role in stigmatizing therapy is linguistic barriers since many Older Somali Refugees who speak English as a second language, they can have a hard time finding therapists that speak Somali.

**Research Paper Presentation**

***Unveiling the Mental Health Impacts of Gendered Islamophobic Violence on Canadian Muslim Women***

Hibah Sidat

This study examines the challenge of negative mental health outcomes for Canadian Muslim women as a result of gendered Islamophobic violence. This research draws data from semi-structured interviews with service providers working on the frontlines of therapy and counselling with Canadian Muslim women. With the application of intersectionality, psychoanalysis, and a community trauma framework, this study finds a myriad of ways in which Canadian Muslim women routinely face Islamophobic discrimination based on their intersectional identities which in turn creates a host of negative mental health outcomes, all characterized by internal struggle rather outward aggression. Responses to discrimination include affected women channelling their own agency and spirituality, as well as seeking community support. Multiple limitations to care from service providers and the broader mental healthcare system also emerge. This study finds that gendered Islamophobic violence is implicated in white nationalism/terror and that a community trauma informed approach is recommended for healing.

### Keynote Panel

#### **Inclusivity and Anti-Racism in Healthcare: From Clinics to Communities and Beyond**

Dr. Josephine Etowa, Dr. Alex L. Pieterse

**Chair:** Dr. Rob Bedi

**Location:** OISE Library

**Time:** 2:45 – 4:00 PM (Friday, June 23, 2023)

### Keynote Presentation

#### ***Fostering Inclusivity in healthcare practice through action on unconscious bias***

Dr. Josephine Etowa

Over the past three years, the pandemic, and its disproportionate impact on the African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) communities and other troubling events such as the death of George Floyd have led to a movement of self-examination and needed actions on racism, diversity, inclusion, and equity around the world. In health care, it is well documented that health care organizations are not inclusive in client care, health workforce and in the overall cultures of health care organizations. Creating inclusive workforce environments fosters more responsive interactions between individuals of diverse backgrounds, and promotes increased commitment and motivation, increased productivity, job satisfaction, and greater success.

In this paper, I will discuss the meaning and the significance of inclusivity in healthcare practice serving ACB communities in Canada based on our current studies. I will discuss associated challenges and conclude with strategies to improve inclusivity.

### Keynote Presentation

#### ***Understanding the Role of Racism in the Construction of Mental Illness: An Anti-Racist and Decolonial Critique***

Dr. Alex L. Pieterse

The diagnosis of mental illness has been critiqued for relying too heavily on epistemological approaches that are largely influenced by European and North American ways of knowing. Indeed, some have viewed the widespread use of US based mental illness diagnostic criteria (i.e., DSM) as a type cultural imposition and as an extension of practices associated with colonization. Furthermore, there is evidence to support the notion that the construction of mental illness as informed by European/North American criteria, has been utilized as a powerful form of racial oppression, and a tool to support notions of white Supremacy. As such, the current presentation will highlight the utility of employing anti-racist and decolonial approaches to the understanding of mental illness. These approaches move beyond the dismantling of oppression within psychology and psychiatry; however, they also allow for a more complete understanding of psychological functioning through the removal of racial hierarchies, through centering culture and indigeneity, and through challenging capitalist approaches to the facilitation of healing and the reduction of mental distress.

## PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

**Aanchal Rai** is a Registered Psychotherapist and has been providing psychotherapy to individuals and families for over 15 years. She completed an M.A. in the Counselling Psychology program at OISE-University of Toronto. Her research focused on the role of South Asian traditional healers in Western forms of counselling. She specializes in psychotherapy with multicultural populations, and her research has helped provide insight into the role of healers in the lives of immigrant populations in Toronto and the GTA.

**Abby Goldstein**, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and Associate Professor at APHD/OISE. She is the lead researcher for the Psychology of Emerging Adulthood Research Lab (PEARL) and the Canada Research Chair in the Psychology of Emerging Adulthood. Her research focuses on risk behaviours in emerging adulthood, including alcohol use, marijuana use, gambling and dating violence.

**Alex L. Pieterse**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Counseling Psychology in the Department of Counseling, Educational and Developmental Psychology. He received his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Teachers College, Columbia University. Dr. Pieterse's scholarship focuses on psychosocial aspects of race and racism, racial trauma, and anti-racism training and self-awareness. He is a prior recipient of a NIH – Health Disparities Grant. Dr Pieterse is currently an Associate Editor for The Counseling Psychologist. Dr. Pieterse is a Licensed Psychologist and has experience as a Racial Diversity Consultant.

**Aliakbar Abbasi Garmroudi** is a doctoral candidate in Counselling Psychology at OISE. Ali's doctoral dissertation focuses on a qualitative analysis of adolescent clients' experience with dual diagnosis in a day treatment program. Prior to immigration, Ali was a school teacher in Iran and then he worked as psychotherapist in a Mental Health Clinic there. Since immigrating to Canada in 2003, he has been working as psychotherapist at Lumenus Community Services which is formerly called Griffin Centre Adolescent Mental Health Service. He actively participated in the Diversity Committee in his agency, as he believes in diversity and see multiculturalism as a strength. Ali also designed and implemented educational groups and gave presentations for public audiences about wellbeing and mental health at schools and Community Centres for both youth and their guardians which helped him most importantly to create a sense of family with the community.

**Alicia Howard**, PhD, is a music psychotherapist who specializes in chronic pain relief, substance use, and anxiety. Dr. Howard has a Master's in Music Therapy from Florida State University where she focused on music in counselling and substance abuse. Alicia is a Registered Psychotherapist with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario and has a certificate in Foundations of Applied Mindfulness Meditation from the School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto.

**Alvi Dandal** is a Ph.D. candidate in the Counselling and Clinical Psychology program in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development (APHD) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto. Broadly, his research interests are (1) examining narrative processes relevant to the development of coherent identities and the enhancement

of well-being and (2) the exploration of psychological processes related to marginalized sexual identities. This presentation is based on his doctoral dissertation supervised by Dr. J. Roy Gillis (associate professor, APHD).

**Amira Derie**, (she/her) is a 1st-year M.Ed Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy student at OISE University of Toronto. With a multidisciplinary background in Psychology, Biology and Women & Gender studies - Amira is passionate about exploring the complete trajectory of the human experience from an anti-oppressive lens. She currently is en route to becoming a registered psychotherapist and aims to address systemic inequities within mental health and psychotherapeutic support for marginalized communities at large. Outside of her academic and research role, she works in Clinical Support and enjoys reading and watching movies.

**Andre Marseille**, PhD, completed his doctoral studies in Counseling from George Mason University in 2018. Andre is trained as a Positive Psychotherapist and Existentialist. Dr. Marseille's research interests include existentialism, positive psychotherapy multi-culturalism, and the impact of climate change on mental health. Dr. Marseille has published two book chapters on Existentialism and Multiculturalism and articles on positive psychotherapy. Dr. Marseille is on the editing board for the Global Psychotherapist International Journal. Andre presents his research often, making presentations, hosting training seminars and participating in panel discussions at different conferences both domestic and internationally. Dr. Marseille lives in Chicago, Illinois. In his spare time, he enjoys running, is an avid reader and enjoys fiction writing and traveling.

**Anusha Kassin**, PhD, is presently an Associate Professor with a High Impact Position in Child and Youth Mental Health the School and Applied Child Psychology Program at the University of British Columbia. Her scholarly interests are informed by her own bi-cultural identity, and presently includes two major foci: immigration experiences across different communities as well as cultural and social justice responsiveness in psychology training.

**Asher Faerstein** is a queer and trans interdisciplinary writer and aspiring psychotherapist from Montreal. They come to the field of psychotherapy with a background in literary studies and gender studies, which they hope will inform their clinical work.

**Becky (Xi) Chen**, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Her globally-recognized research is in field of language and literacy development among bilingual and multilingual children, and in the area of dyslexia. Prof. Chen teaches in courses in reading and writing difficulties, as well as foundations of language and literacy.

**Bhisham Kinha**, M.Ed, Ed.D, is a Registered Psychotherapist whose practice has been shaped by working with individuals, groups and families in various settings, including a university counselling centre and non-profit counselling programs. He currently works in private practice in Toronto, Ontario. Dr. Kinha's research has focused on the counselling and psychotherapy experiences of South Asian-Canadian sexual minorities. He and Dr. Roy Moodley co-authored "Therapy without Borders: Bridging

Counseling and Psychotherapy Across Cultures” which appeared in *International Counseling Case Studies Handbook* (2015).

**Bryan R. Ellis**, PhD, is the grandson of Dr. Clemmont E. Vontress. He is currently an Assistant Professor (of teaching) in the Irvin D. Reid Honors College at Wayne State University in Detroit. He is an urban sociologist who specializes in social inequality. He has written on diversity and pluralism; race and sports; race and policing; and the sociology of education. His recent book (co-written with Fred Pincus) is titled, *Understanding Diversity: An Introduction*.

**Byron Miller**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Director of the Interdisciplinary Social Science Program at the University of South Florida’s St. Petersburg campus. His research examines how social and psychological factors effect health disparities. His research examines how social and psychological factors effect health disparities with a special focus on the impact of interracial romance and multiracial identities on mental health outcomes.

**Carla Grey**, EdD candidate in Counselling Psychology at the University of Toronto, is currently Chair of the College Committee of Accessibility Issues. She is also a Counsellor in the Centre for Accessible Learning and Counselling Services at Centennial College, a position she has held for the last 15 years. Her research interest is critical multicultural counselling and psychotherapy.

**Clara McNamee** is a PhD student in counselling and clinical psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, under the supervision of Dr. Abby Goldstein. She completed her Master of Arts degree at OISE in counselling and clinical psychology under the supervision of Dr. J. Roy Gillis and holds an honours Bachelor of Science in psychology and neuroscience from the University of Toronto. Her research uses mixed methods to investigate how identity development, minority stress, and protective factors coalesce to influence mental health in the plurisexual community.

**David Paul Smith**, MA, PhD, is president and CEO of Integrative Psyche Services, S.C.. He is a clinical psychologist in Chicago Land at hospitals, elder care facilities, as well as conducts a private practice. Dr Smith completed a BA at the U. of Massachusetts through the BDIC program titled “Psychology and Spiritual Development”. He later finished a masters and his Ph.D. at the Univ. of Chicago. His work involved ethnographic study of the sweatlodge and the spiritual and religious characteristics of psychotherapists. Dr. Smith was a part-time faculty member in the Saybrook University College of Mind-Body Medicine, working as Co-chair of the Certificate in Clinical Hypnosis and a faculty member on the Certificate in Advance Studies of Consciousness. Dr Smith is a certified consultant in hypnosis through the Society of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis (SCEH ACE). Finally, Dr Smith is Editor for the International Journal of Traditional Healing and Critical Mental Health based at Christ University in Bangalore. India.

**Denise Paneduro**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Clinical Public Health at the University of Toronto’s (UofT’s), Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Dr. Paneduro teaches and provides graduate student supervision for the Doctor of Education in Counselling and Psychotherapy program within the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at UofT’s Ontario

Institute for Studies in Education. Denise's scholarly work is focused on development and evaluation of mindfulness-based practices, interventions, and programs to infuse at critical junctures across the lifespan.

**Deone Curling**, EdD, is an Assistant Professor (Teaching Stream) at the Ontario Institute For Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. She has been a therapist for the past 24 years. She has extensive experience providing individual and group therapy using evidence-based approaches. Her role as a therapist is informed by her community engagement and research practices focusing on the intersectionality of mental health that impacts BIPOC communities.

**Earl Woodruff**, PhD, serves as the Chair of Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. His scholarship focuses on computer-supported learning environments and flexible modes of education; technology, play, and gaming. Prof. Woodruff has taught courses in the role technology plays in the context of learning and knowledge-building.

**Edna Aryee**, PhD, graduated with a Ph.D. in Counselling-Clinical Psychology from the University of Toronto. She currently works in private practice with over 15 years of clinical experience offering psychotherapy on various issues, including trauma, personality disorders, anxiety, depression, self-esteem, cross-cultural and workplace issues, immigration adjustment, life transitions, and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Canadian generational challenges. Her prior work experience includes working in Forensic and Psychiatry settings such as The Centre for Addictions and Mental Health, Correctional Services of Canada, The Forensic Behaviours Clinic, Ontario Shores, Advance Health, and Oshawa Psychological Services.

**Edwin J. Nichols**, PhD, is a Clinical/Industrial psychologist, Director, Nichols and Associates, an applied behavioral science firm. He is a founding member of The Association of Black Psychologists. He was the first Black center chief at the National Institute of Mental Health -- Chief, Child, and Family Mental Health. As a Visiting Professor at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, he established the Child's Clinic for Psychological Assessment and Evaluation. His national and international I/O work is guided by his hallmark paradigm: *The Philosophical Aspects of Cultural Difference*, first presented in 1976 at the World Psychiatric Conference, held at the University of Ibadan. He was educated at Assumption College, Canada; Tübingen Universität, Germany; and received his PhD in psychology and psychiatry, *cum laude*, Innsbruck Universität, Austria. Fellow, Austrian Ministry of Education; Visiting Scholar, Rockefeller Foundation, Bellagio. Distinguished Psychologist: Harvard, Toronto, and Piauí Brazil. University of the District of Columbia – Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*. US Army Sergeant during Korean War. He has two adult children and two grandchildren.

**Efrat Gold**, PhD, is an AMS History of Medicine postdoctoral fellow at York University, engaging in mad and disability studies. Using interpretive and critical theory and methods, Gold critiques the psychocomplex, moving toward contextualized and relational understandings of suffering, crisis, and distress, and foregrounding those most vulnerable and marginalized by psychiatric power, discourse, and treatments. Her scholarship focuses on constructions of psychiatric legitimacy that naturalize and reproduce medicalized understandings of human suffering, thereby casting off all other possibilities.



Through explorations of norms and meaning-making, Gold unsettles psychiatric ideology by unearthing the present absences of those deemed mad and exploring life-affirming possibilities for mad inclusion.

**Elaine Cagulada** is a PhD candidate in disability studies within OISE's Department of Social Justice Education at University of Toronto. Indebted to the wisdom of disabled, Black, and Indigenous storytellers, her research explores the constitutive force of narrative in relation to perceptions of deafness, disability, race, and policing.

**Ellen Gutowski**, PhD, is an assistant professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Prof. Gutowski's interests include promoting the well-being of underserved populations, understanding the role of psychosocial factors (stress, trauma, relationships) in mental health and functioning, and engaging in social justice work within teaching and clinical practice. She teaches courses in theories and techniques of counselling and psychotherapy.

**Elizabeth Evans**, BSc, RSW, is a Social Worker, Psychotherapist, Mediator and Community Support Team Counsellor who has worked with at-risk justice involved youth at Durham Family Court Clinic (DFCC) since 2014, which includes the assessment and treatment of adolescents who sexually offend. Elizabeth has co-facilitated the DFCC Support Group for Parents/Caregivers of Adolescents Who Have Sexually Offended, and presented on treating youth who have engaged in sexually harming behaviors in the community at ATSA 2018 and the Provincial Human Services Justice Coordinating Committee Biennial Conference -2017. Elizabeth is an active member of the DFCC's Together in Action Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

**Emily Mastragostino** is a PhD student in Counselling and Clinical Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in the University of Toronto. From a positive psychology lens, Emily's research focuses on investigating the ways in which marginalized communities cultivate wellbeing, despite institutional and social barriers. She holds an MA in Counselling and Clinical Psychology from the University of Toronto and a BA (Hons) double major in Psychology and Humanities, with a research background spanning classic quantitative methods to participatory arts-based qualitative approaches.

**Erica Walker**, MEd, EdM, EdD, is an award-winning researcher, educator and professor at the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, and the dean of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto. Walker completed a bachelor of science degree in mathematics at Birmingham-Southern College and a master's degree in mathematics education from Wake Forest University before earning master of education and doctor of education degrees from Harvard University. She then completed a post-doctoral fellowship at Teachers College before embarking on a professorial career there that spanned 20 years – a period she said has been “incredibly enriching for me as a faculty member, researcher and leader.”

**Esther Fu**, an aspiring mental health professional, specializes in multicultural and diversity counseling, with a focus on feminist therapy and gender issues. She earned her Bachelor's in Commerce from McMaster University and is completing her Master of Education in Global Mental Health and

Counseling Psychology at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Esther gained practical experience as a psychotherapist during her practicum at Nanjing University's Counseling Centre in China.

**Farah Charania** is a graduate student in the MSc Counselling Psychology Program at the University of Calgary. Farah is passionate about researching the determinants of psychosocial well-being in marginalized populations and aspires to mobilize this knowledge to impact positive change for equity deserving groups at institutional and systemic levels.

**Gia Geetha** is a trained Psychotherapist and Mental Health Researcher. She completed her MA in Counselling, Psychotherapy & Spirituality at the University of Ottawa in 2019. Growing up in Scarborough, Ontario, Gia was interested and compelled to do work that reduces the barriers that marginalized folks experience in their path toward getting the support they deserve. She did her clinical training with women experiencing homelessness, while working on her thesis that focused on the second-generation South Asian experience. More recently Gia has been working as a Mental Health Researcher. She recently won the 2022 Homewood Mental Health Research award for her research on the impact of a Mental Health Intervention program in a military population.

**Hayley Mangotich** completed her master's degree at the University of Toronto, OISE. As a clinician, she is committed to integrating research and practice to meaningfully support people across diverse social locations. Her research interests include critical multicultural counselling and psychotherapy.

**Hibah Sidat** graduated Summa Cum Laude (with highest distinction) and holds a BA (Specialized Honours) in Public Policy and Administration as well as a Certificate of Basic French Proficiency from York University. Hibah has also completed her MA in Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Her thesis examines the mental health impacts of gendered Islamophobia facing Canadian Muslim women from the perspectives of mental health frontline workers. She has received numerous awards during both her undergraduate and graduate study. Always striving to make a positive difference for the people around her, Hibah has also held a number of political roles, working with various Members of Provincial Parliament and City Councillors.

**J. Roy Gillis**, PhD, (pronouns: he/him/his) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the University of Toronto. He has longstanding research interests in the assessment and prevention of negative outcomes in such areas as HIV infection, hate crime victimization, and intimate partner violence employing diverse community samples involving both 2S+LGBTQIAA and heterosexual communities. In addition to his extensive record of research and publication in these areas, Professor Gillis has a long history of activism and instruction involving these foci for both the 2S+LGBTQIAA communities and other marginalized and racialized communities. Professor Gillis and his research team have focused on developing models of the psychological impact of hate crime victimization, the measurement and impact of heterosexism on 2S+LGBTQIAA communities, and the roles of resistance and resilience in contributing to the mental health and wellbeing of 2S+LGBTQIAA communities. Additionally, he is the principal investigator of a CIHR-funded team grant focusing on identifying and reducing stigma, discrimination and misinformation related to COVID-19 in social media postings. Professor Gillis is a past recipient of the Teaching and

Education Award from Division 44, the Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues of the American Psychological Association. He is also one of the two representatives of the Canadian Psychological Association to the International Network on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Concerns, and Transgender Issues in Psychology.

**James Yuan** is entering the first year of his MA in OISE's Counselling and Clinical Psychology program. He completed his undergrad in psychology at UofT, with research interests in critical psychology, queer theory, and psychoanalysis. Outside of class, he runs the UofT Jungian Association, writes poetry, and frequents cafés and jazz bars.

**Jan A. Wozniak** (he/him) is currently an undergraduate psychology student (thesis stream) at Toronto Metropolitan University. He holds a General Bachelor of Arts with a Minor in Communications, an Honours BA in English and Philosophy, an MA in Philosophy, and a Certificate in Psychology. Jan has also undertaken training in CBT, DBT, MBSR, MBCT, TIDES, mindfulness, and philosophical counselling. His core research interests include autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, anxiety, and health equity. Jan's current research roles include the Anxiety Research and Treatment Lab, the Autism, Neurodiversity, and Academic Achievement Lab, and the Azrieli Adult Neurodevelopmental Centre. As a Program Engagement Co-Facilitator at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Jan's roles as a Program Engagement Co-Facilitator and Research Advisor involve supporting mindfulness and mental health programming, clinical research trials, and neurodiversity-affirming resource development.

**Jason Brown**, PhD, is a professor of Counselling Psychology at Western University. He is a registered psychologist with a small private practice. Jason's primary area of interest centers on equity-informed approaches to counselling and psychotherapy.

**Jenny Hui** (she/her) is pursuing her PhD in Counselling and Clinical Psychology at OISE, University of Toronto. Her research focuses on resilience and mental health among BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, and how intersecting identities inform health disparities and clinical interventions. She has co-facilitated AFFIRMative group therapy for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth and adults, and she co-authored journal articles on multimodal research with 2SLGBTQIA+ youth. Ultimately, Jenny's scholarship and practice strive to uplift the stories of people and communities who are under-represented in counselling, psychology, and social work.

**Jessica Ilton** is a first year PhD student in the clinical and counselling psychology program at University of Toronto. She completed her master's degree in counselling psychology at University of Ottawa. She works as a graduate assistant at University of Toronto, and as a Registered Psychotherapist at Valley Connections Counselling. Her research interests are in vocational and career psychology as well as counselling process, theories and interventions.

**Jonathan Russell** is a University of Toronto undergrad student. He is a specialist in the department of Anthropology, and currently working on a collective research project see: [eliteafriciaproject.org](http://eliteafriciaproject.org) in the focus of political economy. Jonathan runs a small Das Kapital reading group. This does not stop him from reading W.R. Bion, Lacan and Klein.

**Josephine Etowa**, PhD, RN, FWACN, FAAN, FCAN, FCAHS, is a Professor at the University of Ottawa, OHTN Chair in Black Women's HIV Prevention and Care. Dr. Etowa's research focuses on inequities in health and healthcare including nurses' worklife and the health of African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) Canadians using critical race theory and intersectionality lens.

**Kai Forcey-Rodriguez** (They/Them) is an autistic recent graduate from OISE with a Master of Education in Developmental Psychology and Education (APHD) specializing in Special Education and Mental Health. As a long-time advocate for social justice, and equity, and working to ensure diverse communities feel heard, seen, and have their needs met, Kai served as Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Officer for the APHD Student Association and part of the leadership team for the APHD Racialized Student Group supporting students in a mental health or advocacy capacity using their field training in mental health support provision, 3 years of experience as a special ed. and ELL teacher, fluency in eight languages, extensive intercultural knowledge, and advocacy experience. Kai's most notable accomplishments so far are: becoming one of the first Autistic people of his generation to co-lead workshops for both faculty and students in the field of education and psychology about Autism, autistic mental health, and inclusion including having guest lectured on this topic. Kai is also the sole author of a groundbreaking publication in the Canadian Journal of Autism Equity entitled, "The Risk Factors and Preventative Methods of Self-Harm and Suicidality for Autistic People" released in April 2023.

**Kaori Wada**, PhD, was born and raised in Japan and first came to Canada as an international student. She received her BA in Human Relations from Concordia University. She went on to pursue MA and PhD in Counselling Psychology at McGill University, where she gained clinical experience at a high school, university counselling/mental health services, and community and hospital outpatient clinics. She also taught both undergraduate and graduate courses as a part-time instructor at Concordia and McGill. In 2016, she joined Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary, where she teaches graduate courses on career counselling, professional ethics, and assessment.

**Keisha Greene**, EdD, is a Registered Psychotherapist at Women's College Hospital in the Reproductive Life Stages department. Keisha has been a practicing clinician for 9 years and recently moved from providing community mental health and addictions care in the Jane/Wilson and Jane/Finch communities of Toronto, to Women's College Hospital. Within Women's College Hospital, Keisha continues to provide specialized care to racialized clients. Keisha has many years of experience providing clinical care to racialized communities and is aware of the differences that racialized individuals face in navigating their day-to-day experiences, particularly around mental health. Keisha completed her MA in Counselling and Clinical Psychology at McGill University and recently completed her doctorate in Clinical and Counselling Psychology from the University of Toronto. Keisha holds a past and present awareness of anti-Black racism that informs her approach to working with clients who present with racial trauma.

**Kenneth Fung**, MD, is Staff Psychiatrist and Clinical Director of the Asian Initiative in Mental Health Program at the Toronto Western Hospital, University Health Network. He is Professor and Director of Global Mental Health with the Department of Psychiatry, University of Toronto. His research, teaching, and clinical interest include both cultural psychiatry and psychotherapy, especially Acceptance and

Commitment Therapy (ACT), CBT, and mindfulness, with projects and collaborations in China, Hong Kong, and South Korea. He conducts community-based research and projects in stigma, resilience, mental health promotion, trauma, caregivers for children with ASD, immigrant and refugee mental health, and pandemic response

**Kimberly D'Silva** recently completed a Honours Bachelor of Science degree at McMaster University, majoring in Psychology, Neuroscience and Behaviour. Kimberly is very interested in the investigation of risk and resilience factors, and am passionate about implementing early intervention and tailored programs to protect at risk children and youth from negative health outcomes. Kimberly has experience working as a developmental service worker and a daycare assistant teacher. Currently, Kimberly works as an ABA Therapist for children with autism, and a Research Assistant at the George Hull Centre for Children and Families, supporting a school-based social emotional learning project and the CASTER (Child and Adolescent Screener for Traumatic Events and Response) pilot project, amongst others. Kimberly is also a volunteer Research Assistant at the POWERinYOUTH Lab at OISE, assisting Dr. Linda Iwenofu with a systematic review about the health effects of anti-Black racism on Black children and youth.

**Lana Stermac**, PhD, is Professor of Counselling and Clinical Psychology in APHD at the University of Toronto. Professor Stermac's research focuses broadly on the health and educational impacts of violence against women. She served recently as an advisory member on the Presidential and Provostial Committee on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence at the University of Toronto and as a member of the Expert Panel on Education and Prevention of Sexual Violence (2017). She has consulted on these topics to various agencies and is currently collaborating with scholars across Canada and internationally. Professor Stermac received the 2018 Distinguished Contributions to Women and Psychology award from the Canadian Psychological Association. Professor Stermac's research is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

**Linda Iwenofu**, PhD, C.Psych, is an Assistant Professor in OISE's Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development. Her research program is focused on understanding and mitigating race-based mental health inequities among Black young people. She is also a registered Clinical Psychologist with 15+ years clinical and scholarly experience involving youths' psychological problems.

**Lisa Bertin-Fabian**, MSW, BAsC, RSW, is a Social Worker, Psychotherapist with the Intensive Support and Supervision Program (ISSP) at Durham Family Court Clinic (DFCC). Since 2015, Lisa has been working specifically in providing support and counselling for children engaging in concerning sexualized behaviours, youth engaging in sexually abusive behaviours, and their families. She has also facilitated provincial webinar series trainings for service providers working with adolescents who have engaged in sexually abusive behaviours. Lisa is an active member of DFCC's Together in Action Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and in previous employment, assisted in founding the Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression Committee.

**Lisa Chinchamie** is a PhD student in the Department of Social Justice Education, OISE. Lisa's research explores the interconnections of neo-colonialism, globalization, structural violence and the marginalization and disposability of racialized, immigrant/migrant populations.

**Madeleine DeWelles** is a PhD candidate in disability studies and is influenced and guided by childhood studies, phenomenology and interpretive sociology. She studies at the University of Toronto in the Social Justice Education department at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

**Mami Yanai**, ND, is a passionate integrative medicine practitioner and business consultant, promoting the authentic wellness and flourishing of female healthcare professionals in Japan, combining the essence of psychotherapy, meditation, Japanese traditional aesthetics and Naturopathic Medicine. Her approach is based on a therapeutic concept "Delicious Moments" which she has developed with Dr. Ted Lo, the pioneer in cultural psychiatry and together practiced at the Integrative Mental Health Centre of Toronto in clinical, educational and vocational settings. Experiential dining events of "Delicious Moments" have been highly praised at various conferences and meetings around the world. She is also a founder of an initiative called "inochi no ie - a home of flourishing lives," where people can gather to share an experience of witnessing, grieving and savoring the true beauty of their lives. She has been an active member in the Flourishing Network at the Harvard Human Flourishing Program.

**Marguerite Lengyell**, PhD, is a Psychologist and Assistant Professor in the Graduate Program in Counselling Psychology at the Faculty of Education at Western University. Her research interests include critical multiculturalism and the integration of culturally responsive and anti-oppressive practices in counselling and education.

**Marta Milani**, PhD, is a Senior (Tenure Track) Assistant Professor at the University of Verona, where she is involved in research and educational consulting at the Center for Intercultural Studies headed by prof. Agostino Portera. She was visiting scholar at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto, Canada (2011) and her research interests are focused on intercultural education, especially on the development of intercultural competence at school. She is also member of the Cooperative Learning Study-Training-Research Group, where she works as a vocational training expert both nationally and internationally.

**Martín Luciani-Noli** is a first-year student in the MEd Counselling & Psychotherapy program at the University of Toronto and an aspiring educator and Psychotherapist. His experiences as a Latinx refugee immigrant from South America have informed his academic and professional interests in existentialism, life transitions, and education and have inspired his passion for working closely with Latinx refugees, immigrants, and other marginalized groups.

**Mercedes Umana Garcia** is a Registered Psychotherapist and co-founder of Continuing Healing Consultants. For over 20 years Mercedes has provided psychotherapy services in private practice, community, and educational settings, as well as in primary and in tertiary health care. Mercedes areas of expertise include Anti-Oppression Psychotherapy, community mental health, health psychology, trauma, post-traumatic growth, bereavement, HIV, and intersectional research methodologies and

knowledge translation. Mercedes has over 20 years of experience in design and delivery of training on anti-oppression and intersectionality, particularly in relation to mental health service provision with emphasis on inclusive and culturally competent service provision to diverse communities, specifically looking at the impact of factors and oppressions based on race, indigeneity, gender, gender identity, socio-economic status, age, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and spirituality. Mercedes has extensive experience in program coordination, monitoring, and evaluation locally and transnationally. Mercedes Umana Garcia is currently completing doctoral studies in psychology at OISE University of Toronto.

**Michel Ferrari**, PhD, is a Professor at OISE (University of Toronto) who is interested in personal identity and how it develops in typical and atypical populations. This interest extends, in particular, to questions of personal wisdom, as an ideal aspiration of personal development. Dr. Ferrari is head of the Wisdom and Identity Lab, which explores personal wisdom in people of different ages (from children to the elderly) in different countries around the world. He led an international study of personal wisdom in Canada, the USA, Serbia, Ukraine, Iran, India, and China. His most recent project explores the relationship between wisdom and successful immigration to Canada among Iranian immigrants and Syrian Refugees.

**Michelle Zak** is a graduate student in the MSc Counselling Psychology Program at the University of Calgary. As a second-generation Filipino immigrant with vast education and teaching experience, she aims to use her passion for social justice research to advocate with individuals and communities who have been marginalized.

**Naseem Rine-Reesha** is an Ed.D. candidate in Counselling Psychology at the University of Toronto. His research interests include critical multicultural counselling, integrative psychotherapy, psychoanalysis and analytical psychology, career/vocational counselling, and counsellor education and supervision. He works as a psychodynamic therapist in private practice.

**Natacha Pennycooke**, MSc., RP, is an award-winning psychotherapist, consultant and director of Natacha Pennycooke Psychotherapy (a group practice prioritizing the mental health needs of racialized and marginalized professionals). In her over 12 years of practice, Natacha's work is guided from an anti-oppressive, healing focused, trauma informed, anti-Black racism and social justice lens, to unpack and challenge Euro-centric ideologies, systemic oppression and generational traumas that have been detrimental to racialized communities. Natacha, who graduated with a Masters in Counselling Psychology from the University of the West Indies, has presented at a number of international and national psychological conferences; and is sought after for her passionate speaking style and expertise on mental health, racial trauma, workplace and healing to speak at various corporate and community events. Natacha is the recipient of the ByBlacks People's Choice Award for Best Black Counsellor of 2020, and was also nominated for the award in 2021. Most recently, Natacha has been nominated for the 2023 RBC Canadian Women Entrepreneur Awards.

**Nima Karimi** is a recent graduate from the Bachelor of Health Sciences program, McMaster University. Nima's research interests lie in community mental health as well as neuropsychobiological approaches to studying mental health and psychiatric illnesses.



**Njoki N. Wane**, PhD, a professor at the University of Toronto, is currently serving as Chair in the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). An accomplished educator, researcher and educational leader, Professor Wane headed the Office of Teaching Support at OISE from 2009 to 2012 establishing its priorities and activities while recognizing equity as a central dimension of good teaching. From 2011 to 2014, Professor Wane served as Special Advisor on Status of Women Issues, contributing to research and policy development concerning the intersectionality of gender with race, disability, sexual orientation and aboriginal status, and the impact of these issues on the lived experiences of women faculty, staff and students at the University of Toronto. From 2018-2021; she also served as the advisor the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for the Vice-President, Human Resources and Equity. She also served as Director, Center for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies (CIARS) at OISE from 2006 to 2014. An award-winning teacher, Professor Wane was the recipient of many awards, including The President of Toronto Teaching Award. She is well published with her most recent book being: *From my Mother's Back: A Journey from Kenya to Canada*.

**Norman Farb**, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto Mississauga, where he directs the Regulatory and Affective Dynamics laboratory ([www.radlab.zone](http://www.radlab.zone)). He studies the psychology of wellbeing, focusing on mental habits, such as how we think about ourselves and interpret our emotions. Prof. Farb's work currently explores online training to support wellbeing, as well as neuroimaging to understand how emotional reactions predict mental health over the lifespan.

**Olga Oulanova**, PhD, is Assistant Professor in Counselling and Clinical Psychology at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Her research interests include integration of Indigenous traditional healing practices with Western mental health and the role of peer counselling in suicide bereavement. She works in private practice in Toronto, Canada, as a Clinical and Rehabilitation Psychologist.

**Rawan Hedefa** is a passionate MSW graduate from the University of Toronto and an incoming MA student in Clinical and Counselling Psychology. Rawan is dedicated to LGBTQ+ research, with a particular focus on intersectionality and the experiences of BIPOC individuals. Rawan strives to contribute to creating inclusive and affirming spaces for all.

**Roberta Timothy**, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Teaching Stream, Black Health Lead, and is the inaugural Program Director for the upcoming (September 2023) MPH Program in the field of Black Health at Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. Dr. Timothy is also an Adjunct Professor in Critical Disability studies at York University. She specializes in the areas of Black health; intersectionality, violence, transgenerational trauma, and ethics in health work; health and racism; art- based methodologies; transnational Indigenous health; and anti-oppression/anti-colonial approaches to mental health. Dr. Timothy has worked for over 30 years in community health working on resisting anti- Black racism and intersectional violence strategies. Dr. Timothy is also co-founder and consultant at Continuing Healing Consultants where she implements and teaches her intersectional mental health model "Anti-Oppression Psychotherapy". She is an interdisciplinary scholar, health practitioner, and political scientist, who examines global health and ethics from a critical trauma-informed decolonizing framework. Her current research is entitled: "Black Health Matters: National



and Transnational COVID- 19 Impact, Resistance, and Intervention Strategies Project”. For more information see: <https://blackhealthmatterscovid19.ca/>

**Robinder (Rob) P. Bedi**, PhD, is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology, and Special Education at the University of British Columbia. He joined UBC on August 1, 2015 as a tenure track Assistant Professor in Counselling Psychology. He previously held positions as an Associate Professor of Psychology at Western Washington and as an Assistant Professor of Counselling Psychology at the University of Victoria. Dr. Bedi is a registered psychologist in British Columbia and works one day per week providing psychological services through Chuck Jung Associates, a group independent psychology practice specializing in the area of rehabilitation counselling.

**Rod Michalko**, PhD, is a blind disability studies theorist and has recently retired from teaching as a professor at the University of Toronto. He has contributed significantly to the Canadian and international conversation in disability studies, and his books and essays are known internationally. Rod has now moved into the realm of short story writing and *Things are Different Here* is his first collection. He lives in Toronto.

**Roy Moodley**, PhD, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development (APHD) at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). Prof. Moodley's teaching, publications, and research interests include critical multicultural and diversity counselling and psychotherapy; race, culture and psychoanalysis; politics of Identity; global south psychologies, traditional healing and mixed race relationships.

**Saira Khan** is a recent Master of Social Work graduate from the University of Toronto Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, where she specialized in the mental health stream with a collaborative specialization in community development. She is currently assisting with a research project investigating the social service needs of Muslims in Ontario. She has experience providing psychotherapy, counselling, social services and mental health support to diverse clientele at community organizations and a family health team. She is passionate about exploring the intersections of mental health, social justice and art, and is interested in community building and serving equity-seeking populations.

**Sandra Dixon**, PhD, R.Psych, is an Associate Professor within the Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada and a registered psychologist in Alberta, Canada. Her program of research encompasses culturally sensitive counselling practices among immigrants, cultural identity reconstruction, and ethno-cultural diversity issues including but not limited to the intersectionality of spirituality, class, race, and gender across socio-cultural contexts.

**Sandra Osazuwa, M.A.** (she/her) is a Clinical & Counselling Psychology doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto - OISE. As a Vanier Scholar (2021), her research focuses on intersectional analyses of multiculturalism, mental health, and psychotherapy. By addressing the mental health disparities experienced by marginalized groups, her research seeks to inform treatments aimed at improving their access to services and wellness outcomes. Her current research explores the therapeutic

process and effects of culturally integrating African healing traditions systems with Western psychotherapy to create a culturally responsive and affirming approach to mental health treatment for Black community members.

**Sara Azarshahi**, EdD(cand.), was raised in the Netherlands and comes from an Iranian background, which has helped her appreciate various worldviews and alternative ways of knowing. Sara's research interests include critical multi-cultural counselling, traditional healing and culturally integrative treatment, and diversity in practice. She is dedicated to integrating knowledge and clinical practice to improve mental health service access for those who come from diverse ethno-racial identities.

**Sarah Colton** is a first year CCP PhD student at OISE.

**Shaima Ahammed** is a PhD scholar at the University of Alberta and her research interests lie at the intersection of multicultural counselling, refugee and immigrant mental health and trauma-informed counselling practice. As a researcher, she hopes to inform the development of culturally sensitive and trauma-informed therapeutic interventions that can effectively support refugee and immigrant people as they adapt to their new environments.

**Shannen Rowe** (she/her) is a first-year Ph.D. student in the Clinical and Counselling Psychology (CCP) program at the University of Toronto. She is passionate about critical suicidology and exploring sociocultural dimensions of suicide. Her work broadly focuses on cultural understandings of suicide among Indigenous peoples in Canada. Specifically, Shannen is interested in bridging the gap between research and practice through knowledge translation and implementation work related to culturally appropriate suicide prevention strategies within a Canadian context.

**Shasha Oosthuizen** is a Ph.D. Candidate in Counselling and Clinical Psychology at the University of Toronto, OISE. Her research interest is self-care as a strategy for proactively managing occupational stress. Thus, for her Ph.D. dissertation, she is examining self-care practices and motives in therapists.

**Shauna Moore** is the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Lead at Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. She has built and worked with frameworks to create more equitable opportunities and outcomes for individuals who are marginalized. She has also developed, coordinated and facilitated education, awareness, and training for students on equity and inclusion-related issues. She developed a program to remove barriers to access to post-secondary pathways for equity-deserving groups. Shauna has a deep commitment and passion for building intentional and supportive communities.

**Shazzaneiy Mohamed Nalir** is a Peer Researcher at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Social Work, investigating the social service needs of Muslims in Ontario. Currently a Public Health Inspector at Toronto Public Health, Shazzaneiy is passionate about the intersections between health equity, the social determinants of health, public health policy, and community-level interventions that support marginalized groups. As a community youth leader of Regent Park, formerly Canada's largest social housing community, Shazzaneiy has led or developed various capacity and community-building opportunities for marginalized youth, as the Founder & Chair of Youth2Give. In 2017, he was selected as 1 of 50 Outstanding Canadians by Shaw Communications, in honour of Canada's 150th anniversary.

In 2019, he received the Chin-Loy Chang Award for First Generation Students while studying at Toronto Metropolitan University, as part of the President's Awards to Champion Excellence (PACE) initiative.

**Shivon Raghunandan**, PhD, is a Registered Psychotherapist at Humber College, an honorary associate researcher at the Centre for Diversity in Counselling and Psychotherapy (CDCP) at the University of Toronto, and an adjunct professor in the Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology program at Yorkville University. Her clinical interests are diverse with a focus on trauma and attachment, and the influence of race and culture on mental health. Her research interests include race and culture in interracial relationships and Caribbean healing practices.

**Shukri Hilowle**, PhD, is an Educator and Writer. Her advocacy and activism focuses on access to education, women rights, and human rights. She currently works as an Educator, Writer and she is a published Author. She has completed a Bachelor's Degree in History, a Bachelor in Education with a focus on Urban Diversity and Special Education, a Master's Degree and PhD in Education. She is a trained qualitative researcher and her research interests focuses on critical security studies, development education, access to education, decolonization, and anti-racism. She is passionate about women's equality and access to education especially for women in Sub-Saharan Africa. Her writing focuses on a wide-range of topics including politics, gender, self-help, mental health, and well-being.

**Sophie Yohani**, PhD, is originally from Tanzania and a psychologist and professor of Counselling Psychology at the University of Alberta. Her research explores African and Middle Eastern refugee mental health, psychosocial well-being, and community-engaged liberatory practices. Dr. Yohani also engages in interdisciplinary research and community psychology programming focused on the well-being of African/Black families and communities.

**Stephanie Day** is a proud member of Oneida Nation of the Thames, and is a PhD student in Clinical and Counselling Psychology at the University of Toronto. In addition to providing psychological counselling, she researches Indigenization and Indigenous student experience within post-secondary psychology education and Indigenous mental health and healing.

**Stephen (Emeka) Okoli** is a PhD candidate and lecturer in the department of psychology at Nottingham Trent University in the United Kingdom. His research focus is on decolonising the psychology curricula in Westernised universities. Emeka has presented academic papers at national and international conferences and received commendations for his innovative works in decolonising the psychology curricula. He is also involved in evidence-based research using randomised controlled trials for cultural adaptation of psychological interventions for mental health disorders. Emeka uses his research outcomes to inform teaching and learning in modules such as critical psychology, psychology of social realities, African and cultural psychology, and undergraduate research project supervision.

**Suzanne Stewart**, PhD, C.Psych, is a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. She is a registered psychologist and Director of the Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto (U of T), where she is a Professor in the

Division of Social and Behaviour Health Sciences. She holds the TC Energy Research Chair in Indigenous Health. Research and teaching interests include Indigenous health and healing in psychology (homelessness, youth mental health, identity, and work-life development), Indigenous determinants of health, Indigenous pedagogies in higher education and health sciences, and Indigenous research ethics and methodologies. She is committed to advancing Indigenous healing issues in academics, health practice, and policy.

**Tamana Sultani** is a law graduate and International Development practitioner who has dedicated several years of her career to promoting women's rights and gender equality in Afghanistan. In Canada, she engages in social service initiatives through ASPIRE Program. She uses her expertise and resources to empower families by equipping them with the necessary tools and resources to become self-reliant. Currently, she is collaborating with the University of Toronto as a peer researcher for their "A Study on the Social Service Needs of Muslims in Ontario," contributing her knowledge and skills to identify and address the social service needs of the Muslim community.

**Tanya Titchkosky, PhD**, is Professor of Disability Studies in the Department of Social Justice Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. She is globally recognized for her leading work in the field of disability studies and social justice. Prof. Titchkosky teaches courses in critical disability studies.

**Dr. Ted Lo** is a community psychiatrist who has worked in Toronto for the past 40+ years. He has a private practice and consults with Hong Fook Mental Health Association, which he founded 40 years ago with a group of community volunteers. He is also the psychiatric consultant at Across Boundaries Ethnoracial Mental Health Centre.

**Verne Ross, PhD**, (Assistant Professor, University of Toronto) is from Cote First Nation, which is a Sealteaux Nation belonging to Treaty 4 out in Saskatchewan. Verne started his career back in the mid 1980's working in hospitals in Regina, Saskatchewan advocating for all Indigenous families. Verne is the founder of an Indigenous Health Program situated in the Pasqua Hospital. He has always worked with traditional healers and language interpreters and continues to do this important work within communities. I am not an Elder, but I do work with the guidance of the Elders. Verne is known as one of the Traditional Knowledge keepers. Verne graduated here at the U of T completed his undergrad in Indigenous Studies in 2008, also successfully completing the Master of Social Work in 2012. He recently completed his PHD Program in Language, Literacies and Education from OISE within CTL Department. His research and thesis is in the area of Two-spirited people. Verne has taught an undergrad class called Introduction to Indigenous Studies offered through the Centre for Indigenous Studies Department (U of T). I have taught INS200H1 Introduction to Indigenous Truth and Resilience and Indigenous Worldviews, Spiritual & Healing Traditions. Verne continues to be not only be a social worker and a teacher, but he mentors all students from all walks of life here at the U of T.

**Yaoxin Zhang** is currently a third-year doctoral student from the EdD in Counselling Psychology program at the University of Toronto. She is also an associate counsellor at McDowall Integrative Psychology Clinic. Her research interests include multicultural counselling, Chinese healing traditions, and Taoism and healing.

## CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Caren Li
- Carla Grey
- Dr. Denise Paneduro
- Jenny Hui (*conference coordinator*)
- Kai Forcey-Rodriguez
- Martín Luciani-Noli
- Meriem Grifi
- Naseem Rine-Reesha
- Reem Toubache
- Dr. Roy Moodley (*conference coordinator*)
- Sandra Osazuwa
- Sasha David
- Yaoxin Zhang
- Yizhuo Qin
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