

# Central Valley Counseling Association

*Serving and Supporting Virginia Counselors in Augusta County, Highland County, Page County, Rockingham County, Shenandoah County, Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro since 1962!*



## Letter from the Editors

Hello CVCA Members!

We are excited to bring you a newsletter packed full of timely and meaningful articles! This year – 2013 – marks the 51<sup>st</sup> year in our Chapter's history! For the past four years, CVCA has won the Large Chapter of the Year Award from the Virginia Counseling Association.

We have been honored with this prestigious recognition because of you, our members. It is because of your dedication to our profession, your clients, our community and our chapter that have made this possible.

As your editors, it is our goal to keep with that level of excellence in producing our quarterly newsletter!

As always, we welcome your input and feedback, as well as your thought provoking articles! Happy Reading!

**-Cherée Hammond, Sara Loker, Ginger Neff & Andrea Zimmon**

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## CVCA Stands Out at VCA

### 2013 VCA Convention – A Bang for your Buck

CVCA was well represented at the 2013 VCA Convention at the Homestead Resort and Spa in the beautiful setting of Hot Springs in Bath County. The cost of \$105 per room attracted many counselors. The VCA office reported that there were approximately 608 people registered for this convention. Smiles, hugs and laughter while enjoying delicious food, serious learning sessions, spa time, outdoor and indoor exploring time, tea time, entertaining receptions and an outstanding Keynote Speaker, Trevor Romain, made this convention one of the best in VCA's history. CVCA members presented a large percentage of the 134 professional development sessions, helped with the VA Alliance for School Counseling and the VA Clinical Counselors Alliance, and volunteered for check-in duties, filling tote bags, selling books and CVCA reception duties. Our reception was one of the best-attended receptions, even attracting Trevor Romain who was warmly welcomed. Member participation is what makes CVCA an outstanding VCA Chapter.

CVCA earned three specially designated tables honoring award winners at the Awards Luncheon. The Large VCA Chapter Award was presented to CVCA, the William Van Hoose Career Service Award was presented to Dr. Renee Staton, and the John R Cook Award for service to VCA was presented to Sandy Hite, co-recipient with Michele Dowdy. This is the fourth consecutive year that CVCA has received the Large Chapter Award. Jenn Kurbel received the CVCA Chapter Member of the Year Award and Sandy Hite received the VASC Division Member of the Year Award. CVCA once again brought honors to our valley.

The VCA 2014 Convention will be at the Williamsburg Lodge from Nov. 20-22, 2014 and the VCA 2015 Convention will return to the Homestead at the same prices as this year.

Vicky Wheeler at the VCA Office predicts an even bigger attendance in 2015 and she has requested an increase in our room blocks and the inclusion of Saturday night at convention prices. The additional night at the lower fee should encourage many attendees to stay through the weekend and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere of the Homestead.

This year's convention provided the opportunity for attendees to "Refresh, Renew, and Revitalize Your Professional Repertoire" in a beautiful setting filled with many fun things to do at a reasonable price. What a bang for your buck!



Our CVCA awards co-chairs, Emily Barnes and Vanessa Redmond, have learned that **CVCA will win the VCA Large Chapter of the Year Award** and **Jenn Kurbel** will be presented the **CVCA Chapter Member of the Year Award**. CVCA accomplished many goals last year under the leadership of Jenn and our chapter really stood out among the others. Our connections with each other and strong push for professional development and sharing resources was noted. I believe this is the 4th year in a row that we have won this award. Let's continue to keep CVCA a strong and outstanding chapter. I hope you will be at the convention luncheon to help us celebrate.

Another winner is **Renee Staton** who will be presented the **VCA William VanHoose Career Service Award**. This award is presented to members whose contributions to the professional aims of the organization have been substantial. Renee meets all of the criteria listed for this category.

*CVCA Continued...*

She has rendered a significant contribution to the advancement of the professional goals of VCA, has performed outstanding acts and achievements such as noteworthy professional manuscripts, programs, seminars, etc., and has made significant contributions to public understanding of the professional aims and achievements of guidance and personnel works whether at the state or local level. Lennie Echterling described Renee in the following statement:

As a leader, Renee has fulfilled an impressive array of roles—booster, organizer, gadfly, advocate, and diplomat—in charting the most promising course for any professional organization, energizing its members, and building a productive team. Renee has served in numerous vital roles, including president, board member, and editorial board member of the Virginia Counselors Association Journal. She also has served as president, board member, and graduate student liaison in the Virginia Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (VACES). As a direct result of her efforts, VACES received a national award from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision. For years, Renee has organized and coordinated JMU's successful Annual Summer Institute in Counseling, which recently completed its seventeenth year. She is an inspirational counselor educator, dedicated leader, and tireless advocate who deserves this recognition for her commitment to the counseling profession. Thanks and congratulations on this honor that you so richly deserve, Renee!

The VCA Foundation is presenting the **VCA John R. Cook Award to Sandy Hite** to honor a long and meritorious history with VCA. Lennie Echterling described Sandy in the following statement: Sandy is the epitome of a true school counselor, a tireless promoter of the profession, an inspiring example to colleagues, and an outstanding mentor of counseling students. She has vigorously supported both VCA and CVCA in countless ways throughout a distinguished career that has been characterized by dedicated involvement in professional service. At the local, state and national levels,

Sandy has been deeply involved in professional service for many years.

In VCA, she has served as Secretary, chaired the Awards Committee, chaired the Bylaws Resolutions Committee, chaired the Professional Development Committee, and served on the Convention Steering Committee. She has been President of both CVCA and VSCA. Sandy has served in other offices for CVCA, including Secretary, Awards Chair, and Membership Chair.

Sandy is a wonderful example of life-long learning and dedication to professional vitality. Always full of energy, enthusiasm and hope, Sandy is the poster child for combating stagnation and burnout. Sandy's unflagging commitment to professional service for over four decades makes her an obvious choice for this award. Counseling has made tremendous strides in Virginia during that time and Sandy has played a significant role in advancing the profession. Congratulations and thanks for all that you do, Sandy!

The CVCA Awards Committee also **nominated Pam Comer for the VCA Counselor of the Year and Cheree Hammond for the Humanitarian and Caring Person Award**. They were not winners at the state level this year but are winners in our book. We plan to resubmit them for these awards next year. If you have any supporting evidence to add to their nomination packets please give it to Teresa Haase at EMU.

The **Counselor of the Year Award** gives recognition to an outstanding member of VCA who spends the majority of his/her professional time in counseling and guidance. Pam meets the criteria for Counselor of the Year as she has rendered significant contributions to the organization she serves, has offered outstanding guidance, counselor and personnel services to many and has exhibited leadership in the community through the organization being served. Teresa Haase described Pam in the following statement:

Prior to her work at EMU, Pam served as a grief counselor and became a recognized and highly respected clinician in our community. She transitioned to a group practice and worked with a diverse caseload. In 2004 she was hired as the Director of the Counseling Center at EMU.

*CVCA Continued...*

Pam has been recognized as a leader in suicide prevention and intervention, facilitating trainings, spearheading initiatives such as Walk for Hope and coordinating a prevention program at EMU called CoachLink, which pairs students who are struggling academically and emotionally with mentors. In all ways, Pam is a devoted and stellar clinician. She maintains a private practice and continues to be a highly sought after counselor. One of Pam's greatest strengths is her groundedness – her ability to remain calm and to provide a feeling of safety and security for those she counsels, trains or supervises. She possesses a comforting presence and has an innate ability to draw out strength and confidence in her clients. She is a master clinician.

The **Humanitarian and Caring Person Award** gives recognition to a member who truly cares for the welfare of others and who cares about social issues and problems. This award honors persons who give to others without fanfare or expectation of reward other than personal satisfaction in seeing other persons made happier or the social milieu given more integrity. Cheree meets the criteria for the Humanitarian and Caring Person of the Year Award as she has a great impact on the lives of others through caring and this is recognized by her peers and she continually is involved in situations which benefit others. Michele Kielty described Cheree in the following statement:

Cheree has not only poured her heart and soul into creating counseling courses that allow students to learn and grow, she has infused aspects of social justice and humanitarian principles into these courses and associated experiences. Students have commented on the way Cheree uses herself and her life experiences to create a sense of safety in the classroom in order to explore issues of justice and the human condition.

Cheree's counseling practice has revolved around under-served populations and she has provided truly empathic and deeply caring services to children and families who are struggling with seemingly insurmountable concerns. Cheree's integration of service, scholarship, and teaching in the arena of multicultural counseling is truly impressive.

She embodies the principles of a multiculturally competent person and counselor.

**More recognition and awards for CVCA members:**

Our CVCA President, **Debbie Sturm**, has received the **SACES Award for Outstanding Teaching and also the JMU Department of Graduate Psychology's Distinguished Service Award** and **Lennie Echterling** has received the **JMU Department of Graduate Psychology's Distinguished Scholar Award**. Lennie wrote the following information but he is too modest in recognizing himself. His last sentence in referring to his colleagues certainly describes Lennie! After returning from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) Conference, where she received the SACES Award for Outstanding Teaching, Debbie Sturm just learned that she has been honored with the Department of Graduate Psychology's Distinguished Service Award. Her achievement is particularly noteworthy because she is still a relatively recent, but most welcome, addition to the Department of Graduate Psychology. It is always a pleasure to see this talented clinician, supervisor, and teacher in action. With her artful ways of promoting openness, self-exploration, discovery, insight and personal growth, Debbie epitomizes the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to be a successful counselor. She certainly puts her talents to excellent use in providing service at the program, department, university, state, regional, and national levels. Congratulations once again, Debbie!

Finally, the Department of Graduate Psychology also honored me with its Distinguished Scholar Award. This gives me an opportunity to recognize so many others--faculty members, students, and practitioners--who have made my scholarly work such joyfully collaborative ventures. In fact, nearly all my publications have included wonderful co-authors who worked closely with me throughout the entire process. It's such a delight to be surrounded by curious, sharp, energetic, thoughtful, and generous colleagues who inspire, challenge, and encourage me! Thank you!



## What We Are Publishing

Eric Cowan of James Madison University has been interviewed for an online exclusive piece that has been posted on the Counseling Today website. The title of the piece is "Processing Personal Grief as a Professional Counselor," and you can access it at <http://ct.counseling.org/2013/10/processing-personal-grief-as-a-professional-counselor/>. Lennie Echterling notes that, "Eric brings to this important topic a deep appreciation for the complex dynamics of the grief process and a profound sensitivity to the needs of counselors who are grieving. As I read Eric's words, I couldn't help but imagine his voice--its pacing, tone and eloquence--giving expression to his insights and wisdom."

**Congratulations** to Dr. Annmarie Early, Ph.D., LMFT, and her husband and co-author Christian Early, Ph.D. for their publication *"Integrating the New Science of Love and a Spirituality of Peace: Becoming Human Again"* with Cascade Press. This volume comprises a compilation from the Attachment Conference hosted by EMU in 2011.

This masterful volume works to compile the contributions of renowned speakers and their keynotes such as Dr. Dan Siegel (IPNB and author of *Mindsight*), Dr. Susan Johnson (originator of Emotionally Focused Couples

Therapy), Dr. Jim Coan (neuroscientist at UVA), Dr. John Paul Lederach (Notre Dame and leader in the field of Conflict Resolution), and Dr. Nancey Murphy (Ethicist). The volume also includes an introduction and conclusion from the Early's and an addition of attachment to place and ecology by Dr. Janelle Curry.

Dr. Howard Zehr writes in the foreword, *"This book is about what it means to be human, and it may not be what you expect. Contemporary neuroscientists is rapidly undermining some of our dearly held assumptions about who we are and how we function. This is not another idle academic conversation. These assumptions have been the basis of our educational and legal institutions, and changing them could have far-reaching consequences for how we structure our lives... How we see ourselves is an urgent moral issue. The implications of attachment theory are personal, social, and global, and that is why this book is so important."*

Readers cannot help but be both riveted and enchanted by the Early's lyrical and compelling integration of these thinkers. I highly recommend this book and suspect it will find a place on your bookshelf next to your most treasured attachment literature.

## What We Are Reading

**What We Are Reading:** *Serve the People: A Stir Fried Journey Through China*

By: Michael Horst

### **Foodie Relationships**

I grew up in a Mennonite family that recognized food as an important piece of our cultural identity.

Through potlucks at church, large meals at family gatherings, the longstanding food pantry run out of our church's kitchen, and fond memories of cooking with my family; food played a large role in my upbringing and my cultural identity.

Beyond these fond memories and customs and the immense value I place on food as a catalyst and key ingredient (pun intended) for culture,

*Reading, continued...*

I am proud to say that I welcome the label "foodie". I'm also elated to say that my wife, a fellow foodie, supports me in this venture. Being a foodie is a burgeoning young aspect of my identity. It's a hobby, useful skill, and provides delightful fodder for a marriage. From fat kid to foodie, food has always held and will always hold great importance in my life.

### **A Stir Fried Journey**

My love of food is one in a series of reasons that brought me to select Jen LinLiu's *Serve the people: A stir fried journey through china*. LinLiu's book not only explores Chinese culture through recounting her journey of working from entry-level culinary training to working in a restaurant, but gives the reader a chance to cook along with her. This opportunity had me sold on tackling the cook and cooking along with LinLiu. This book also appealed to me because of its exploration of China and the Chinese people.

LinLiu's ancestors came from Guangdong and Fujian, but her parents lived in Taiwan (a touchy subject to many Chinese persons, since China sees Taiwan as a renegade province) before they immigrated to the United States. LinLiu, was raised in southern California and graduated from Columbia University. She has written for many prominent journals and magazines. LinLiu, on a Fulbright scholarship, traveled to China to reconnect with her heritage through immersing herself in the culture of China, attending culinary school, and eventually founding the Black Sesame Culinary School in Beijing.

A close friend of mine has close ties to China and has traveled there many times. This summer, before he returned to China for a year, I met him for coffee weekly and we would discuss Chinese culture and I was pleased to see that LinLiu's book mirrored much of the content of our discussions.

In China, there is a very large group of persons that my friend would refer to as peasants, which I'm not sure is politically correct, but seems appropriate

economically. These persons often farm in the countryside and the government can routinely take land or move families. Young persons often flock to cities looking for a "rice bowl", as LinLiu writes in her book. A rice bowl is a living wage. There is also a growing middle class in China that is in search of creature comforts. This is the economic class that my friend works with, because they can afford to travel or host Americans.

LinLiu attends culinary school with young persons from the lower and middle classes looking for low wage works as cooks and chefs. LinLiu writes that one could work as a chef in the United States for a few months and return to China to buy a house. However, in China, many cooks and chefs are low wage workers. Despite the low wage, there is a sense of tradition and pride in the profession and very skilled, driven persons can find work in upper class restaurants that cater to the wealthy demographic of large cities.

An interesting point that stuck out to me in LinLiu's book is the strong correlation between education and perspectives on culture. When LinLiu first arrives to her first culinary school her fellow students (mostly poor young men from the countryside) and her teacher do not understand that she is American because she looks Chinese. All of her classes and interactions had been in Mandarin and LinLiu struggled to keep up. Eventually she writes that her teacher finally understood that Mandarin was not her first Language. LinLiu writes, "I had assumed that when I interrupted Teacher Zhang to ask questions, he and the students understood that I had to process the information in Chinese first and then mentally translate it into English. Apparently, however, they had simply thought I was retarded". (LinLiu, 2009, p. 44). The students also, having finally understood the concept of Chinese American, asked her all sorts of questions about race, such as what happens when a Chinese lady had a baby with a white man. As the book progresses and LinLiu interacts with more educated persons, this sort of experience is not as much of an issue. However, among the over 1.3 billion people living in China, education (particularly in multiculturalism) and money can be scarce.

*Reading, continued...*

Jen LinLiu was born and raised in the United States, so she and I seem to share many cultural values and perspectives. We also share a love of food and a desire to reconnect with our heritages, she perhaps a bit more intensely than I. However, LinLiu is a woman from California with a Chinese heritage by way of parents from Taiwan. She grew up with *Mom's steamed pork patty* and I grew up with potluck casseroles. I'm a white man and she, as most people she met in China made clear to her, looks like a very Chinese woman.

LinLiu's book gave me a glimpse into Chinese culture. I was surprised how difficult LinLiu's assimilation into Chinese culture was at times even though she is highly educated, planned her journey, had Chinese heritage, a Chinese appearance, and grasp of the language. Her experience reminded me of the challenges immigrants face when they attempt to assimilate into another country and culture.

LinLiu holds onto many her American values, such as individualism, but expands her perspective into a broader pluralism than she had before. LinLiu reiterated a message that I have heard many times, but never loses its importance. This world's peoples are comprised of a pluralism of paradigms that permeate culture.

### **Wrapping Up**

As a counselor, I want to hold onto and develop my own pluralistic perspective. At times, I can feel myself slipping into the comfortable western mindset that has enwrapped my life and education. This is fine because this is the perspective that I bring to the panoply of perspectives offered by this world's peoples. Where I need to be careful is in placing value judgments on perspectives or becoming too rigid in my own perspective.

Another important point that LinLiu's book brought to life for me is the importance of self-knowledge, whatever that may be. I believe that counselors need to know themselves. To know oneself, one needs an authentic identity. Authentic identities include a sense of heritage, ancestry, and history.

Therefore, I believe that counselors need a sense of history in terms of their sense of self. LinLiu connected to her sense of history in a very tangible way, she immersed herself in the Chinese culinary scene and lived in China. I am exploring other, more figurative ways of reconnecting to mine.

For both LinLiu and me, food is important, but so is the journey to better understand ourselves in the context of a large, diverse, and pluralistic world. When persons walk through the door of the counseling office, they have all come from rich histories that lend themselves to complex individuals that embody them. My prejudices, presumptions, and false narratives of the other may need to clear to make space to listen to the unique story that the individual brings.

Sturm, D., & Gibson, D. (Eds.) (2012). *Social Class and the Helping Professions*. New York: Taylor Francis.

This book provides a comprehensive examination of the intersection of social class and the helping professions, including examinations of the role of social class in American culture, classism, social class and mental health, and the American Dream. The first section contains an introduction to the global, historical, and sociological aspects of class and an in-depth look at urban and rural poverty, the middle class, and the upper class and economic privilege. The next section brings the reader into the world of their clients in more specific ways, examining the role social class plays in mental health and mental health counseling, in the family structure and in counseling families, and in the experiences people have throughout the educational process and in schools. Finally, the last section of the book discusses specific techniques and models to use in the reader's clinical practice, including how to assess clients' experiences of class and classism and how these experiences have shaped their worldview and view of the self.

## **What We are Contemplating, Pondering, and Considering**

*"Howard Yoder has spearheaded efforts to collaborate with the CSB and the local sheriff's department to better meet the needs of persons experiencing mental health difficulties and while in our local jails."*

### **Jail is no Place for the Mentally Ill**

According to a 2008 Virginia state mental health commission report, an estimated 15 percent of inmates in our prisons and jails are suffering from some form of mental illness. Since the number of patient beds in state mental institutions like Western State Hospital have been drastically reduced through the deinstitutionalization initiated in Virginia several decades ago, available space for mentally ill adults in such facilities has dropped from over 10,000 to fewer than 2000.

Unfortunately, far too many of our citizens with mental illnesses have ended up in prison as a result of their inappropriate behaviors or threats of harm to themselves or others. Our jails and prisons are ill-equipped to handle such cases.

For example, in dealing with inmates who are suicidally depressed, our local Harrisonburg-Rockingham Regional Jail often sees itself as having to resort to the use of a restraint chair or the padded isolation cell.

The restraint chair is one in which an inmate is strapped and kept in an upright position for hours on end, without access to mental health treatment or any kind of normal human interaction.

The padded isolation room, unlike a regular solitary confinement cell, has no cot or mattress and no sink or commode, only a hole in the floor to be used as a toilet. Before being placed in the cell, the person is stripped and given only a paper gown to wear. No reading or writing material is provided, and human contact is limited to jail personnel bringing in food (with no utensils, for safety reasons) and some strips of toilet paper when requested.

From the perspective of jail personnel, they feel they have no other options. They don't have the staff, training or budget to provide the necessary mental health treatment. Someone from the Community Services Board may be called in for an assessment, but actual counseling help is normally not available.

Understandably, the jail's primary responsibility is to ensure inmate safety and security. But a caring community as rich in resources as ours should be able to do better than that, given the fact that, for an emotionally ill person, this kind of restraint and isolation can only serve to worsen their mental condition.

I have no easy solution, but for starters I suggest considering the following:

- 1) Whenever possible, confine suicidal persons to regular segregation cells, with trained community volunteers present for designated shifts around the clock to assure safety and provide for human interaction. These could include people like graduate level counselor interns and retired mental health professionals or clergy.
- 2) Provide appropriate reading and writing material.
- 3) Offer professional therapy on a regular basis through the CSB or with trained interns from JMU's or EMU's Masters in Counseling programs.

These are only some beginning suggestions, and any long-term solutions must include having more forensic unit bed space at institutions like Western State Hospital.

Meanwhile, I welcome any of you who are interested to join some of us who are in ongoing conversations with our local CSB (which has the contract with the HRRJ) to work at alternative solutions

Harvey Yoder, LPC, LMFT

Family Life Resource Center

273 Newman Avenue

Harrisonburg, VA 22801



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*Contemplating continued: THEORY CORNER***A Brief Note on Psychoanalysis**

Nate Koser, PhD, LPC

There are many ways to describe psychoanalysis. Every description will fail. This is necessary and inevitable. Though it is a framework with specific principles of theory and praxis, psychoanalysis is a discourse not a technique. Psychoanalysis is a practice of the unconscious. Therefore, it is always contingent upon the particularities of each subject and is predicated upon the singularity of desire. However, a few things might be said, which will point to the uniqueness of this approach.

Psychoanalysis begins with what Freud considered the *fundamental rule* of the clinic. The one who has come to speak to a psychoanalyst, the analysand, must say everything that occurs to him or her. The analysand must agree to commit to this and to say everything without censorship or judgment. The analysand must abandon all consideration of the relevance, appropriateness, value, and quality of what is on their mind.

The psychoanalyst, in turn, is charged with listening. He or she must provide silence. Offering this unique space through which the subject may emerge in speech is anything but passivity. In the end, the psychoanalytic discourse operates on and through what occurs in the speech of the analysand.

Psychoanalysis is predicated on the actual discourse of the analysand, the actual words used, and the specific significations the analysand utters.

Language is exceedingly important. This is another reason why the analyst's silence is necessary: the analyst wants to hear these words, the repetition of words, and the associative links such words have to the analysand's history. The subject is an effect of this signifying chain.

The *fundamental rule* and the analyst's offering of silence allow for the transference. In the end, it is important that the analysand is speaking to someone. The position of the interlocutor is vital. However, the psychoanalyst allows himself or herself to be deformed in light of the analysand's history. As Lacan noted, in the clinic the psychoanalyst

must pay with his or her person. The analyst does not avoid this, but welcomes it. The transference is the very catalyst for the analysis. The transference brings with it the unconscious material that is inaccessible to the analysand. This is the material that will be the focus of the treatment. One way of understanding the transference, according to Lacan, relates to the fact that the analysand will place the analyst in the position of the *subject supposed to know*. In other words, the analyst will be the one supposed to have knowledge of the analysand's suffering and of their desire.

When the transference begins, the analyst never identifies with the position in which they have been placed, but functions within what Lacan termed the *psychoanalytic discourse*: the analyst does not assert themselves as another ego or subject within the relationship, but as a function, a cause of the desire of the analysand. This is why in psychoanalysis, what is focused upon are the formations of the unconscious; such as slips, bungled actions, forgetting, mixed metaphors, negations, and so on. In each of these events, the unconscious has ruptured the typical discourse of the ego. The analyst punctuates these moments. The analyst always acts upon the moment when something related to desire emerges in the session. The analyst always awaits the surprise of the unconscious.

Psychoanalysis is not about understanding, meaning, and what has been called insight. These may occur, but they are not the goal *as such*. It is especially not the case that if they do, the analyst was the one to have contributed them. Psychoanalysis is much more concerned with throwing knowing into question. It is directed toward the holes in meaning, toward what is seemingly nonsensical, to what resists being brought into communal knowledge. Psychoanalytic interpretation, or the role of the analyst, is not to deliver knowledge but to set the analysand to work, to cause the desire of the unconscious. It is also utilized to begin to undo the identifications in which the subject is mired. In psychoanalysis, it is not merely that the analysand is always beset by an unknowable knowledge, but that the analyst is even further from the truth. The psychoanalyst can never

*Contemplating continued: THEORY CORNER*

hope to have the answer. More than the unknown, it is this unknowable, which guides psychoanalysis. The psychoanalytic discourse is constitutive of the analysand encountering the dimensions of his or her psychical economy that are radically alien to both themselves and the analyst.

*Nate Koser earned his BS in psychology and MA in counseling from Eastern Mennonite University. He earned a PhD in psychology at Saybrook University in San Francisco, California. Nate is a Lacanian psychoanalyst in continual formation. Nate is a member of the Lacanian Forum of Washington D.C. He also works closely with Lutecium: The Psychoanalytic Foundation, the Affiliated Psychoanalytic Workgroups (APW), and Das Unbehagen: A Free Association for Psychoanalysis. Nate provides psychoanalysis and psychotherapy at Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC in Harrisonburg, VA. Please call (540) 908-0808, or consult the website for more information, [www.aporiacounseling.com](http://www.aporiacounseling.com).*

### **Examining Efforts to Build Diversity Among Counseling Students**

#### **A Literature Review**

Erin A. Williams

By examining the diversity within the population of mental health professionals, a prominent issue has emerged in the literature. The representation of culturally and ethnically diverse professionals is minimal in a career field where the need for awareness and competency of multicultural issues is rapidly growing (Maton, Kohout, Wicherski, Leary, Vinokurov, 2006; Shin, 2008; Shin, Smith, Goodrich, & LaRosa, 2011). Research indicates that ethnic demographics have increased in the past few decades, and although the gap in access to education between Whites and minorities has decreased, there is still a tremendous disparity among the number of minorities who complete a higher education degree (Maton, et. al, 2006; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; Chandler, 2011). In 2008, the National Center for Education Statistics noted, "Although bachelor's

degree attainment rates for all racial/ethnic groups have increased over the past 12 years, gaps are not narrowing and, in some cases, they are widening" (2010). According to the United States Census Bureau in 2009, the amount of White students enrolled in a four-year college program was 8,025,000. In the same category, only 1,490,000 Black students, 593,000 Asian students, and 1,168,000 Hispanic students were enrolled in a four-year college. Numbers of non-White students enrolled in graduate programs the same year drastically decreased: 2,792,000 White students were enrolled compared to 479,000 Black students, 381,000 Asian students, and 265,000 Hispanic students (2012). In discussing the underrepresentation of non-White persons in psychology, Chandler (2011) stated, "Attention was given to the importance of American psychologists having a sense of urgency toward improving diversity in the field, both as an ethical obligation and as a model of change for other fields" (p.101). As this topic was researched further, literature regarding diversity in higher education was inconsistent, as some sources examined the weaknesses in current higher education institutions, and other sources related the inadequacies to earlier education environments, such as undergraduate programs and even high school. One must consider then, is the lack of culturally and ethnically diverse professionals a result of the lack in generation of educational programs? What are the factors that contribute to low enrollment of culturally and ethnically diverse individuals into psychology programs, particularly in higher education? Why is this area of research recognized, but not pursued more urgently?

Affirmative action efforts have tried supporting the increase of minorities to enroll in educational programs. Vasquez and Jones (2006) reported "in higher education, affirmative action policies were designed to encourage minorities of color to enroll in order to minimize the discrepancy between their enrollment and their representation in the population" (p. 133). However, they pointed out the contrast that, "racial/ethnic minority students are

*Contemplating continued...*

underrepresented at all levels of psychology” (p. 134). Vasquez and Jones (2006) concluded that affirmative action policies could help academic programs by placing focus on inclusion versus exclusion efforts. In addition, Maton, et. al. (2006) examined how anti-affirmative action measures may have confounded minority students’ college enrollment by decreasing flexibility in admission criteria.

Shin (2008) discussed how academic institutions, particularly psychology and counseling programs, are subject to represent socially constructed biases, just as other major businesses and corporations surrounding them. Therefore, academic programs and universities are first challenged to be aware of their messages of privilege and power and more specifically, their unconscious disregard to diversity issues. It is strongly argued that faculty attitudes and institutional curricula need to be more open to integrating diversity throughout their programs (Rogers & Molina, 2006; Vasquez & Jones, 2006; Quarterman, 2008). There are many benefits to being increasingly diverse in education and practice including uncovering unmet needs, gaining new knowledge, and improving creativity and effectiveness of interventions when addressing issues that have roots in cultural and ethnical struggles (Rogers & Molina, 2006).

A more specific area that is deficient in increasing diversity within learning environments is the diversity of faculty and administration, themselves. Maton, et. al. (2006) asserted that the presence of minority faculty can help attract minority applicants. Guiffrida and Douthit (2010) described how Black faculty and advisors can attend to minority students positively, as they are able to understand the psychological and emotional issues, in addition to academic demands, that minority students experience, whereas White faculty may struggle to connect with minority students. This may be due to a White faculty’s cultural insensitivities or being viewed as an unrealistic role model. However, Chandler (2011) challenged that racial/ethnic

background of faculty and administration is not as important as simply being competent and open to diversity issues. Rogers and Molina (2006) identified that faculty should be regularly provided opportunities and trainings to increase their cultural competence. This is assuming that faculty and administration are willing to participate in the diversity effort; Shin, et. al. questioned staff investment, wondering if faculty themselves are ready to confront their own stereotypes, uncomfortable feelings, or even more drastically, embrace unwanted change. Nonetheless, by being more aware of their own prejudices, faculty can create safer learning environments where students can reveal feelings without cultural or ethnic challenge (Shin, 2008). Ratts and Hutchins (2009) supported this in explaining that it is a counselor’s duty to advocate for minority students, in order to increase safety, avoid mental health problems, and increase academic success.

The literature next identified the issues of recruitment and retention efforts for minority applicants. It is indicated that recruitment efforts may have to extend all the way to high school students (Maton, et. al. 2006; Chandler, 2011). Many sources invite the field to examine the pipeline between higher education institutions and areas that diverse applicants could be reached. Shin, et. al. (2011) appealed to the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to research and implement effective recruitment strategies, by suggesting that institution be required to keep systematic data on the race, culture, and ethnicity of applicants, something that is now a choice of the individual institutions. The next step is to reexamine the materials and the distribution of those materials by academic institutions to make sure they are culturally and ethnically attractive (Rogers & Molina 2006; Quarterman, 2008). Some theorists recommend that a course on diversity issues be included in the curriculum, as an inviting element (Rogers & Molina, 2006; Vasquez & Jones, 2006). Quarterman highlighted that minority students “often have been victims of long-term educational disadvantage”

*Contemplating continued...*

(p. 948), therefore institutions and programs of learning may have to make efforts in helping minority applicants become more academically prepared (2008). Furthermore, Maton, et. al. (2006) added that the quality of academic preparation for students of color be given just as much attention. Many authors outline the importance of personal contact between an advisor and a potential applicant and emphasize the need for the contact to continue throughout a student's learning career (Rogers & Molina, 2006; Shin, 2008; Guiffrida & Douthit, 2010; Chandler, 2011). Chandler (2011) encouraged minority applicants to consider the "desire and responsibility to uplift the Black community through their work" (p. 108) as a way to appeal and recruit minority applicants.

Evaluation of admission criteria is another recruitment and retention effort that requires attention. Vasquez and Jones (2006) questioned if standardized tests, such as the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) required by most programs for admission, are biased since they do not accurately predict the success of a student in a program. Shin (2008) asserted admission requirements need to place less emphasis on GRE scores and grade point averages (GPA) and more so on letters of recommendation, special talents, socioeconomic status, geographic origin, and leadership potential. He added, "Relying too heavily on GRE scores and GPAs also does not take into consideration the unique life experiences of many applicants of color" (p. 184). One must consider how the marginalized population is continually victim to various oppressive dynamics. Minimizing these constructs in a higher education admission process is crucial.

A resounding matter in recruitment and retention of minority students is financial aid. By providing funds or stipends for minority applicants, the interest and accessibility to a higher education becomes more achievable (Maton, et. al., 2006; Shin, 2008; Quarterman, 2008; Chandler, 2011). Vasquez and Jones (2006) even suggested reducing the cost gap in lower educational settings between Whites and minority, as a way to provide an example for higher

learning institutions.

The final comparable factor that may contribute to the recruitment and retention of minority students is location. The literature questioned whether or not higher education institutions consider the geographical factors as minorities seek learning environments, such as distance from a student's home, the acceptance and support of one's culture or ethnicity in this new environment, and the social connections available surrounding a college or university campus (Chandler, 2011). Guiffrida and Douthit (2010) explored the significance in colleges and universities endorsing active student and professional organizations with a cultural or ethnic focus. They listed how this allowed minority students to feel connected with others with common backgrounds and experiences, helped empower them to advocate with a group for systemic changes, and provided respite to be themselves. This can then aid an institution not only with attractiveness, but retention of minority students. Quarterman (2008) warned that without these assets in place, minority students are vulnerable to feeling isolated and lonely. As the population of minority students grow, they can feel more supported and connected to institutions that foster acceptance and openness to diversity. Hopefully then, this concept produces more students and graduates, therefore increasing the diversity amongst professionals in the field.

In this small amount of research, an astounding need for greater efforts in improving recruitment and retention of culturally and ethnically diverse students is identified. It is a grand idea to consider how advances in diversifying educational environments could lead to tremendous progress in the field of counseling and psychology. Turning this idea into practice is an important area for future research. "If college education is a pathway to full societal participation, then it is vital for our society and its future to ensure that a diverse representation of our citizenry is able to fully participate" (Vasquez & Jones, 2006, p. 134).



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### **JMU's Dr. Presbury To Retire in 2014**

Dr. Jack Presbury, an award-winning JMU Counseling faculty member who has been an inspiring mentor, supervisor, and educator for over three decades here in the Valley, will be retiring next September. He will continue to write and teach part-time, but as a Renaissance man, Jack will have no trouble finding things to do! He plans to continue publishing professional books, chapters, and journal articles on such wide-ranging topics as brief counseling, artificial intelligence, counselor education, and cognitive science. And after retirement, Jack is looking forward to having more time to add to the more than 500 songs that he already has written in his musical career. With Gary Bugg, Jack recently formed a duet, "Carter's Crossing," which has performed at local venues, including the Oak Grove Folk Festival.

Among his many honors, Jack has received the National Award for Publication in Counselor Education from the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, the College of Psychology and Education's Distinguished Teaching Award, and James Madison University's Madison Scholar Award. However, even more impressive is that Jack is a member of an elite and all-too-rare breed of true scholars who reads voraciously, actively seeks out new intellectual challenges, and regularly displays a brilliant, penetrating and profound intelligence. Given his wide-ranging interests, talents and passions, it is not surprising that Jack is just as likely to quote Bob Dylan as he is Dylan Thomas, recite Bernie as he is the Bard, or recount a story about Matlock as he is about Maslow.

With his colleagues and students, Jack is always generous with his assistance and support, willing to engage in stimulating discussions at the drop of a hat, and unstinting in his commitment to share his time, thoughts, and wisdom. Jack is a source of inspiration in his determination to dig deeply into an idea, and in his unwillingness to settle for a simplistic or superficial consideration of an issue.

He writes thoughtful research articles, beautiful poetry, and poignant songs. He can handle a hammer and nail as skillfully as he can handle a computer and diskette. He takes tremendous satisfaction in having a personal life, savoring those times when he can just "be." In short, Jack Presbury is a one-of-a-kind, never-to-be-repeated event who will continue after retirement to surprise us with his insights, touch us with his music, and amaze us with his discoveries.

**Upcoming Workshops and Events:****CVCA Calendar 2013-2014**

Jan. 23, 2014 – School Counselor Group, “Invite, Invest, Inspire”, 4:30-6 PM at BRCC. 1.5 Continuing Education/Recertification Credits available.

Jan. 30, 2014 CVCA Dinner Meeting at Taste of Thai in Harrisonburg beginning at 6 PM. Jenny Cline, PhD, will be speaking about “Ethical Dilemmas and Social Media”.

Feb. 21, 2014 – Spring CVCA Workshop, “Trauma and Crisis in Counseling: Creating Strategies for Promoting Resilience”, 8 AM-3PM, at BRCC Plecker Workforce Center. Presenter: Madeleine Dupre, PhD, LPC, ACS. 6 Continuing Education Credits available. Morning refreshments and lunch provided. Fee: CVCA/VCA members \$45, non members \$65 and student CVCA/VCA members \$35, student non members \$55.

March 20, 2014 – CVCA Social at Clementine’s in Harrisonburg beginning at 5:30 PM. CVCA provides appetizers and everyone buys his/her own drink.

March 27, 2014 – School Counselor Group, “Invite, Invest, Inspire”. 4:30-6 PM at BRCC. 1.5 Continuing Education/Recertification Credits available.

April 13, 2014 – Out of Darkness Walk (Suicide Prevention/Intervention) at JMU. CVCA is a sponsor of this event.

May 2, 2014 – CVCA Annual Awards/Recognition Breakfast at Village Inn, Rt. 11 South of Harrisonburg, 7:30 AM.

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**Additional Opportunities...**

Join us for a day of creativity and exploration with internationally-recognized poet, David Whyte, on Saturday, February 22, 2014 at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA. He will be leading us in contemplating the fruitful discipline of finding and asking the beautiful questions in life. We invite you to attend this day training and/or evening training(s) and experience a day of transformative reflection via the depth of poetry and imagination. The day training provides five contact hours of continuing education (NBCC #4488). For more information visit: [www.emu.edu/david-whyte](http://www.emu.edu/david-whyte)

Visit <http://emu.edu/graduate-counseling/institute/expert-speaker-series/> for pricing and other information.

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*Upcoming Continued...*

## **Call for Proposals: VCDA**

***The Virginia Career Development Association  
(VCDA)***

***invites you to submit your program proposal for***

***VCDA Conference 2014. March 7, 2014***

***Newcomb Hall, The University of Virginia,  
Charlottesville***

***Hosted by Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society, UVA  
Counselor Education Program***

***“The Challenge of Change:***

***Moving Forward For Virginia’s Future through***

***Career Planning and Development.”***

***As a past supporter and conference attendee,***

***VCDA is giving you early notice so you can be among  
the first to submit.***

**To learn more and to get your Program Proposal  
Application, go to [www.vcdaweb.org](http://www.vcdaweb.org) and click on  
Call for Proposals: VCDA Conference 2014**

**Submit your proposal by December 13, 2013.**

### **BENEFITS OF PRESENTING AT VCDA**

Presenting at VCDA will:

Ø Provide an opportunity for you to demonstrate  
your commitment to the field

of career education,

Ø Give you an opportunity to be recognized for  
your creativity, hard work and professional  
experience,

Ø Help you network with other career  
professionals,

Ø Be a great resume builder, and

Ø Allow you to attend the full day conference at a  
significantly reduced rate.

***Questions?***

***Sharon DeBragga***