

Issue no-1

February 2015

# CPA Counsellor

Newsletter of the **Counselling Psychology Section**

Canadian Psychological Association



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The CPA Counsellor focuses on teaching, scholarship and practice for Counselling Psychologists and graduate students in training. We're proud to present our renovated newsletter and blog site to our membership and hope that you will feel inspired to give us your feedback and become even more involved with our growing community.

[www.cpacounselling.wordpress.com](http://www.cpacounselling.wordpress.com)

# REFLECTIONS from the CHAIR

**Robinder (Rob) P. Bedi, Ph.D.**

**Associate Professor, Department of Psychology. Western Washington University**

I am very pleased to be writing my second editorial as Chair of the Section. The Section Executive continues to work hard to serve your interests and expand the awareness of and influence of Canadian counselling psychology both domestically and abroad.

For example, Dr. Ada Sinacore, psychology undergraduate student Kayla Christiani, and myself are currently writing up the results of the full member survey. Kayla, myself and Section student representative Julie Cohen are also just about to launch an online survey of our student membership. The Executive Committee recognizes the lack available of internships for doctoral students and are still recruiting for the Committee for Counselling Psychology Pre-Doctoral Internships. Please seriously consider this opportunity to serve the future of Canadian counselling psychology. Dr. Freda Ginsberg has thankfully kept her attention on making sure the awards nomination process runs smoothly, including recruiting awards reviewers. Dr. Natalee Popadiuk did a wonderful job of managing the review process for conference submissions. Dr. Sharon Cairns (treasurer) had been busy preparing our annual budget and now is ready to manage the upcoming conference expenditures.

So, speaking of the conference... Please mark your calendar for the 76th annual convention of the Canadian Psychological Association

on June 4th to 6th, 2015 in Ottawa, Ontario. In line with my Chair initiative to support the globalization of counselling psychology, this year, the Executive decided to break with informal tradition and invite an international speaker for our Keynote speech.

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Shuchu Chao from the National Changhua University of Education (in Taiwan) will be speaking on gender equity.

We are currently accepting nominations and self-nominations for some upcoming open Executive positions:

**Member at Large**  
(Review Coordinator)

**Member at Large**  
(Student Awards),

and, **Chair-Elect.**

Please send all nominations to me at [Rob.Bedi@wwu.edu](mailto:Rob.Bedi@wwu.edu), preferably **by May 21st, 2015.**

Elections will take place at the annual business meeting (June 5th in Ottawa) but attendance at the meeting is not required for nominees.

Please do not forget about our upcoming thesis and dissertation award deadlines as well as our Section's Distinguished Member Award.

Further information about all these awards is available

on our Section website. In addition, please consider taking part in our new "Name the Newsletter" competition open to both full and student members of the Section (see further details later in this newsletter and on our blog site).

In closing, if you have not already, I would like to invite you to check out our refreshed and revamped Section website (<http://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology/>), our Section blog (<https://cpacounselling.wordpress.com/>) and our student member Facebook page. Hope you enjoy this second issue under the editorship of our new newsletter/blog editor, Dr. Janet Miller.

Robinder (Rob) P. Bedi, Ph.D.  
**[rob.bedi@wwu.edu](mailto:rob.bedi@wwu.edu)**



## NAME THE NEWSLETTER - CONTEST

The CPA Counselling Psychology Section is pleased to announce the launch of a contest to name our newsletter. Our newsletter is currently titled, "CPA Counsellor: Newsletter of the Counselling Psychology Section." The contest opens March 1st, 2015 and closes May 1st, 2015 at 11:59pm Pacific Time. The winner will receive a \$50 Amazon gift card.

Submissions will be judged across criteria such as: creativity/"catchiness," how well it captures the typical content in our newsletter, and how well it reflects the definition of Counselling Psychology, as adopted by CPA.

[cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology](http://cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology)

The contest is open to all members of the CPA Counselling Psychology Section (full, student, affiliates etc.). Individuals are welcome to join the Section at the same time as entry submission

[cpa.ca/membership/becomeamemberofcpa](http://cpa.ca/membership/becomeamemberofcpa)

Please send your name, contact information and your proposed newsletter title to

**Rob.Bedi@wwu.edu** by **May 1st, 2015**. The submissions will be judged by the Section Executive.

The winner and winning name will be first announced at the Section's business meeting on June 5th, 2015.







## The Dire Reality of Counselling Psychology Pre-Doctoral Internships in Canada

Anusha Kassan, Ph.D., University of Calgary

As the process of securing a Pre-Doctoral Internship in Professional Psychology begins, anxiety rises. Doctoral students, training directors, and program coordinators alike feel the pressure of this very important training milestone.

Many questions float around: Will I get matched? Will there be enough placements? What will happen if someone is without an internship?

I remember all too well, the internship experience... I began researching internship programs in the summer of 2005 and entered my placement in the summer of 2006.

Two years of my graduate student life revolved around internship: Preparing applications, completing interviews, visiting

potential sites, trying to figure out my ideal rankings, waiting to hear the news – It was quite consuming. At the same time, my internship training remains a highlight of my graduate experience. I was privileged to complete my internship in a counselling center in California, where I received excellent training and supervision, a very nice complement to the education I had received throughout my graduate studies.

At that time, my counselling psychology training program was accredited by both the American Psychological Association (APA) and Canadian Psychological Association (CPA), there were more placements available to students, and visas were more easily obtain-

able to enter the United States. Since then, much has changed, and doctoral students who are about to embark on the internship journey are often challenged by and stressed about the entire process.

Currently, there are 28 internship programs in clinical psychology, three in clinical neuropsychology, and two in counselling psychology that are accredited by the CPA (CPA, 2015). The large majority of these sites usually prefer (or even limit training to) clinical psychology students. Conversely, counselling psychology oriented internship sites do accept clinical psychology students and hire clinical psychologists (Bedi, Klubben, Barker, 2012). Between all five CPA-accredited counselling psychology

**“...at most, 40% of them obtain a match through the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centres.”**

programs in Canada, it is estimated that approximately 25 doctoral students per year are seeking internship placements, and at most 40% of them obtain a match through the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC; Haverkamp, Robertson, Cairns, Bedi, 2011).

Even students who seek non-accredited internships find themselves with limited options and steep competition. Clearly, there is cause for concern when it comes to internship training for counselling psychology students in Canada.

In 2011, while Dr. Ada L. Sinacore was the Chair of the



## Reaching out to all counselling psychology educators, supervisors and practitioners to help improve the training path for our current and future doctoral students

Executive of the Section on Counselling Psychology, an Ad-Hoc Committee for Counselling Psychology Pre-doctoral Internships was formed. The team, which was made up predominantly of training directors from Canadian counselling psychology programs, discussed the internship crisis, interviewed numerous training directors from accredited and non-accredited sites across the country, brainstormed potential challenges as well as possible solutions, to mention but a few of their efforts. I was pleased to take over as the chair of this committee this year, and excited about the prospect of impacting change within the field. In the fall, I was able to speak with previous members, to discuss their thoughts on how the committee should best move forward.

Accordingly, the new mandate for the Ad-Hoc Committee was determined, including (a) advocacy to the CPA in order to

increase internship placements of counselling psychology students in Canada; (b) assistance to current internship programs in counselling centers that want to become accredited; and (c) support to counselling psychology students in Canada who are interested in internship programs that are already accredited.

Unfortunately, very few individuals have shown interest in joining the committee and pursuing these critical steps. As such, it is unclear whether or not our internship efforts will be able to continue in this capacity. I would like to reach out to all of you, counselling psychology educators, supervisors, practitioners, to ask for your time and commitment, in helping to improve the training path for our current and future doctoral students.

These trainees work extremely hard throughout their degree and represent the future of our discipline. Hence, they deserve the best internship experience

possible. And together, we can make that happen!

*\* Individuals who are interested in joining the Ad-Hoc Committee for Counselling Psychology Pre-doctoral Internships should contact*

*Dr. Anusha Kassan  
(anusha.kassan@ucalgary.ca)*

### References

Bedi, R. P., Klubben, L. M., & Barker, G. T. (2012). CPA Accredited Programs: A Comparison of Psychology Doctoral Programs in Canada. *Canadian Psychology, 53*(3), 238-253. doi: 10.1037/a0028558

Canadian Psychological Association (2015). CPA Accredited Programs. Retrieved from: <http://www.cpa.ca/accreditation/CPAAccreditedprograms/>

Haverkamp, B.E., Robertson, S. E., Cairns, S. L., & Bedi, R. P. (2011). Professional Issues in Canadian Counselling Psychology: Identity, Education, and Professional Practice. *Canadian Psychology, 52*(4), 256-264. doi: 10.1037/a0025214



## Alisha Henson Featured Member

MA, CCC, RDT, PhD Student Counselling Psychology  
Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology McGill  
McGill Psychotherapy Process Research Group  
Canadian Chapter President and Canadian Board Representative:  
North American Drama Therapy Association  
[alisha.henson@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:alisha.henson@mail.mcgill.ca)



Many years ago Alisha completed a college diploma at Randolph Academy of the Performing Arts and worked in the film industry with the Director's Guild of Canada as an Assistant Director. This experience gave Alisha the drive and passion for exploring human dynamics as well as an amazing work ethic and capacity to multitask. Alisha then went on to complete her undergraduate degree at Trent Univer-

**...helping clients “to face challenges and access hope for the future.”**

sity in Psychology with a focus on attachment representations with Dr. Elaine Scharfe. She completed her Master's degree at Concordia University in Drama Therapy.

Following her MA graduation, Alisha worked rurally as a Child and Family Therapist at the Phoenix Centre in Pembroke Ontario for 3.5 years with an emphasis on youth mental health, day treatment and parent-child relationships. Through this work she became affiliated with the Ontario Centre of Excellence in Child and Youth Mental Health as a Youth Engagement (YE) facilitator and Children Mental Health Ontario's New Mentality project as a YE adult ally.

Alisha's experience working with youth with mental health concerns, her experience in YE, her social justice belief system, and her love of research has driven her to return to school and complete her PhD. Alisha is now a third

year PhD student working with Dr. Marilyn Fitzpatrick at McGill University in the Counselling Psychology department. Her dissertation project will focus on utilizing Youth Engagement frameworks and Participatory Action Research to help with the development and evaluation of a Self Compassion and Values Clarification program utilizing both traditional and Arts Based mediums. In working within the YE approach, Alisha believes that by allowing youth to have a voice in the development and evaluation of mental health programs, we will be better able to serve this population. In addition, by evaluating the benefits of this process, Alisha will be able to assist in taking the next steps in helping to develop the body of evidence on YE processes while working in youth mental health.

In addition to her dissertation project, Alisha works as an intern for a rural centre conducting psy-

cho-educational assessments under the guidance of Dr. Len Gignac and as a part-time lecturer in the Drama Therapy department at Concordia University. She is also the Canadian chapter president and Canadian board member for the National Association of Drama Therapy.

Alisha is drawn to counselling psychology because it allows for a person-centred and eclectic framework in her work with clients. It is not focused on diagnosis, but in seeing the system in which people live their lives and helping them to face challenges and access hope for the future. She feels that the process of counselling allows for a shared journey with the client, where the psychologist supports the process and has the unique and beautiful opportunity to learn about life through the eyes of another.

**Member Profile** - In an effort to increase connections among our members, we are pleased to present Member Profiles in each issue of the CPA Counsellor. Invitations to submit a profile are sent by the Editor, either to random members selected from our registry or to those nominated by their colleagues. Please send recommendations to the Editor - [jbmiller@mtroyal.ca](mailto:jbmiller@mtroyal.ca)

## WHAT ARE YOU READING?

***Achieving Student Success: Effective Student Services in Canadian Higher Education***

Donna Hardy Cox & C. Carney Strange, 2010

***Handbook for Social Justice in Counseling Psychology: Leadership, Vision and Action.***

Editors: Rebecca Toporek, Lawrence Gerstein, Nadya Fouad, Gargi Roysircar & Tania Israel, 2006.

***The Impact of Bullying on the Mental Health of Young Gay Men.***

Matthew D. Skinta, 2010

***The Sexual Paradox: Extreme Men, Gifted Women and the Real Gender Gap***

Susan Pinker, 2009

***Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking***

Susan Cain, 2013

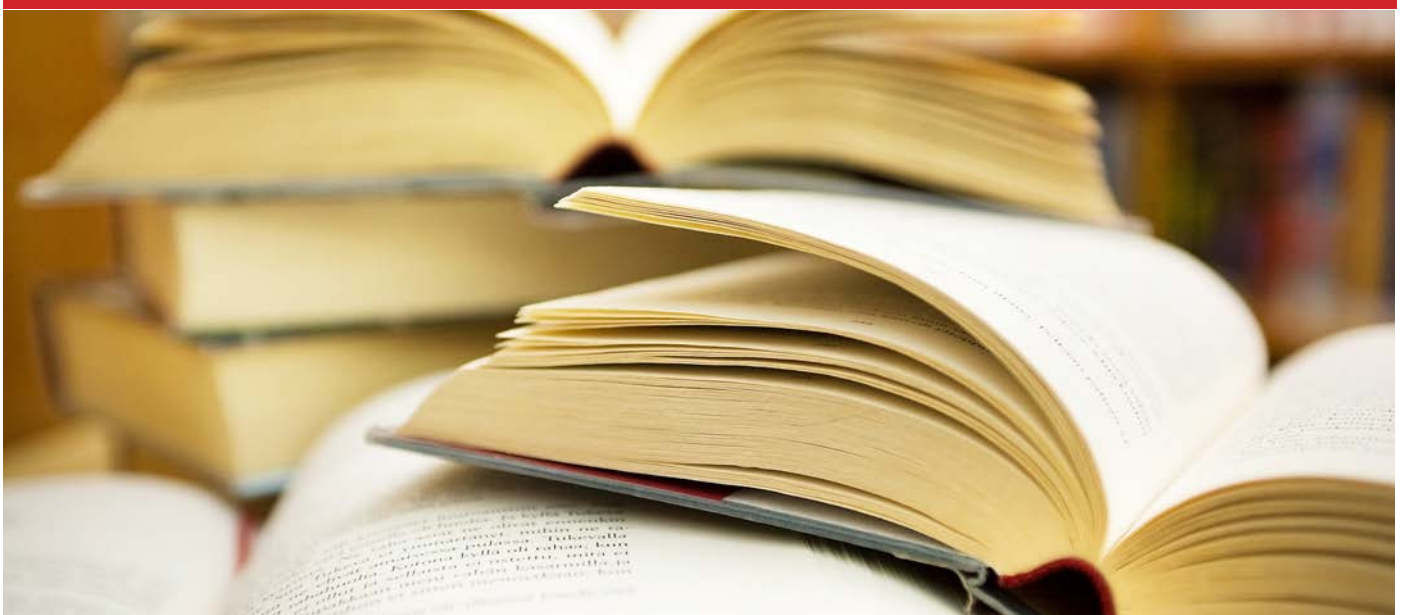
***Thinking Fast and Slow***

Daniel Kahneman, 2013

***Narrative Therapy for Women Experiencing Domestic Violence: Supporting Women's Transitions from Abuse to Safety.***

Mary Allen, 2009

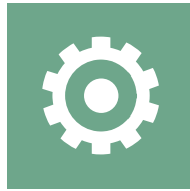
Let us know what you're reading! Email our newsletter Editor: [jbmill@mtroyal.ca](mailto:jbmill@mtroyal.ca)  
or start the conversation on our blogsite --- [www.cpacounselling.wordpress.com](http://www.cpacounselling.wordpress.com)



# APPS FOR THAT



We continue our feature here of apps suggested by our clients and colleagues. Whether we see it as a supplement to counselling, or as a light form of entertainment, health-related apps are certainly being well used among today's clientele. If you have a candidate for a great app, we'd like to hear about it!



## Timeful

This app combines your current schedules, daily habits and deadlines and creates a calendar that maximizes the use of your time. Users can adjust suggested schedules and may find the reminder feature helpful.

## HabitSeed

This app can be used to stop old habits or to create a new ones. The app prompts you to set a goal, and is tailored to provide support over a 21-day period. The growth of a virtual tree aims to reinforce your progress.



## Freckle

This app and web service aims to track time spent on projects, and provides the user with reporting tools including time sheets, invoices and project summary reports.

## Way of Life

This is another goal-setting app that aims to support the user in developing new, positive habits. The app is programmed to chart your progress towards several goals using daily journaling about each behaviour.

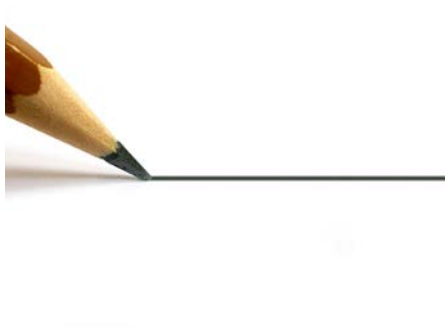
# ARTICLES TO CONSIDER



## Loving Relationships

Kern, M. L., Della Porta, S. S. & Friedman, H. S. (2014). Lifelong pathways to longevity: Personality, relationships, flourishing and health. *Journal of Personality, 82(6)*, 472-484.

Gala, J. & Kapadia, S. (2013). Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood: A developmental perspective. *Psychological Studies, 58(4)*, 406-418.



## Healthy Boundaries

Ammons, S. K. (2013). Work-family boundary strategies: Stability and alignment between preferred and enacted boundaries. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 82(1)*, 49-58.

Jiang, J. Y., Zhang, X. & Tjosvold, D. (2013). Emotion regulation as a boundary condition relationship between team conflict and performance. A multi-level examination. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 34*, 714-734.



## Joy and Resiliency

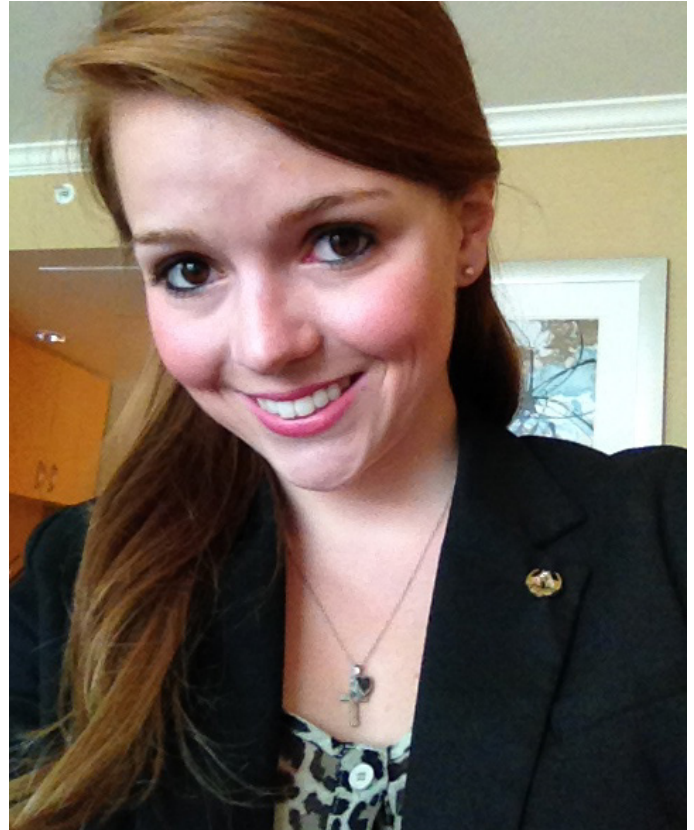
Rose, J. & Steen, S. (2014). The achieving success everyday group counselling model: Fostering resiliency in middle school students. *Professional School Counseling, 18(1)*, 28-37.

Kleiman, E. M., Riskind, J. H. & Schaefer, K. E. (2014). Social support and positive events as suicide resiliency factors: Examination of synergistic buffering effects. *Archives of Suicide Research, 18(2)*, 144-155.



# LINDSEY THOMSON

## WEBMASTER



My name is Lindsey Thomson and I am a first year graduate student at the University of Ottawa in the M.Ed Educational Counselling program.

I previously completed an Honours B.A with a Specialization in Psychology in the French Immersion program and then a Bachelor of Education in the junior/intermediate division. From a young age I have always enjoyed helping others and believe that relationships are the foundation of society – that's why I am working towards becoming a Certified Canadian Counsellor and eventually a Registered Marriage and Family Therapist.

I have been involved with the CPA for a few years now as I also volunteer as the Undergraduate Student Affairs Officer for the student section. I volunteer as the counselling psychology section webmaster as I was interested in being involved with this section as it primarily relates to my passion for counselling. Coming into this position I experienced somewhat of a learning curve as I got used to using the site program. I have experience in website creation through managing my personal blog for university students and through my work as social media coordinator for an educational planning website.

Through my experience so far I have really enjoyed working with the executive team and getting to know the members better. Last year I presented a poster at the CPA convention in Vancouver and also hosted the student social.

This year I am really looking forward to taking a more active role at the convention and excited to build new relationships with other members of the counselling psychology section. I plan on continuing my involvement with the CPA through volunteering with the section as much as I can.

### READINGS ON CANADIAN COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

Thanks to our webmaster Lindsey Thomson, we just finished this new section on our website entitled, "Readings on Canadian Counselling Psychology" which includes abstracts for the various chapters/articles. It is linked here: <http://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology/readingsoncanadiancounselling> If you notice an important article about professional or disciplinary issues in counselling psychology in Canada missing, please send it for inclusion on the list (send them to me at Rob.Bedi@wwu.edu). This list should serve as a useful place for practitioners curious about broader issues in Canadian counselling psychology or wishing to stay up-to-date on disciplinary issues as well for as for students and course instructors.

**Thanks Lindsey!**



## Freda Ginsberg, PhD

Executive member of the Counselling Psychology Section of the CPA

Dr. Freda Ginsberg, MBA, is a Counselling Psychologist, and an Assistant Professor and the Director of the Ward Hall Counseling Center, in the Counselor Education Department at SUNY Plattsburgh, in New York State. Dr. Ginsberg's scholarly expertise includes counseling and teaching for social justice, Jewish identity, historical trauma, and critical pedagogies.

Dr. Ginsberg has been an active member of the Canadian Psychological Association's Section for Counselling Psychology since 2009. Dr. Ginsberg currently serves on the Section's Executive and she spearheaded the creation of the Section's on-line interactive archive. As well, Dr. Ginsberg served as the conference coordinator for the Inaugural Canadian Counselling Psychology Conference.

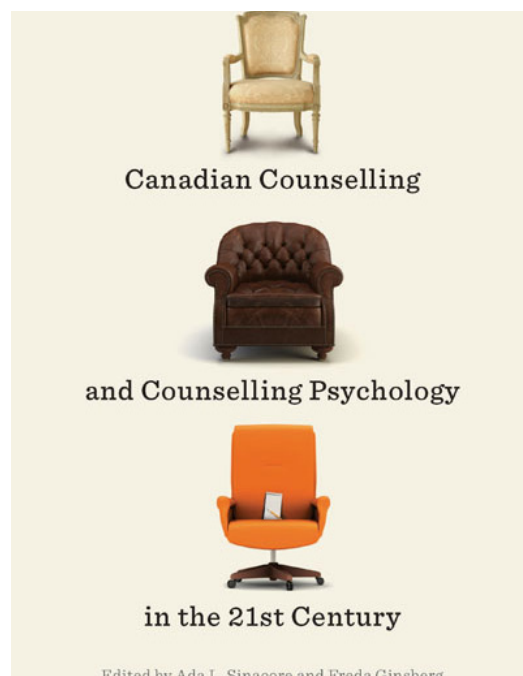
# Canadian Counselling and Counselling Psychology in the 21st Century

Edited by Ada L. Sinacore and Freda Ginsberg  
McGill-Queen's University Press

Canadian counsellors and counselling psychologists have made significant advances in mental health services and the broader field of applied psychology, but much of the counselling and counselling psychology scholarship has been published outside of Canada, rendering it difficult to identify as distinctly Canadian.

This path-breaking book highlights the work of Canadian counsellors and counselling psychologists and focuses on issues pertinent to practising in Canada. Key topics such as scientific issues, health, wellness, prevention, career psychology, assessment, training and supervision, and social justice and multiculturalism are explored in detail. Using a strength-based framework, each chapter attends to societal factors, diversity of methodological frameworks, and an analysis of the challenges and future directions for the disciplines.

Providing a common voice for a diverse group of students and professionals, *Canadian Counselling and Counselling Psychology in the 21st Century* will be of interest to counsellor educators, faculty in counsellor and counselling psychology training programs, and counsellors interested in advancing their understanding of the current state of the field.



**RECENT RELEASE!**

Media inquiries and review copy requests - Jacqui Davis - Publicist - [jacqueline.davis@mcgill.ca](mailto:jacqueline.davis@mcgill.ca)  
Other queries - Roy Ward - College Sales Coordinator - [roy.ward@mcgill.ca](mailto:roy.ward@mcgill.ca)

# CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

## CPA Counselling Psychology - Student Dissertation and Thesis Awards

The Counselling Psychology Section of the Canadian Psychological Association is pleased to accept nominations for its annual Best Doctoral Dissertation and Best Masters Thesis awards. These awards recognize outstanding student research in the field of counselling psychology and include a monetary prize of \$100 per award.

For details on the awards and the nomination process, please visit:

[www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology/Awards](http://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/cpasections/counsellingpsychology/Awards)

Please send nominations for the award to:

**Dr. Freda Ginsberg**  
**fgins001@plattsburgh.edu,**  
**by May 15, 2015**

In addition to these awards, all Master's and Doctoral student posters presented at the Counselling Psychology poster session of CPA's annual 2015 convention will be considered for the Best Doctoral Conference Poster Award and the Best Master's Conference Poster Award (each with a monetary prize of \$100). No separate nomination process is required for posters. Hope to see you at the CPA Conference in Ottawa this June!

## JOIN THE EXECUTIVE 2015/16

Our CPA Counselling Section has several Executive positions coming up for elections. Nominations (including self-nominations, which are the norm) are preferred by May 21st but are welcome up until the start of Section's Annual Business Meeting at the CPA conference (June 5th, 2015 in Ottawa). Elections will take place at the annual business meeting but attendance at the meeting is not required for nominees.

Nominees are requested to e-mail a brief biography and nominee statement (what position they are running for and why they wish to serve in this position) to the Chair (Rob.Bedi@wwu.edu), preferably by **May 21st, 2015**. Please direct all questions about these positions to the Chair as well.

### CHAIR ELECT:

The Chair-Elect is available to carry out duties assigned by the Chair or requested by the Executive Committee or the general membership. In the absence of the Chair will preside at meetings.

In the event that the Chair is vacated, the Chair-Elect shall assume the full functions of the Chair.

### REVIEW COORDINATOR:

The Member-At-Large (Review Coordinator) shall coordinate the review process for proposals submitted to CPA for the Section. This will include maintaining a list of proposal reviewers, instructing reviewers on the review process, and communicating the results of the review process to CPA within the required time frame. In addition, this individual shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair and the Executive Committee. It is a 2 year term.

### STUDENT AWARDS:

The Member-At-Large (Student Awards) shall coordinate the review process for all student awards. This will include maintaining a list of thesis and dissertation reviewers, instructing reviewers on the review process, and coordinating adjudication of the poster awards. In addition, this individual shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the Chair and the Executive Committee. It is a two year term.

## How To Find Us On FACEBOOK

CPA COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY  
SECTION STUDENT PAGE

[www.facebook.com/pages/CPA-Counselling-Psychology-Section-Student-Page/177731629100144](http://www.facebook.com/pages/CPA-Counselling-Psychology-Section-Student-Page/177731629100144)





## THINGS TO WATCH



### **Personal Reflections on Manic-Depressive Disorder**

University of Virginia, Kay Redfield Jamison, Uploaded February 9, 2008  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxRLap9xLag>

### **What is Psychology**

Jamie Dyce, PhD., Concordia University, Uploaded May 26, 2008  
Part 1 of 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yKzJToO0Fjw>  
Part 2 of 2 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlBxUSSkXiU>

### **China's Web Junkies: Internet Addiction Documentary / Op-Docs / The New York Times**

Published January 21, 2014  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jqctG3NnDa0>

### **Faculty Perspectives on Counselling Psychology's PhD. Program at UBC**

Assistant Professor Dan Cox and Professor Richard Young answer some "vital questions" for anyone considering the PhD program in Counselling, Uploaded June 3, 2014  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xv-oeSiillM>

### **The Truth about Depression - BBC Full Documentary 2013**

Published on May 16, 2013.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5YubjEqbZ8>

### **Psychiatric Interviews for Teaching: Depression**

University of Nottingham, Uploaded January 31, 2012.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4YhpWZCdiZc>

### **SCENE 15 Suicide Risk Assessment**

IP Communication, "Psychotherapy: An Australian Perspective", published on January 20, 2013  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-m\\_alQfXZA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-m_alQfXZA)

#### CLASSICS...

#### Three Approaches to Psychotherapy (1965). Training Tapes

#### Dr. Fritz Perls and Gloria (Gestalt) Counselling Session

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it0j6Flxlog>



# Three Surprising Things about the DSM5

Michael Zwiers, PhD. University of Calgary



Not all counselling psychologists have been trained in diagnostic assessment using the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM); however, diagnosis does fall within the scope of practice of psychology and some counselling psychology training programs do offer this training. The accreditation standards of the Canadian Psychological Association identify the same core training requirements for Clinical, Counselling, and School Psychology programs (CPA, 2011), which must include training in assessment processes<sup>1</sup>. Counselling Psychology training programs have historically used a strength-based approach to assessment that purposively emphasizes capacities (Hansen, 2003), and many have avoided deficit-based models such as diagnostic nosologies that categorize disorder. Although nosologies like the DSM attempt to label conditions and not people, counselling psychologists have been concerned about harm that may come to clients who may be diagnosed with a particular condition (Honos-Webb & Leitner, 2001). Of course, diagnostic systems have been utilized by professionals and pro-

fessional bodies for decades to better understand mental health conditions and improve communication; to support research, intervention, and training; to help clients learn about their condition, (which can normalize experiences, alleviate anxiety, and help them understand themselves); to improve advocacy and stigma reduction efforts; and to help individuals access services, programs, and benefits. In some cases, clinicians can help clients to access supports only if they provide both diagnostic codes and descriptions of impairments / barriers to daily functioning (e.g., Canada Revenue Agency, insurance companies).

Clinicians might be surprised to know several things about the newest version of the DSM (DSM-5; APA, 2014). First, the manual encourages clinicians to pay attention to context; second, the manual pays specific and notable

attention to the DSM, which have provided space for contextual factors to be listed on Axis IV, at least those that were considered to be psychosocial stressors. The newest version of the DSM has moved to a non-axial system, which has raised fears that even the previously limited consideration of context will no longer be represented. However, DSM-5 itself states that contextual factors should be captured in the general assessment write-up: "DSM-5 has moved to a nonaxial documentation of diagnosis...with separate notations for important psychosocial and contextual factors (formerly Axis IV) and disability (formerly Axis V)" (DSM-5, p. 16) and clarifies that "The case formulation for any given patient must involve a careful clinical history and concise summary of the social, psychological, and biological factors that may have contributed to developing a

"...to help clients learn about their condition, which can normalize the experiences, alleviate anxiety and help them to understand themselves"

attention to culture; and third, the manual specifically contains a number of categories and codes that are not considered to be mental disorders or disabilities.

Counselling psychology has long advocated for an assessment process that considers the broader context that individuals live and function in (Ivey & Ivey, 1998), including family, community, and culture. These perspectives have been given some attention in earlier editions of

given mental disorder," (p. 19). If we understand assessment to be the process of identifying questions, generating hypotheses, gathering information to answer questions, and thoughtfully ruling in and ruling out various explanations for challenges/difficulties, then there is a lot of scope to consider contextual factors.

DSM-5 pays attention to culture, most notably in the opening section, where it states:

*Mental disorders are defined in relation to cultural, social, and familial norms and values. Culture provides interpretive frameworks that shape the experience and expression of the symptoms, signs, and behaviors that are criteria for diagnosis. Culture is transmitted, revised, and recreated within the family and other social systems and institutions. Diagnostic assessment must therefore consider whether an individual's experiences, symptoms, and behaviors differ from sociocultural norms and lead to difficulties in adaptation in the cultures of origin and in specific social or familial contexts, (DSM-5, p.14).*

It goes on to say:

*The boundaries between normality and pathology vary across cultures for specific types of behaviors. Thresholds of tolerance for specific symptoms or behaviors differ across cultures, social settings, and families. Hence, the level at which an experience becomes problematic or pathological will differ. The judgment that a given behavior is abnormal and requires clinical attention depends on cultural norms that are internalized by the individual and applied by others around them, including family members and clinicians.... Culture also affects the conduct of the clinical encounter; as a result, cultural differences between the clinician and the patient have implications for the accuracy and acceptance of diagnosis as well as for treatment decisions, prognostic considerations, and clinical outcomes. (DSM-5, p.14).*

The combined import of these statements represents a remarkable shift in emphasis in the DSM, which is an important consideration for clinicians who work with individuals who may come from cultural and linguistic backgrounds that differ from the dominant culture. In addition, DSM-5 articulates 3 concepts that require cultural consideration: cultural syndromes, cultural



Idioms of distress, and cultural explanations of perceived cause. Cultural syndromes are specific symptom clusters that are limited to a unique cultural group (e.g., *ataque de nervios*). These syndromes do not map directly onto any already identified DSM conditions, although they are represented within the broader DSM-5 disorder families (e.g., *ataque de nervios* is considered to be a manifestation of anxiety and falls under the Other Specified Anxiety Disorder diagnosis). Cultural idioms of distress are simply different ways to describe suffering, and may be understood to be equivalent to translations of western conceptions – or vice versa – (e.g., *Folie à deux* is known in DSM-5 as Shared Delusional Disorder). Finally, a cultural explanation of perceived cause is simply a culturally derived or conceived etiology of symptoms, illness, or distress. By acknowledging that people from other cultures may have unique explanations of mental health symptoms or syndromes, DSM-5 implies that

these descriptions and understandings should be given some credence and not simply dismissed as being naïve, simple-minded, or distorted. In order to work with people, we must appreciate the perspectives that they bring to the table.

DSM-5 is by definition a manual of mental disorders, so it will surprise some to find that it contains codes that are not considered to be mental disorders or disabilities. One of the chapters is titled Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention, which specifically contains conditions that are descriptive rather than diagnostic. These include the Z codes (formerly known as V codes<sup>2</sup>) and the old Axis IV psychosocial stressors that may be a focus of clinical attention (e.g., Acculturation Difficulty Z60.3), but also incorporate codes such as: Other Counselling or Consultation (Z71.9); Sex Counselling<sup>3</sup> (Z70.9); Overweight or Obesity<sup>4</sup> (E66.9); Nonadherence to Medical Treatment<sup>5</sup> (Z91.19); Malingering (Z76.5); and Borderline Intellectual Functioning<sup>6</sup> (R41.83). In-



cluded in this section is a code that will be of interest to many: Unspecified Problem Related to Unspecified Psychosocial Circumstances (Z65.9). If one desires to use a code that provides almost no information to the reader on why the client is being seen, this is the one to use!

The DSM-5 framework has been challenged by some in the counselling psychology field, but is a reality in the Canadian context and may be used to the benefit of clients. Even if clinicians do not use the DSM in their daily practice, knowledge of the DSM can be advantageous and may help counselling psychologists to ensure that other clinicians use it as it was intended.

#### Additional Resources

APA DSM-5 Publishing: <http://www.appi.org/Pages/DSM.aspx>

Canadian psychiatrist Dr. Joel Paris has written *The Intelligent Clinician's Guide to the DSM-5*, a thoughtful book published by Oxford University Press in 2013.

Dr. Allen Frances has written several books about the DSM-5, including *Essentials of Psychiatric Diagnosis: Responding to the Challenge of DSM-5*, Revised Edition published by Guildford Press in 2013 and *Saving Normal*, a general reading book published by HarperCollins in 2013.

**CPA offers a web-based learning module on the DSM-5 that can be accessed at: <http://cpa.scholarlab.ca/>. The online workshop and resources were created by Dr. Zwiers, with all proceeds going to CPA.**

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Dr. Zwiers has also created a free resource website for psychologists that may be accessed at: <http://psychstar.ca/>

Thanks so much Michael !

#### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Even the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) training program accreditation standards includes assessment training as a core area of competency.

<sup>2</sup> Note that although DSM-5 officially switched to using the codes from ICD 10 in October of 2014 (hence the change to Z codes), some Canadian systems and jurisdictions may still use the ICD 9 codes for recording purposes.

<sup>3</sup> Considering the many types of counselling that are not highlighted by DSM, (e.g., career, family, group, or any number of others), it is curious that the only specialized type of counselling service that is given a unique code in DSM-5 is that of sex counselling.

<sup>4</sup> This is taken directly from the ICD and is considered to be a descriptor, a reason for clinical attention, but not a disorder.

<sup>5</sup> This is a notable change from DSM-IV's "Noncompliance with Medical Treatment". The term "nonadherence" does not offer any implication for why someone might choose to not follow a prescribed medical treatment.

<sup>6</sup> This does not map directly onto the Borderline range of functioning that is used by several measures of cognitive / intellectual functioning.



## FROM THE EDITOR

I've really enjoyed the opportunity to connect with members as we've prepared this edition of the Counselling Section newsletter. Corresponding with Alisha Henson was a delight, and I look forward to future profiles and ongoing connections. I am especially grateful to Michael Zwiers for responding so enthusiastically to my request for an article about the DSM-5. I enjoyed his online CPA course and I continue to be impressed with his ongoing contribution to our profession! I feel very fortunate to have exposure to the vast expertise we have among our members in terms of their counselling practice, teaching, supervision and research. We have much to be proud of in this Section!

February was also Psychology Month, and activities hosted by the CPA can be found on this website: <http://www.cpa.ca/psychologymonth/psychmonthprofessionals>. Perhaps you participated in the "who did you talk to today?" campaign, or made use of the slide deck authored by Karen Cohen entitled "Psychology: What it is, What do Psychologists do and Why does Psychology Matter?". I received notice of these campaigns right around the time of the Bell Media "Let's Talk" event, and I appreciate the way these support one another to raise awareness about the value of counselling. It's wonderful to see Canadians being encouraged to take time to invest in their psychological health.

This is a great profession, rich with meaning, purpose and impact. Please take the time to consider how you might become more involved with the CPA generally, and with our Section specifically. Send me an article, join a committee, offer a PD session or put your name forward to join our executive. I'd appreciate knowing about your work, what you're reading and what videos you've found interesting. Please send articles and suggestions my way for inclusion in our May edition. Until then, best wishes for the end of term, the beginning of Spring and all that lies ahead.

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*Please Note:* The opinions expressed in this newsletter are strictly those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Canadian Psychological Association, its officers, directors, or employees.

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CPA Counselling Psychology Section

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# CPA Counsellor

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Canadian Psychological Association

### COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

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