



The Diversity Factor

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Message from the Editor



Welcome to the summer 2010 edition of *The Diversity Factor*, SERD's newsletter. We have several interesting articles and contributions in this edition. In the feature article, Dr. Rosie Bingham reflects on her work as Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Memphis. Next, in *Up, Close, & Personal*, Mink Shin interviews Dr. Bingham about her career, interests, and secret to living a balanced life. In *Announcements & Achievements*, Jasmin Llamas compiled a list of upcoming events of interest. Look

out for a list of SERD-related events in the upcoming APA convention. Ten individuals contributed short personal stories that illustrate the meaning of culture in the *Chronicles*. In *Mosaic*, Ruth Horton reflects on coming to terms with the loss of a colleague who recently died by suicide, while Jonathan Lassiter shares about his experience of racial microaggression by his classmates. Michael Manalo and Jenny Wu reflect on their experience of attending APA conventions in *Psychologists-in-Training*. In *Here & Now*, Ron Miyaguchi discusses the pernicious influence of the perpetual foreigner stereotype in the United States. Finally, Chad Yoo and Sheila Henderson discuss comedian Margaret Cho's comedy film, *I'm the One That I Want* in *Movie & Book Reviews*. Enjoy!

Joel Wong, Ph.D.
SERD Newsletter Editor
Assistant Professor
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Feature Article

Am I still a Psychologist?

Rosie Bingham, Ph.D.
University of Memphis

There are days when I call myself an Administrator rather than a psychologist. I serve as Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Memphis, a large metropolitan university in the heart of a very urban city. My days are spent meeting with students, colleagues who report to me, colleagues who are senior leaders at the University, community partners, faculty and when I can fit them in – family. I don't do therapy, run groups, conduct workshops; seldom do consultations, rarely teach, sometimes do presentations and scholarly writing. So I occasionally stop and ask myself –am I still a psychologist?

While I do have some overall responsibility for the University of Memphis because of my membership on the President's Executive Council, the heart and soul of my work is through my service as the senior leader in the Division of Student Affairs. The Division has a three pronged overarching vision for students: 1) Understanding and Managing Self; 2) Engaging Others in a Diverse World; and 3) Succeeding as a professional (http://www.memphis.edu/studentaffairs/mission_goals.htm). This vision allows you, the reader, and me to begin to see hints to the answer to my question about whether or not I am still a psychologist. The Society of Counseling Psychology brochure states that a counseling psychologist "facilitates personal and interpersonal functioning across the life span with a focus on emotional, social, vocational, educational, health-related, developmental, and organizational concerns..." The brochure goes on to talk about how counseling psychologists integrate theory, research, and practice and highlights a focus on multiculturalism.

If the reader is inclined to visit the Student Affairs



web site listed above, you will find that we focus on data and assessment to influence how we implement our vision and measure our outcomes. I would argue that such a focus is not coincidental since I am a counseling psychologist as is

our Director of Student Learning and Assessment. I would further submit that the focus on diversity is directly related to my work in multicultural psychology and my racial/ethnic/gender identity as an African American woman. One of my highest aspirations is to help us learn to live well together in a diverse society/world. Everyday I get another opportunity to make that happen in my role as Vice President with my training as a counseling psychologist.

All of my days are not easy because each day I have the opportunity (some might say challenge) to deal with sexism, racism and all of the other "isms." But when I am facing our biggest foes and most vociferous opponents to advancement, I fall back on my practice training to listen to the most strident voices and then use our best science to respond in meaningful ways. While I am not always on point "in the moment," (I lose my cool) I later have time to reflect and then try again next time. I remind myself of the microaggression work of Derald Wing Sue and that helps me to remember what happens to all underrepresented people so why should my life be any different. I am in a privileged position so that I can inter-

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Interview with Dr. Rosie P. Bingham

Dr. Rosie Bingham received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology/ Education from Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Illinois and received her Master of Arts degree in Counseling and Guidance and doctorate degree in Counseling Psychology from The Ohio State University. After she started her career, she not only has served as the president of three national professional organizations but also was the co-founder of the National Multicultural Conferences and Summit. Currently she is the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Memphis.

Mink (M): It's a real honor to interview you Dr. Bingham. Although I don't know much about you, I have learned some things about you and your work that inspired me. Especially, I noticed that you have been involved in a lot of different projects and activities. Because of this, the first question that came into my mind was "How do you manage balancing work and life in general?"

Dr. Bingham (B): I think I see work and life as a package. For example, I have an article to write for a newsletter, and then I have writing with a colleague. Both of them are due on June 15. However, I had to get them as much done since I'm planning to travel soon. I also had to make sure I spent time with my sister who went into the emergency room because she has cancer. Besides those two, I also had to visit my brother who was in town from Nashville, have lunch with my friends, get a haircut, and work church in. I'm also on call 24/7 because of my job. I worked everything in, but in order to do this, I had to weave everything into one piece to make it work.

M: It sounds like your life and work is very much combined together. On the other hand, I can imagine that there might be times when you may feel tired since you are involved in many things.

B: It's true. I do get tired but my secret weapon is my secretary. She's marvelous and she looks for me a day off here and a day off there. When I really am exhausted, she helps schedule me a day off. She's really good at picking days for me to take off.

M: It's great that you have a person who could help you take care of yourself. As you know, quite ironically, I've seen many people in our field who don't do self-care although they talk a lot about it.

B: I agree. However, here's the deal. I think our rhetoric about that is more theoretical than dealing with the world. I believe if I'm having a

good time that is self-care. The critical thing in there is to make sure that I'm doing something that I enjoy that hopefully has a purpose. You born, you die, and you do something in between. In between stuff, I try to make sure that I make things as enjoyable as I can.. It doesn't matter if I'm doing the enjoyable thing at the University of Memphis or my house.

M: No wonder you were able to work without being burned out or exhausted frequently.

B: I rarely experience feeling burned out. Have you ever taken the StrengthsQuest? It's similar to the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and it is something that labels you as a certain type of person. I was labeled as the "achiever." I need to be achieving. Consequently, I'm better when I'm achieving. Even when I'm broken working hard, achieving removes my anxiety and make me feel better about myself. I'm one of those people who always set goals like publishing at least one article a year or having at least one national or regional presentation. Nobody ever made me do it. It's just my need and I guess I was just implementing who I am.

M: I think I need to start learning this from you. Although I'm just in my second year, there were times when I felt like I can't do this.

B: You know what? There were couple times when I felt like I was so stuck that I could not write that dissertation. And the oddest thing happened when I went to a lecture by Maya Angelou. After the lecture, she was signing autographs and I got into the line and I starting pouring my heart out to this poor lady about how I was stuck, I couldn't do it, and so on. And she wrote in my book, "Go on Ph. D." as if I already have a Ph.D. That unstuck me and helped me get back to work. Thinking the fact that she let this stranger just go on and on just makes me laugh. Another thing that happened to me in graduate school that was memorable was taking the comprehensive exam and I felt like crying. I think graduate school is tough but you can do it. I think the difference between a Ph.D. and somebody without a Ph. D. is not that one is smarter than the other. It's being persistent and tenacious. It's a lot of work but you could get it done.

M: Thank you for your encouraging words. It really helps. Another thing I have noticed about you is that you have received the Woman of the Year Prize and that you gave the speech, "The Balancing Act." I read through it and was very

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touch by your speech, which talks about your life and struggles. On the other hand, I also started to wonder if there was someone, specifically a woman figure, in your life who had significant impact on you or inspired you.

B: I talked about Maya Angelou but also my mother had an impact on my through childhood to high school. I have five biological sisters who are my great supporters. I have very good friends who are major support systems. One of my friends, who now lives in Chicago, has been friends with me since my first year of graduate school. She is an inspiration for me. We always support and help each other when one of us is going through a difficult time. When I was co-founding the National Multicultural Conference and Summit, one of the persons I first sought and got funding for this conference was this girlfriend. At that time she was working for American Express and, thankfully, she made this possible. It's these kinds of things that make a difference. There also are a lot of other women and I call them sisters. My sister friends have always been very good to me and I believe that women always need to have women in their lives. They understand in ways that are different from men. However, I also have great men mentors. Bruce Walsh was probably one of the most influential figures in my professional career. He was my doctoral advisor and I told him yes to almost everything. I never told him no to anything.

M: Considering where you are right now in your career, what you're saying seem to portray the power of having a great support system and being open to new experiences and challenges. To slightly change the topic, I heard that you have done a lot of work related to multiculturalism. Based upon your experience, what do you think multiculturalism is? How do you think we can practice being culturally sensitive in research, practice, and in daily life?

B: I am now at the Ms. America answer and that is "world peace." One of the things that I push here to my group is learning to live well together in a diverse society. It's my spiritual belief that there is enough in the world for all of us. We don't need to fight each other for what we need. We have to learn to care for each other enough and realize that there is enough for everybody. This is related to learning about people because most people want basically the same thing. We look at people and think we are very different. People are different in the way they implement who they are. However, similarly, most of them want purpose and they want to do good in the

world. They want to be cared about. They want to get along. If you look at Western and Eastern culture, they aren't very different when it comes to the basic things that we all have. Therefore, in order to live well together, we need to know about each other and what's going on with each other. What does it take to do this? We have to make access possible to all people. We have to keep the door open. That means that I have to make it welcoming to all the people including LGBTQ and disabilities. It is my obligation to do what I can to make life go well for others. For this reason, I have to learn about others or know what it is that takes for others to live well. I don't have a good definition for multiculturalism but this is what guides my life.

M: So taking care of others, learning about them, and being open is what you are suggesting.

B: And action. You have got to take action.

M: What kind of action can we take?

B: Sometimes the smallest thing you can do is to not laugh at a joke that is putting some other groups down and to let them know privately that it is not funny. It is sometimes related to knowing research. For example, I am currently working at the University of Memphis and one of the things I do is look at the admissions criteria. They have been making the standards higher and difficult to get in. If they are planning to make changes in the admission criteria, my job is to tell them to show me a formula that doesn't adversely affect under-represented people. If they say that they are unprepared, it is my job to ask them what we need to do to be prepared and put our money there to make it possible. Therefore, it depends on wherever you are. It means that sometimes you need to step out of your comfort zone. It is also sometimes hard for me. When I walk into a sea of White people, I feel tempted to walk in and sit with the other Black folks. However, I sometimes go sit with some White people to learn and model something.

M: I think I could identify with you about the last part. I'm an international student who doesn't have much knowledge or experience with Americans. This fact makes me anxious whenever I try to talk with Americans because of the fear that I might offend them or be awkward in some way.

B: I think the amazing thing is that the other groups will be feeling the same way about you as well. One thing that research tells us

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clearly about students is that all students want more diverse contact. They actually want that but almost everyone is afraid. It's not an easy thing to do because it is uncomfortable and people don't want to be uncomfortable. However, I think the only way to change is to become a little uncomfortable. Believe me, Mink, I'm 61 years old and I still feel that fear. I have some friends who are very wealthy White women. I try to make sure that I don't fall into thinking of them not talking to me or spending time with me as a personal rebuff of me. What I have found is that these people are also very insecure of how other people think of them.

M: One thing I had difficulty finding was your research interests. Could you talk about it a little bit?

B: If I actually were doing some research, I'll be doing research related to multicultural vocational psychology. I'm interested in work, how people come to decide on a career, and what it means to their lives. Most of the articles I have written are on this area. I have also developed a step model because of this interest. However, I never have done the research to prove it. I believe that people are born with something special and I sometimes wonder if there is something in the genome project that could help me shed light on that. Like the gene for shyness, I wonder if there is something that you are born with or if it is the reinforcement from family members regarding one's talent and abilities. I actually started research in this area several years ago with my friend. However, we weren't able to finish it because she is busy with her private practice while I'm busy with my administrative job. I sometimes wonder what my life could have been like if I had taken a position as a faculty, had my own research team, and tried to find the answers to my research questions. It might have looked different. Who knows?

Currently, I have an entitled position of Director of Student Learning and Assessment and we are working right now to make sure students are learning. I believe that students learn outside the classroom such as residence hall, multicultural fairs, and leadership organizations. I work very hard for the directors of different organizations to have a learning goal, objectives, and expected outcomes, and that they measure that. I'm also a data person so I like to see the evidence. This is probably because of my training as a scientist-practitioner.

M: It sounds like you are basically doing some research on what you believe.

B: Yes. When I say that I'm not a research person, I mean that I'm not an active research person with an active research program but that I implement around science. I've been doing this work for seven years and the first things I did when I was appointed to this position is to change people's thinking. We began to do measurements to find out the impact of these programs for students in the university. We have been working on coming up with the right amount of programs based upon the data we have collected in the previous year. I'm delighted when people come in and report how they plan to modify their program based upon the outcome data.

M: That's great! What kind of things would you like to do in the future?

B: When I walk away from this job, I hope I left a culture of learning so that people believe in learning and measuring outcomes. It will be great if that lasted for a while even after I walked away. After I retire, I hope to still do something that helps prepare people to be a part of the world. For example, like making sure that children, especially those in 3rd grade, are performing at that their grade level. If they are not, it is more likely for them to be in the criminal justice system, have children too early, and live in poverty. I want to do something that makes a difference. I'm not sure if it will be related to training parents but I'm sure I'm not going to go for something like running for the APA president. I don't want to spend my energy for political battles. I will get frustrated since they require a lot of patience which I don't have. For instance, some people have accused APA of torturing people. This can't be true because the very people who are promoting multiculturalism and social justice are working for the APA. However, APA has to spend a lot of energy responding to that to clear its name. I would rather argue with people about why funding children on grade level by the time they are in the third grade is important, since this is more important to me. It is still okay being involved in the APA for the present, since I like the people that I get to know and I really want to work on psychologists understanding the importance of doing science and practice.

Mink Shin

Indiana University Bloomington

ANNOUNCEMENTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

compiled by **Jasmin Llamas**, University of California, Santa Barbara

APA Convention Events

APA 118th Annual Convention

August 12-15, San Diego, CA
<http://www.apa.org/convention/>

SERD Events (held during APA convention)

SERD Board Meeting*: 8/12 at 2 PM
SERD Business Meeting*: 8/12 at 3 PM
SERD Mentoring Session*: 8/14 at 12 PM
SERD Award Reception*: 8/14 at 1 PM
* Events held at the Div17 Hospitality Suite: Hard Rock Hotel (Revolution Room, 1st Floor)

SERD/CHP Symposium: 8/15 at 12 PM

San Diego Convention Center (11A)

Suicide Research, Treatment, and Prevention: Addressing the Complexity of a Growing Public Health Problem.

Co-chaired by Dr. Ezemenari M. Obasi (SERD, Chair) and Dr. Nicole J. Borges (CHP, Chair-Elect).
Presenters: Dr. Rheeda L. Walker, Dr. Y. Joel Wong, Dr. James R. Rogers, and Dr. Louise A. Douce.
Discussant: Dr. Mark M. Leach.

Selected Student Posters to represent SERD at the CCPTP Division 17 Poster Session

Taylor Locker - *Intersections of identities: Gender, race, and weight impact clinical judgment of mental health professionals*

Mark Mason - *Critical events in multicultural psychology courses*

Keisha Thompson - *Influence of family's perception of acting White on acculturative stress*

Monique Mendoza - *Hispanic psychological perceptions of campus climate*

Other Announcements

Div. 22 Conference

(Society for Rehabilitation Psychology)
February 25-28, Tucson, AZ
<http://www.div22.org/>

16th Annual Counseling Skills Conference

September 30-October 2, Las Vegas, NV
<http://www.usjt.com/counseling-skills-2010/>

Diversity Challenge 2010

Race and Culture in Teaching, Training, and Supervision
October 15-16, Boston, MA
<http://www.bc.edu/schools/lsoe/isprc/>

Clinical & Counseling Advances

The Heartland Conference on Behavioral Health and Addictive Disorders
October 21-23, Chicago, IL
<http://www.usjt.com/counseling-skills-2010/>

National Latina/o Psychological Association 2010 Biennial Conference

Latinas: Celebrating the Psychological Strengths and Resilience of Latina Women and Girls
November 11-13, San Antonio, TX
<http://www.nlpa.ws/>

Board of Directors Meeting

December 10-12, Washington, DC
<http://www.apa.org/news/events/2010/directors-december.aspx>

6th African Conference on Psychotherapy

December 14-16, Kampala, Uganda
<http://www.apa.org/news/events/2010/african-psychotherapy.aspx>

National Multicultural Conference & Summit 2011

Unification through Diversity: Bridging Psychological Science and Practice in Public Interest
January 27-28, Seattle, Washington
<http://www.multiculturalsummit.org/>

36th Annual Association for Women in Psychology Conference

Generating Feminisms: Building Partnerships, Recognizing Continuity, and Growing Community Across the Feminist Generations
March 3-6, Philadelphia, PA
<http://www.awpsych.org/>

Western Psychological Association 91st Annual Convention.

The 2011 WPA Convention will be in Los Angeles from April 28 to May 1, 2011 at the Wilshire Grand. The Terman Teaching Conference will be held on April 27, from 9am to 5pm. A Statistics Workshop is scheduled for each day of the convention. The call for papers will be announced in September. The deadline for submitting proposals for posters, papers, and symposiums will be midnight November 15, 2010. The Los Angeles convention is co-hosted by CSU Los Angeles and Cal Poly Pomona. Program Co-Chairs are Heidi Riggio, Gaithri Fernando, and Brigitte Matthies from CSU Los Angeles.

Counseling Psychology Fund: Call for Proposals

Established in 1998, this award is to sponsor not-for-profit activities for scientific, literary, or educational purposes to enhance the science and practice of counseling psychology. It particularly aims to

support research on the implementation of innovative counseling programs and models. About \$5,000 is available to fund projects. Requirements: Applicants must be members of APA Division 17 (Society of Counseling Psychology). Application process: The Counseling Psychology Fund is administered by APA Division 17. Proposal due dates are November 1 or April 2 of each year. Proposals should include the following materials: an executive summary (200 words), the project's goal, a work plan and timeline, the sponsoring organization qualified to conduct this project, other organizations and/or funders are involved in the project, their contributions to the work, who this project serve, intended outcomes, and how will the project achieve them, the geographic scope of the proposed project, the total cost of the project, detailed budget and summary of qualifications. Send proposals (5 paper copies) and an electronic copy (wbwalsh@sbcglobal.net) to: W. Bruce Walsh Department of Psychology, Psychology Building 1835 Neil Avenue, The Ohio State University Columbus, OH 43210-1222

Achievements

Let's take a moment to offer our congratulations to several of our SERD members' recent achievements. Congratulations!!!

Edward A. Delgado-Romero, Ph.D. from the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services at the University of Georgia was promoted to Professor. Dr. Delgado-Romero is also the current president of the National Latina/o Psychological Association.

Manny Casas, Ph.D. from the Department of Counseling, Clinical, and School Psychology at University of California, Santa Barbara received the Elder Recognition Award for Distinguished Contribution to Counseling Psychology from Division 17 of APA.

Kevin Nadal, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of John Jay College of Criminal Justice- City University of New York, recently received a \$75,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation- New Connections Active Living Research program. His PAPA (Physical Activity and Pilipino American Youth Assessment) Project aims to examine the physical activity behaviors, nutrition, and mental health experiences of Filipino American youth across the United States. In the summer, he is also launching his new book *Filipino American Psychology: A Collection of Personal Narratives*, the sequel to his previous book *Filipino American Psychology: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice*.

Chronicles: Short Stories About Culture

Editor's (JW) Note: As a multicultural scholar, I frequently use Likert-type rating scales for my research on culture. Although I view these as legitimate research tools, I'm aware that rating scales can't fully capture the complexities of culture the way stories do. Stories have an almost magical quality about them. When we narrate an incident, an event, or an experience about culture, it breathes life into the meaning of culture. For this column, I requested for short personal stories that illustrate the meaning of culture. Ten individuals responded with the following contributions. These short stories are delightfully rich. Enjoy!

Cleopatra Abdou, Ph.D. **University of Michigan**

Space is one fascinating window into culture. Growing up on the East Coast in a house of five children, we had very little space made me woozy. I wondered how so many people even come to be with so little private space! Perhaps I should be embarrassed by this thought, but I was deeply curious about how it all works. (Naturally, I couldn't actually ask anyone.) In America, my family's lack of space might be regarded as chaotic and uncivilized; but, returning from Egypt, I could barely hold onto myself in all that space. I was wahi-dah (alone; but, more accurately, lonely). With the birth of my Okinawan-Italian nephew, who could not be more perfect in my eyes, it became clear that the next generation would have even less space—no matter that we have more money now. My nephew equated lack of space with love, and any more space would have made him feel that all wasn't well in his world. Now, as an adolescent in America—surprise—he craves more space. Recently, while standing in line at the grocery store, I put my arms around him and kissed him. He asked me, carefully, "Tauntie (aunt), can you at least pretend to give me space?" Backing up, chuckling a little, I replied, "Sure, ya habiiby (my love), I'll pretend."

Vicky T. Lomay, Ph.D. **Fort Defiance Indian Hospital Board, Inc.**

As a Diné (Navajo) child growing up on the western edge of our vast reservation, I was immersed in many of our traditional ways. Many things I didn't question, they just are. I didn't ask why prayers & songs always start from the east and follow a sun-wise direction. It just does. Or why I walked into a ceremony clockwise, I just did. One specific instruction I do remember is being told to think carefully before I speak, hozhoo'igoo yanilti' (speak in a peaceful, beautiful way),

aadoh a'adza'i yanilti' (do not speak foolishly, rashly). Words are powerful, with the ability to manifest into reality. You can literally make things come true by saying them out loud. For this reason, I was taught, it is best to pause and choose your words carefully before you speak. It is similar to other sayings I've heard, "think before you speak" or "if you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all." This value has served me well regardless of where I am— at home, 'on the rez', in faraway cities, with family, with colleagues, as a psychologist, as a friend, and in all my different roles.

E. J. R. David, Ph.D **University of Alaska Anchorage**

A Lakota elder, who I consider to be a mentor, gave me perhaps the most succinct and profound understanding of culture. One day we were walking along a lake with wild ducks that were floating, eating, swimming, flying, and playing in it. He started making duck sounds, half-heartedly trying to call them to come closer to us. When his duck calls failed, I said "It's pretty cool how the wild ducks can tell between a genuine duck call versus a fake one." He said, "They're wild, not stupid." This, I think, speaks to the many indigenous cultures around the world who developed their own worldviews, values, beliefs, behaviors, and traditions as inspired by their environment. Their culture may be different, but this does not mean that they are less intelligent, less civilized, or less important than other cultures who may try to dominate or colonize them. It does not mean that their culture is inferior. As a Filipino American married to an Athabascan Indian with a Filibascan son, my life and my child's life are shaped by histories of colonialism, contemporary experiences of oppression, and future experiences of discrimination. Despite all of these, I hope my child will come to appreciate all parts of his identity, and learn that – although they are different – his Filipino culture, his Athabascan culture, and his American culture are equally just as good and valuable.

Chronicles: Short Stories About Culture

Kayoko Yokoyama, Ph.D. **JFK University**

As a mother, I see culture through the eyes of my son who is Japanese and Jewish. A fierce protectiveness comes over me to translate with strength and pride, the oppressed and oppressive bits of our collective cultures. I feel myself rising against the wave when the clerk asks, "How was your Christmas?" and I state matter-of-factly, "Tell her about what we did on Hanukkah." At preschool, I talk about Japanese children's day yet one day I'll explain that the military references reflect a history of pride and shame...and question out loud the impact of American occupation and our family's story. He sings a Jewish prayer at a not-so-sacred decibel and beats rhythmically on his "Taiko" drum. I fight against my lingering insecurity when I teach him my imperfect Japanese. How do I explain why our family isn't celebrating Israel's founding? He doesn't question that both mama and papa cook and snuggle with him each night. The feminist in me smiles at the subversive nature of parenting when he tells his friend, "Good teamwork! Everyone in a family helps out." All of this helps me appreciate the ebb and flow of my cultures and the legacy it will leave.

Kimberly L. Howell **Pacifica Graduate Institute**

Watching my grandmother in the kitchen making biscuits from scratch using the lid of a Mason jar to cut her confections into submissive perfection, I began to recognize my culture. Looking into the eyes of this beautiful Southern matriarch with skin as rich and dark as hot cocoa, I came to the sobering realization that this was not my culture—African-American? Yes. A strong woman? Absolutely. As a career-woman pursuing a doctorate and enjoying consumerist trappings, I recognized I did not possess many of the traits that permeated the culture of my grandmother.

Each year, the events of my life cause me to drift farther away from the similarities shared with my beloved grandmother. I find my culture among women in higher education often regardless of race or ethnic background. I find my culture among those who sacrificed a traditional family for ca-

reer. I find my culture spans far beyond the South and often far beyond the United States. However, I am reassured that regardless of similarities in categorized culture, there is an enchanting ingredient that can bind humankind together; it is the same ingredient my grandmother put not only in those biscuits, but everything she created—love.

Mai-Lin Poon, M.S. **Indiana University Bloomington**

If you were to just look at me, you would notice that I appear to be Asian. You might then take this assumption one step farther and believe that my cultural identity may lie within the umbrella of Asianness or perhaps one specific Asian ethnicity. In your head, you may guess that I am Korean, Chinese, or Japanese. You might tire of this and ask me where I'm from. When my answer of New York doesn't get to the answer you were searching for, you may try again, "No, where are you really from?" Being a sassy kind of gal, I reply, "Upstate New York, where it snows a lot." You grow frustrated, "No, where are your people from, because your English is so good!" That's right, folks. It's astounding that I have good speaking skills and am adept at the English language because being born and raised in New York and going to public school had no effect whatsoever. My Asian appearance is what makes you think that I'm a foreigner who just came off the boat and studied real hard at mastering the English language. It makes me sad and angry to know that as a second generation Asian American, you and I probably share more cultural similarities than I do with my own parents. However, you can't see this because I don't look like you. You think this conversation is acceptable. It isn't. You stare at me until I answer, "I'm Chinese American. Where are your people from?, because wow you're English is amazing too!"

Ralph J. Crabbe, M.A. **New Mexico State University - Las Cruces**

I remember when I was very young and my father told me that our family had a history of service to the United States by serving in the military. He showed me family records that indicated that my great, great grandfather served in company B

Chronicles: Short Stories About Culture

of the Pennsylvania Colored Infantry. He said that a black man had to prove his worth by being twice as good as White people. I remember he said that serving in the military showed that we are loyal to this country, but your time in the military had to be spent proving yourself beyond a shadow doubt. I remember hearing this story and resenting that African American men were required to make an extra ordinary effort to prove our worth. However, being a doctoral student is just that, it is an extra ordinary effort to prove that I can make a contribution to this nation, but I'm preparing to complete my internship at the Veterans Affairs facility at Biloxi, MS. While I never served in the military I am preparing for a career to serve veterans of the armed forces of this nation. I find it somewhat amusing regarding the path of my life as it relates to my father's belief regarding what a Black man must do prove ourselves worthy in the eyes of white people.

Alison E. Schwing, Ed.S., LMHC
Indiana University Bloomington

I think of my culture mostly in terms of culture related to race and family culture. My culture is a blend of European American and Asian American cultures. "Blend" is a bit of a euphemism, because I sometimes experience my cultures at odds with one another. I see these cultures as relying heavily on the communication of values conveyed through activities and verbal messages in my family.

A personal story related to culture has to do with the reverence with which we were taught to treat our elders in my father's (Korean) household. I bowed to my grandmother and we had regular ceremonies honoring my deceased grandfather. I often feel annoyed with the disrespect toward elderly individuals that is evident in the dominant culture in the United States.

Althea Monteiro

I was raised Catholic in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I don't recall ever thinking of myself as a subject; I was usually the object and the other in my culture where religion defined one ethnically and being of a minority religion sealed one's "other"

identity from birth. Thus my community defined itself in terms of how it differed from Islamic Pakistani culture, rather than by its features. For example, Islamic culture encourages modesty such as dressing oneself in shalwar kameez, so we wore the latest and shortest in Western frocks to church. The national language of Pakistan, Urdu, was practically never heard within the confines of my community, where English, just as we heard it in the latest American and English pop music and videos, resounded. In coming to Canada I have discovered a whole nation that defines itself by how it differs from America. So I have learnt to appreciate the colored paper money, Canadian music, peacekeeping, the monarchy, national healthcare and overall the complex Canadian feeling of superiority and inferiority when it compares itself with its big brother. Today I am proud to be a Pakistani-Catholic-Canadian and Ineluctably Other.

Juanita Kwarteng
University of Missouri

In my mind, culture is how different areas of the world adapt to the challenges that they face on a daily basis. The difference in clothing, food, customs, and gestures that exist all over the world are a reflection of their environment as well as what they have access to. I believe that beauty of culture can be found in differences that it creates amongst us. I also feel that the ability to have access to a social welfare system can dramatically impact a culture's ideas about happiness. I am originally from Ghana and the lack of social welfare in essence forces families to provide support such with all aspects of life similarly to what would be provided in other parts of the world by a social welfare system. As a result, the emphasis for what consists of happiness is mostly based on basic needs (food, employment, education) to due to the limited access to resources. In the West, the social welfare system provides individuals with the luxury to think beyond their basic needs and focus on their individual perceptions of happiness, prosperity, creativity, and self-fulfillment. Culture is all around us and directly affects how people respond to their daily challenges



Coming to Terms with the Unthinkable and Unbearable: When a colleague dies by suicide

The announcement that came via e-mail was simple but profound. On March 17, 2010, a young and promising second year student in our program had died by suicide.

American poet Tony Hoagland muses in his poem *The Question*, "Some questions have no answer./ Raised, they hang there in the mind/ Like open mouths, full of something missing" (Hoagland, 1999, p. 124). In the months following the death of my colleague many questions have surfaced: How?, Why?, What could we have been done to prevent this tragedy?, and How will we overcome our feelings of guilt and incompetence to continue our work in the field of counseling psychology? Even now I still find myself grasping for words and answers, wondering how I can capture a lifetime too brief and yet vibrantly full in this column and how I can adequately describe the way this event has transformed my understanding of the profession of clinical psychology.

In many ways the fragrant bouquet of calla lilies, freesia, and roses placed in the entryway to the library to honor her life hinted at how she was a breath of fresh air, an inspiration to others through the work that she had done with youth in a residential psychiatric facility, and the gratitude and empathy she exhibited toward those from whom she had learned—the clients, the professors, and school colleagues—and those whose lives she had touched, mine included. One need only think about a name to conjure up a memory in the way that the scent of budding garden tomatoes on the vine, cinnamon buns baking in the oven, or the smell of asphalt after rain can readily be brought to mind through a word.

With her name many memories come to mind—her zeal for children, her self-proclaimed gourmet "foodie," and the easy-going nature that allowed her to connect with people from many different walks of life. And yet the very language that allows me to share some scattered pieces of Hoagland, continuing her complex life fails to capture her intense passion for helping others to realize their potential. His exploration of *The Question*, observes that "A man hears a word, and the world/ Becomes a place that he misunderstands" (Hoagland, 1999, p. 124). My hope is that with these brief words I can make a young woman I admire less misunderstood and share how the process of coming to terms with her life has been facilitated and hampered by words.

In the weeks following the announcement via e-mail of her death faculty and students at the school struggled with how to process and cope with our loss in the classroom and in the school community. After announcing the news to our research seminar, one professor invited the students to share their thoughts and feelings about it while exploring the cultural traditions and rituals of grieving with which each student was familiar. The resulting discussion was one that helped the students and professor to better understand one another and from which ways to support one another through the grieving process emerged naturally. It took place in a supportive and safe environment that the professor had carefully developed over the life of the course.

In other courses equally well meaning professors asked the students if they wanted to discuss what had happened or if the students had anything they wanted to share. These questions were met with silence and averted eyes, although there was much that could have been said given how close some of these students were to the young woman. In yet other courses the event was mentioned briefly without an invitation to discuss it further or the professor solicited information about the event from students, which yielded a cursory discussion of facts rather than feelings around the facts. The opportunity to begin to process this loss may have been lost in the choice of words that set the parameters for the discussion. While the classroom should not be considered

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a substitute for the therapy room, the difficulty in talking about suicide and the impact of this loss was evident in the ways that we grappled with finding words in spite of our training and expertise around the subject.

There were both impromptu and organized gatherings, however, including memorial services at the school and in the community where the young woman's family lives. These venues provided us with a chance to pool our collective memories of her and to appreciate the richness of her lifetime. Toward the end of the semester program directors and faculty invited students to participate in a reflective dialogue about the process of grieving and ways the school could build a stronger, more connected community. We explored the boundaries between our multiple roles as colleagues in an academic setting, as concerned friends, and as mental health practitioners and how these multiple roles are both facilitative and challenging in supporting individuals in crisis. We raised questions and proposed some answers. In many ways it seemed that we were coming to realize what the Portuguese poet and philosopher Fernando Pessoa, whom Hoagland pays homage to throughout his poem, understood when he observed that "[w]e are what is missing from the world" (Hoagland, 1999, pg. 124). What may have been missing from our discussions in the classroom about this loss was the on-going dialogue about who we are as individuals and as professionals that really begins the first day of class. It is a dialogue that becomes richer with each opportunity that we have to develop supportive, meaningful relation-

ships student to student and student to professor in an environment of mutual respect and safety.

As the weeks turned into months, I found myself turning to a book for "children of all ages" as the publisher notes on the back spine of *Lifetimes* by Bryan Mellonie. It is not a book that promises answers to these questions; rather it is one that allows us to sit a little longer with the questions and accept with grace that the answers may be beyond our knowing for now. My hope now is that as that we find ways—each and every time we come together to learn with and from each other—to "grow immediately less strange" as Hoagland puts it:

And Pessoa, that eminently healthy man,
That artist, wore a blue wool hat
Even on the hottest summer days.
Simply to toss at strangers in the street.
He liked to see them catch it,
And grow immediately less strange.

(Hoagland, 1999, p. 125)

Ruth Horton,
CSPP at Alliant

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What Hope Do I Have?: Achieving Respectability Among My Colleagues

As I logged into my Facebook account one day, I noticed an exchange between two of my classmates on my homepage. From their comments, it was clear this conversation had taken place during our therapeutic techniques class earlier that day. Referring to the discussion my professor had led in class, one classmate wrote, "Hang on there...just one more week of this shit. I can not [sic] believe we are analyzing a mediocre movie to the point of insanity." Another classmate replied, "I don't even think Tyler Perry would believe that his movie would be given this much attention." When I read these comments, I was immediately offended and enraged not because they were insulting Tyler Perry's movie but because of something deeper.

A few weeks earlier my therapeutic techniques class had an assignment to write a paper detailing the application of a family therapy technique to a group of family members in Tyler Perry's movie *Madea's Family Reunion*. This movie starred, was written and directed by Tyler Perry—an African American man. It also was performed by an all African American cast and features subject matter closely tied to one of the many experiences of African American life. The film is filled with family dysfunction, perfect for the assignment. However, a group of non-African American classmates had decided that this movie was "mediocre" at best and not worthy of their time spent analyzing its characters. I did not take the time to ask them about the meaning of their comments, but from their words and negative attitudes earlier in class that day their meaning was obvious. It seemed to me that my classmates did not deem this assignment—assigned by an African

American male professor and analyzing African American people—deserving of their time. I felt that their comments were much bigger than a simple critique; their comments were blatantly disrespectful of the cinematic depiction of the experiences of African American people, my professor's pedagogical efforts, and the perspectives of African Americans in general. Of course, I'm sure that if I asked my classmates if this was the intent of their comments, they would assure me I was mistaken. They would never make racist comments like that in this post-racial world in "progressive" San Francisco. They were "good liberals" after all. To me, their comments were a racial microaggression, and I was incensed.

Sue et al. (2007, p. 273) defines a racial microaggression as a "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignit[y], whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate[s] hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group." More specifically, my classmates performed a microinvalidation. They invalidated the experience of African Americans, and by association they invalidated me. I am often one of the only African Americans in my graduate classes. I regularly find myself educating my mostly White classmates about "the African American experience." Their severe lack of understanding around significant issues pertaining to African Americans—one of the largest racial minority groups in America with one of the longest histories—is startling. Also the degree to which their misconceptions are ingrained is concerning given that they will be future psychologists working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, I often feel alone in my efforts to educate my classmates and wonder if I sound like a broken record. However, I feel obligated to replace their misinformation with reality-based and often empirically confirmed data. This is a perpetual action. I find myself speaking on behalf of African Americans in most of my classes. Sometimes I become tired of being a representative, but I feel it is a necessity.

I thought my therapeutic techniques class would be a relief from this role. Not only was I not the only African American student in my class—there was one other—but my

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professor was African American. If the American Psychological Association's membership is any indication—mostly female and only 1.8 percent African American (APA, 2010)—the chances of encountering an African American male psychologist—especially in the classroom—is rare. As an aspiring professor and researcher it was inspirational to see an African American man teaching a graduate level psychology course. I thought that for once I would not have to be the lone voice righting the “wrongs” when it came to multicultural discourse in the class. However, I still found myself having to corroborate and validate my professor's viewpoints whenever he linked the African American experience with course material. I would look around the room and see some of my classmates roll their eyes or frown when he would bring in an African American point of view (it should be noted that he brought in myriad cultural perspectives and was not myopic in his discussions) as if to say, “Not again.” They often seemed to challenge him when he highlighted the effects of systemic racism on communities of color and how they impacted therapeutic applications and outcomes. I was often disgusted by my classmates' behavior and spoke out in support of my professor, almost challenging my classmates to disagree with me. I had read the research and was ready to meet their disputes. However, beneath the disgust, I was saddened. An experienced educator was standing in front of the class presenting research supported by several years of experience as a counseling psychologist, and he was being disrespectfully challenged by students in a doctoral program. Is this that what years of practice and scholarship earned you? Invalidation by students? Is this same invalidation what awaits me when I step in front of a classroom? Will someone get tired of me bringing up the minority perspective and wasting his or her time with a “mediocre” movie?

My classmates' behavior reminded me of the interaction Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.—a renowned Harvard professor

who happens to be African American—had with a White police officer outside of his home in 2009. The officer arrested Dr. Gates on his front porch after receiving a call from a neighbor that “two black males” were breaking into Gate's house—even after Dr. Gates had provided two forms of identification and proved that he did indeed lived in the house (Trujillo, 2009). This incident was a prime example of racial profiling and what Sue would describe as a type of microaggression called criminality (Sue et al., 2007). Because Gates is an African American man that was trying to enter his home, his White neighbor and the police officer proclaimed him a criminal. If Dr. Gates, one of the foremost literary critics in the United States, and my professor, a well-respected academician and clinician at multiple universities on the East and West coasts, are not venerated for all of their accomplishments, what hope do I have at earning any respect? What hope do I have of my opinions, scholarly contributions, accomplishments, and pedagogical efforts being valued in a world dominated by people like my classmates who will soon be my professional peers and have even more power to demonstrate just how much of a waste of time they deem minority experiences?

Jonathan M. Lassiter,
CSPP at Alliant

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PSYCHOLOGISTS-IN-TRAINING

APA Convention Attendance and the Road to Internship

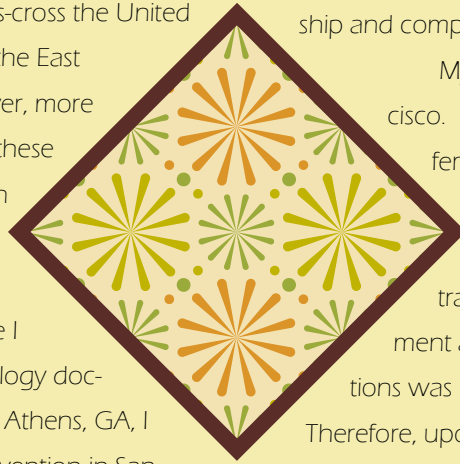
San Francisco, CA. Boston, MA. Toronto, ON. And, finally, Cullowhee, NC. These cities and towns criss-cross the United States and Canada from the West Coast to the East Coast, from the South to the North. However, more than a disparate collection of places to live, these various cities and towns have represented in many ways my journey from beginning graduate school to my pre-doctoral internship. Each August for the past 3 years while I have been enrolled as a Counseling Psychology doctoral student at The University of Georgia in Athens, GA, I have been fortunate to attend the APA convention in San Francisco, Boston, and Toronto, respectively. However, I will not be able to attend the conference this year; it is because of a very good thing: this August, I will be starting my pre-doctoral internship in psychology at the Counseling and Psychological Services at Western Carolina University (WCU) in Cullowhee, NC.

As I write this article, I am sitting in the living room of my new apartment in Western North Carolina, located in the town of Dillsboro, which is about 15 minutes down the road from WCU. While the quiet towns and green Smoky Mountains of Western North Carolina are a far cry from the bustling cities of San Francisco, Boston, and Toronto, I find myself yet again this summer living out of a suitcase for the time being as I set up my new apartment. For now, the cupboards of my new place are bare, my rooms are empty of furniture, and I have been sleeping on an air mattress in the bedroom as I slowly move my furniture in multiple waves from my other apartment in Athens. While doing this and with my intern-

ship start date growing closer, I feel on one hand a sense of optimism as I begin one of the final parts of my journey as a doctoral student. However, I also feel a sense of nostalgia as I reflect upon my past three years as a doctoral student in counseling psychology and how my attendance at the APA conventions have interacted with my journey towards internship and completing my degree.

My first APA Convention was in San Francisco. Having attended several national level conferences through the American Counseling Association as a master's student in School Counseling, I had been well-trained in knowing that professional development and involvement in professional organizations was important to my growth as a counselor.

Therefore, upon moving to my doctoral program, I found it important to continue attending conferences, particularly as I prepare for internship. In addition, I was encouraged by my training director to attend the Asian American Psychological Association (AAPA) convention, which immediately preceded the APA convention. I continued to attend both APA and AAPA conventions each year for the past three years. I have been fortunate to attend conference events, which addressed other aspects of cultural identity, including those by Division 17, Division 44 (Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues) and others concerned with examining aspects of cultural identity as is done here in SERD. Furthermore, many of my cultural experiences came not only from the conference sessions but also from my experiences outside the sessions, whether it was visiting local community mental health organizations that worked with diverse populations or meeting other students involved in cultural organizations at other universities. Such events and experiences allowed me to reflect upon my awareness as a cultural being as well as the many intersections of culture that



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I represent as a gay Filipino American man. My recollections from these conferences and other experiences came into play during my internship interview process when I was asked how I defined multiculturalism and how my own identity related to that of the clients I would be serving on internship. Even prior to the interviews, I found myself being very open about these various aspects of my identity when writing my application essays in order to demonstrate the importance of my worldview and its impact on my work as an intern. Going to conferences has encouraged me to think and learn more about cultural identity and has allowed me to demonstrate my interest in multicultural issues to prospective internship sites, and I am fortunate to have found an internship site at WCU that valued me for my interests in multiculturalism.

I would encourage other students who will be applying for internship soon to attend conferences and think about how their experiences both in and out of conference sessions will contribute to your understanding of multiculturalism and how this will affect your work as an intern and in your profes-

sional career beyond. In my experience many internship sites were interested in hearing about my interests in multiculturalism, and I think that attending conferences and meeting people interested in multiculturalism has certainly helped me think about and communicate my interests to prospective internship sites. I recognize that it is a privilege that I have been able to afford to attend conferences for the last few years and that this is a privilege that many of my fellow students have not always been able to share. However, for those who are able to afford it or can find a creative way to seek funding or reduce the cost of attendance through volunteering at conferences, the experience can be worthwhile. So as I sit in my nearly empty new apartment in North Carolina, having spent multiple summers in multiple cities across the continent, I am both reminiscent of my past experiences at APA conventions and looking forward to the new experiences I will have on internship.

Michael J. Manalo
The University of Georgia

APA Convention: Where Psychologists Belong

Like the devout Christians who dreamed to visit Jerusalem once in their lifetime and the Buddhists' monks and nuns who show their devotion by chanting at the temple every day, I, as a future counseling psychologist, have the same kind of enthusiasm and devotion for attending the APA annual convention each year. It is with great excitement that I look forward to the event in August. Why? Because attending the APA Annual Convention defines who I am. It is, like praying or chanting, a routine behavior that strengthens and shows my professional identity as a counseling psychologist-in-training.

When I first started my master degree in counselor education, I was overwhelmed by all the psychology related associations and conferences. There are international conferences, national conferences, regional conferences, and even conferences held by psychology departments such as the Teacher's College Winter Roundtable. The two major associations related to counseling and psychology is the American Counseling Association and the American Psychological Association. However, one year, the American Psychological Association (APA) annual convention caught my attention (and almost all my peers in the program at the time as well). The conference was being held in Hawaii! Although I did not make it to that one due to financial reason, I set my goal to

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attend one of the APA annual convention in the future ever since.

The first year I started my doctoral program in Counseling Psychology, I worked on a research project with a team and submitted the proposal to the APA Annual Convention. Lucky for us, the proposal was accepted, and I managed to attend the conference at San Francisco with the financial funding from the department. I need not tell you what a beautiful city San Francisco is in the summer. However, I do need to tell you my first experience at the APA annual convention. Whenever I remember that experience, I have a wide smile on my face and experience butterflies in the stomach.

After registering for the conference, I received the conference-programming book, which seemed to list thousands of sessions. I was at a lost at first but started to look through each session, planning my schedule before my departure for San Francisco. When I arrived at the convention center, I was surprised to find that the conference was held in two buildings, across the street from one another. After a full day of running across the street so many times in high heels, within the 10-minute break, I realized that I needed to re-do my schedule according to the location where the sessions would be held. For my first experience, I was overjoyed by the opportunities of listening to talks by famous psychologists, names that I learned from the many textbooks that I have to read in graduate school. It was definitely inspiring to listen to their ideas and their work in person, and my passion for the field was lit up by the experience. Since then, I was encouraged to know that I have chosen the right path for my career. Of course, a tour of the city was nice. It was a nice little vacation for me from a year of hard work on the study and the research.

If you remember, I mentioned that it was somewhat impossible to look through all the programs. The second time

I attended the APA annual convention, which was at Toronto, I received a program summary booklet from APAGS. The booklet made my schedule planning so much easier. At the convention, I also picked up a program summary booklet focused on International Psychology. The information in those two booklets was great because it pulled out the sessions that I was more likely to be interested in attending. Although I was more experienced in attending the conference second time around, it was still quite a challenge to put every sessions that I was interested in together because some of the sessions overlapped with one another. In addition, this time around, I also included many social gathering events and networking sessions into my schedule. That, I found, was another high point during the four days of conference. Not only did I listen to the many presentations, but I was also active in meeting other convention attendees. It can be intimidating to think about meeting all those great people in the field. So attending the social gatherings with a friend or someone you already know is helpful. For example, I was introduced to people whom my friend knows and in turn, I introduce people that I know to my friend. In other words, that is the great part about networking; you get to meet many more people when you already know some people to begin with. Despite being alone at times, I found that I could still enjoy myself because of the awesome planning of those social events and the friendly people that I always find during the event. Overall, it was fun and interesting to learn about what other psychologists and psychologists-in-training do in the field.

In the beginning, I was motivated to attend the APA annual convention because of the opportunity to take a break from study and do some traveling of a new city without guilt. However, after attending a couple of these conferences, I found other reasons that kept me looking forward to this event in August. For one, setting the goal to attend the APA annual convention helps me set a deadline for my research

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vene, especially on behalf of students. I think of Jack Dovidio and recall that it is possible to change the mind set of modern racists and know that effective intervention is possible. And when things get really tough I turn to my allies and friends who pick me up and send me right back in to do the work I am called to do. All of them help me to do the work that counseling psychologists are called to do...“help people improve their well being, alleviate distress and maladjustment, resolve crises, and increase their ability to live more highly functioning lives” (http://www.div17.org/students_defining.html).

So if I had some advice for students and early career professionals it would be simply this:

- Remember that at the end of the day you are a counseling psychologist regardless of what you do.
- Use your training to make a difference in the world.

- Seek to implement your highest aspiration or “calling.”
- Call on your friends and allies.

I am Rosie Phillips Bingham, a multicultural counseling psychologist serving as a Vice President for Student Affairs.

Rosie Bingham, Ph.D.
University of Memphis

Readings

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project and motivates me to submit my research for the conference. Being accepted as one of the presenters at the conference serves as an affirmation about my research interest and skills. Secondly, the APA annual convention is a great place to meet both old friends and new people in the field. Through networking, I have gradually expanded my research interests as I exchanged research ideas and experiences with others. More exciting than that, I had the opportunity to meet researchers and clinicians who work in my home country, Taiwan, who came specifically for the conference. Last but not least, attending the APA annual convention helped define who I am as a future counseling psychologist. Although people who attend the conference come from different disci-

plines within psychology, we all have the same goal, which is to understand human mind and behaviors. Broadening our knowledge about the human mind and behavior by using various methods, we can better provide mental health services to our clients. Therefore, every year, I participated and planned to continue participation in this annual event in August, with high regard for others' dedication to their works and great passion for the field of psychology. When I attend the APA convention with an open mind and an open heart to meet people and absorb new ideas, the cost of attending the event is definitely worth it!

Jenny Y. Wu
University of Georgia-Athens

HERE & NOW

Who Looks American?

Here's a pop quiz - what does Arizona senate bill 1070, president Obama's birth certificate and the soon-to-be-released movie "The Last Airbender" have in common? These issues have all been in the news recently and they are also recent iterations of the "perpetual foreigner". The frequent occurrence of these examples in everyday use suggests that this mindset is not only still active, but possibly even expanding in its scope and pervasiveness.

The concept of the perpetual foreigner has primarily been used to describe the ways in which mainstream Americans sometimes view Asian Americans. Because Asian Americans usually do not fit the physical description of White Americans (tall, fair-skinned, round eyes), mainstream American society can often perceive them as "not American" or as foreigners. This perception can be manifested in many ways, such as the question "where are you from?" or the comment "you speak English well" or viewing Asian Americans as exotic, or mysterious, or as icons of wisdom or sensuality. Although these prejudices can sometimes be intended as compliments, the overall effect is to continue to reaffirm the Asian American as the "other", to be feared, dismissed or desired, but not to be accepted as fully American.

The Arizona senate bill, recently signed into law includes among its provisions, the requirement that police determine the immigration status of anyone with whom the police has official contact if there is reasonable suspicion of that person's citizenship. Although state officials have issued statements that the law will not contribute to racial profiling, I am curious about how many Euro-Americans will be asked to provide evidence of their citizenship. This is a troubling expansion of the concept of perpetual foreigner to American Latinos and Latinas; it is another barrier for them to overcome in order to be seen as Americans who belong in the U.S. Despite protest to the contrary, I believe the impact of the bill will

be to disproportionately bring questions of citizenship to the front of all Latino\a citizens, no matter that they were born in the U.S. to American parents. In an attempt to protect American jobs, it jeopardizes the freedoms that American citizenship guarantees.

For those who are not familiar with some of the more fringe movements in the U.S., the Obama "birther" group consists of people who insist that Barack Obama is not a natural born U.S. citizen and is therefore unable to be the legally elected president of the United States. In response to these concerns, during the run up to the election the Obama campaign released a copy of his birth certificate. In addition, multiple news organizations have asked for and received official copies of his birth certificate straight from the state of Hawaii. Despite this, in the April 2010 New York Times/CBS News poll only 58% of Americans think Barack Obama was born in the U.S. While there may be multiple political and personal reasons for the robustness of this belief, at heart this is another variation on the image of perpetual foreigner. By attempting to cast president Obama as the perpetual foreigner, the birthers are attempting to deny his claim to citizenship and therefore call into question his legitimacy as a president and an American. No previous president has ever been asked to produce evidence of his citizenship and it is hard to imagine any other president being seen as anything other than 100% American.

On the surface, the final example that I'm citing could be seen as the counterexample of the perpetual foreigner. An Indian-American (M. Night Shyamalan) directs the film adaptation of a popular fantasy cartoon series with Asian themes. Three Euro-American actors are cast in the roles of the main protagonists, a decision which might seem to suggest that Asian American actors actually aren't seen as exotic enough for the roles. In fact, one might think that this movie offers evidence that Americans don't automatically equate

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Asian Americans with foreigners. Sadly, I believe the actual reason for the casting is a calculated decision by the movie-makers that mainstream America is still not ready for Asian Americans in leading roles. As noted by the author of a previous column ("Reflections on Recent Hollywood Portrayals of Asians and Asian Americans") it has been common practice for Hollywood to cast White actors in Asian or Asian American parts. Although movies with Asian leads have been successful at the American box office, these have typically been made outside the American film industry. Hollywood's reluctance to cast Asian Americans in lead roles continues a self-fulfilling prophecy: a movie with Asian Americans in the lead roles can't be a box office success and the evidence cited is that there has never been a successful movie with Asian

Americans in lead roles.

After the historic election of 2008, the people of the United States have continued to struggle with the idea of what it means to look American. In electing our first multiracial president we have affirmed the citizenship of a greater diversity of Americans but we have also called into question the expectations, perceptions and assumptions of others. These others will not easily abandon the idea of the perpetual foreigner. This means that in order to be inclusive of all Americans, we need to be equally persistent in validating and advocating for the inclusion of ourselves and each other.

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Movie & Book Reviews

Margaret Cho's *I'm the One that I Want*

In America where many different ethnic groups live together, it is important to be aware of the stereotypes that one group might harbor toward other groups. This is especially important in understanding the life experiences of individuals with multiple identities. *I'm the One that I Want* is recommended by Quina & Bronstein (2003) as a good DVD for students learning about the intersection of size and race in their book, *Teaching Gender and Multicultural Awareness: Resources for the Psychology Classroom*. This DVD is a stand up comedy film where Margaret Cho tells stories of her struggle with discrimination against not only her body size, ethnic heritage and race, but also gender, and sexual orientation. Her life experiences, disheartening yet told in humor, offer great examples of the injustice that can occur when living and identifying

within multiple identities. Though the film was produced over ten years ago, the DVD continues as good viewing for undergraduate and graduate students seeking to expand their understanding of multiculturalism in the United States.

Born in Korea and now a doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology, Alliant International University, San Francisco campus, I appreciate Margaret Cho's stand-up comedy for lending me comprehension of the harsh reality of stereotypes and discrimination. Ms. Cho, an ample-sized, bisexual woman, born in the United States to Korean immigrants offers perspective on both Korean and American worldviews and cultures. Ms. Cho, awarded for her social justice efforts, uses her own lived experience to entertain and to expand awareness. By watching Ms. Cho's comedy, students can see indirectly some of the traditional Korean or East Asian worldviews about American society in general and toward the gay community in particular. In Ko-

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rea, individuals in the gay community may find it too difficult to be out with their sexual orientation because of conservative social norms related to Confucianism and many religious groups. Because Ms. Cho grew up in a conservative Korean family, she is able to present the conservative Korean worldview in parody where she exposes her mother's disapproving attitude toward her bisexuality and toward the gay community in general by deftly demonstrating her mother's matchless humorous gestures and expressions.

Margaret Cho's comedy show reveals the American media's biased expectation for Asian women (a topic also discussed in the SERD Summer 09 issue by Mai-Lin Poon). For instance, Americans often learn negative or exaggerated stereotypes of Asian Americans by watching Asian actors/actresses cast in narrow roles that do not portray the full diversity of the Asian American people. Ms. Cho talked a lot about the struggle she had with "not being Asian enough" in the eyes of the T.V. producers. That alone is a poignant example of how Asian Americans are excluded as full members of American society. In regards to body image, Ms. Cho tells the story of being denied TV opportunities because of her larger body type that did not conform to stereotypical expectations. As a woman, she also faced blatant gender discrimination and sexual harassment. The combined mistreatment of her myriad and intersecting cultural identities broke her spirit for a short time, during which she fell into drugs and alcohol, and considered suicide. However, Ms. Cho's deeper values of social justice drove her to overcome the depression, alcohol, and drugs

and build her own career as a comedian. Through her own force of will, she became a popular comedian with a unique and broad worldview of body image, gender, and GLBT intersections within Korean and American biculturalism. Margaret Cho became the first Asian American woman making a successful living as a stand-up comedian in the United States. Through her creative comedy style, busting stereotypes held by conservative Korean American and East Asian community, Ms. Cho's comedy may provide hope to people facing the social injustice of stereotypes, discrimination, and abuse. My only caveat is that Ms. Cho uses "member only" language and labels that would be inappropriate for "non-member" use, and by anyone in professional settings. If the film is used in educational training settings, it would be important to allow time for processing her use of language and what the terms can mean in different settings. If viewers keep this in mind, the comedy is a great experience. If someone seeks to understand (a) worldviews that embrace Asian and American cultures, (b) the media's inflexibility toward body image and harassment of women, and (c) some of the LGBT community's struggles, Margaret Cho's DVD can be helpful as a starting point.

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The authors would like to acknowledge my colleague, Jonathan Oringher also at California School of Professional Psychology, for his contribution in reviewing the initial draft.

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