

CPA Counsellor

Newsletter of Counselling Psychology Section of the
Canadian Psychological Association

November 2008

Message from the Chair

It is indeed an honour and a privilege to serve the Section on Counselling Psychology as chair of the section. It is also somewhat daunting as I scramble to get up to speed on the many activities of the section and duties of the chair. However, this process has been made significantly easier with the assistance of the Past Chair, Vivian Lalonde; Secretary-Treasurer, Shelly Russell-Mayhew; Student Representative and List Serve Manager, Reana Saraceni; Newsletter Editor, Michael Huston; José Domene, our Webmaster; and Members at Large, Colleen Haney and Patrice Keats who generously contribute their time to Student Awards and Conference Review Coordination, respectively. It is these individuals, along with the counselling psychologists who came before them, who built the switchbacks so I do not have to bushwhack straight up the mountain. Thank you!

This is an exciting time for Counselling Psychology as we grapple with defining Counselling Psychology for the Canadian Psychological Association. All 379 of us belong to this Section due to a personal and/or professional affiliation with the term "Counselling Psychology". However, capturing the diverse roles and values of so many individuals is a monumental task. We are indeed fortunate to have a dedicated committee [Romeo Beatch, Robinder (Rob) Bedi, Douglas Cave, José Domene, Gregory Harris, Beth Haverkamp, and Anne-Marie Mikhail] spearheading the

Section's work in this area. Please see the message from the committee in this issue and please consider sending the committee members your feedback on the draft definition.

One of the privileges of the role of chair is having the formal opportunity to recognize our outstanding colleagues and excellent students. In Halifax, Dr. Lee Handy was recognized for his outstanding career in counselling psychology with the Distinguished Member Award. This newsletter includes his reflections on his 40+ year career. We also included abstracts from our 2008 student awards: Becky Stewart (Best Master's Thesis); and Natalie Hansen, Olga Oulanova, and Reana Saraceni (Outstanding Master's Conference Posters). Please consider nominating your students' theses or dissertations for an award. We all know of outstanding colleagues and students. However, for them to receive the recognition they deserve, you need to nominate them for an award.

In closing, I hope to see many of you Montreal. We already are in the process of developing an excellent program. Working with the Clinical Section and the International and Cross Cultural Section, we have been successful in co-nominating Dr. Laurence Kirmayer as a CPA Invited Speaker. Dr. Kirmayer's areas of expertise include cultural formulation in assessment and suicide prevention for Aboriginal peoples. In addition, we have arranged for Dr. Nancy Heath from McGill University to provide our section keynote session. Her talk will be *Non-Suicidal Self-Injury: The New Challenge for Counsellors*.

Respectfully,
Sharon Cairns, Chair

Defining Counselling Psychology: A Request for Feedback on the State of Counselling Psychology in Canada

Dear Members of the Counselling Psychology Section of CPA,

The Executive Committee for a Canadian Understanding of Counselling Psychology is seeking your opinion on the field of counselling psychology in Canada. Our committee is currently creating an official definition of counselling psychology for the Canadian Psychological Association, and we would like to invite

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you to review a draft of our report, and provide your feedback by January 2nd, 2009. The full report is available on the Counselling Psychology Section's website: <http://www.cpa.ca/sections/counselling>.

Any feedback that you have is welcomed, although we would be most appreciative if you would focus on two specific issues:

1. *How well does this report reflect your own understanding of counselling psychology in a Canadian context?*
2. *Is there anything that is missing (or shouldn't be there) from our proposed definition on pages 20-21 and reproduced later in this article?*

A very brief excerpt from the report (p. 5-6) is below, followed by the proposed definition (from p. 20):

Counselling psychology (CNPSY) in Canada has grown over the past two decades but has yet to advance a unified and consensual definition, endorsed by the CPA's CNPSY Section, to guide its evolution (see Lalonde, 2004, for an account of the formation of the section). Throughout its young history, there has been confusion among those within and outside CNPSY about the identity of the field in Canada. This confusion has been exacerbated by perceptions of CNPSY's overlap with several other professional specializations, particularly clinical psychology (CLPSY) and professional mental health counselling (PMHC). Despite a conviction among counselling psychologists about the legitimacy of their field, its well established history in North America and the recently growing membership in the CNPSY section of CPA, confusion persists within psychology at large, including among those pursuing undergraduate study in general psychology. Few published articles have described the discipline of CNPSY in Canada. Extant descriptions published in Canadian journals are almost entirely (e.g., Sinacore-Guinn, 1995) or at least predominantly (e.g., Friesen, 1983; Lecompte et al., 1981) centered on American literature and events and "seem to represent a 'Canadian perspective' largely because the writers are Canadians, not because they focus on the state of affairs in Canada or review Canadian research" (Hiebert & Uhlemann, 1993, p. 307). However, the evolution of Canadian CNPSY reflects important national and cultural contrasts to U.S. CNPSY (Boucher, 2004). These differences have implications for the practice of psychology (Bowman, 2000) and highlight the need to focus specifically on the Canadian experience of CNPSY.

The purpose of this report is to examine the question, "What is counselling psychology, as conceptualized and practiced in Canada?" This report not only sets out a definition that takes into consideration

Canadian history and traditions but, more importantly, attempts to outline the distinctiveness of CNPSY in Canada, particularly in contrast to similar applied professions within Canada. This task is complicated because the field is constantly changing (Lalonde, 2004) and because counselling psychologists are an extremely diverse group (Hiebert & Uhlemann, 1993). We do not claim to fully represent all possible perspectives on CNPSY in Canada with this report. However, we believe that this report represents a broad range of perspectives on Canadian CNPSY at this point in time. It is hoped that this report will educate others about the nature and practice of CNPSY in Canada, thus bringing a broader awareness of CNPSY as a distinct specialization within applied professional psychology and as a vibrant section within CPA.

In addition, developing a formal definition of CNPSY for CPA Section 24 (CNPSY) is an ethical and professional imperative for a number of reasons, including (a) providing fully informed consent for clients using CNPSY services, (b) articulating a set of core competencies, which can be used to promote greater consistency in training across universities, and (c) establishing a consensual scope of practice (Cross & Watts, 2002).

It is also important to recognize that CNPSY in Canada is particularly "endangered by allowing [their] practice to be defined by others, whether these are employers, professional associations, or other stakeholders in the field of psychology, or those outside of psychology" (Young & Nicol, 2007, p. 29). For example, as provinces proceed with regulating PMHC and continue to regulate the practice of psychology, there is a heightened risk of CNPSY being defined by default as whatever lies outside of the legislated scope of PMHC and CLPSY. This is particularly concerning because national and provincial counselling associations (e.g., Canadian Counselling Association, British Columbia Association of Clinical Counsellors, Canadian Association of Marriage and Family Therapists) will understandably want to define their discipline and scope of practice as broadly as possible. Additionally, without an adequate characterization of counselling psychologists and what they do, there is also risk that the regulatory authorities for psychology will base decisions about the scope of practice of CNPSY on inaccurate perceptions of CNPSY training and professional identity. As Young and Nicol, Sinacore-Guinn (1995) and others point out, if Canadian counselling psychologists do not take the initiative to explain who they are and what they do, they risk losing their identity and existence as a unique specialization.

Proposed Definition of Counselling Psychology

CNPSY can be conceptualized as a specialization within professional psychology concerned with the health, well-being, and growth of individuals, families, groups, and the broader community. At its core is the interconnection of research-informed practice and practice-informed research. Counselling psychologists facilitate a client-centered and client-directed process to address issues such as: physical and mental health, personal growth, self-awareness, improved decision-making and problem-solving, favourable adjustment to unexpected life situations and normal life transitions, optimal vocational and career development, improved functioning in social relationships, and advocacy in promoting positive social change in society. CNPSY is committed to a developmental, multicultural, and wellness perspective in addressing presenting issues that recognizes the importance of prevention and psycho-education, rather than remediation alone (even when working with those who meet criteria for a psychiatric disorder). The CNPSY perspective also tends to emphasize clients as agents of their own change, which leads to an approach that involves the implementation of evidence-based techniques drawn from research in CNPSY and related fields, and which draws on the resourcefulness and pre-existing strengths of the person and the power of the counselling relationship. Counselling psychologists adopt a holistic approach to assessment that emphasizes the importance of contextual/environmental influences, diversity, and individual differences in client conceptualization and diagnosis (noting that diagnosing contextualized problems is generally preferred to diagnosing clinical disorders out of social context).

Please forward all feedback to Dr. Greg Harris (Memorial University) at gharris@mun.ca or Dr. Jose Domene (Trinity Western University) at Jose.Domene@twu.ca. To ensure your perspective is considered in the final report and definition, please provide your feedback no later than Friday January 2nd, 2009.

Thank you in advance for your input!

Romeo Beatch
Robinder (Rob) P. Bedi
Douglas G. Cave
José F. Domene
Gregory E. Harris
Beth E. Haverkamp
Anne-Marie Mikhail

Distinguished Member Award 2008

The Distinguished Member Award recognizes someone who has made significant contributions to the field as a practitioner or as a researcher. Dr. Lee

Handy has made significant contributions to the field through professional service, through his practice as a counsellor, and through his scholarly activities.

Dr. Handy was a founding member of CPA's Section on Counselling Psychology and is a past president of the section. Beyond the Counselling Section, Dr. has also served on CPA's Ethics Committee and the Education and Training Committee. Provincially, Dr. Handy has been taken on leadership roles in both the Psychologists' Association of Alberta and the College of Alberta Psychologists. In addition to outstanding direct counselling service to thousands of clients, Dr. Handy has also played a major role in educating more than a generation of counsellors through teaching graduate level courses and providing both clinical and scholarly supervision for more than a hundred students at the Master's and Ph.D. levels. In terms of scholarly activity, Dr. Handy has been prolific in writing, editing, or contributing to eight books, and authoring or co-authoring numerous journal articles and professional papers. He has given well over a hundred conference presentations and is frequently invited to give keynote addresses, guest lectures, and community seminars.

Ramblings on a Career in Counselling Psychology

Lee C. Handy PhD, R Psych

It is hard to know where to start. My first thought is that I, through little effort of my own, was at the right places at the right time. I began my undergraduate work in 1957 at a local Junior College, which had an excellent psychology instructor who influenced me very much. I then went to Iowa State University and originally headed toward industrial psychology but along the way got more interested in clinical and counselling, interestingly enough through my studies of family and sexuality in sociology. Fortunately there were strong faculty at Iowa State University in all of these areas. I very quickly discovered that counseling psychology supported a diversity of interests including a number of which I soon became quite passionate about.

My first course in counselling utilized "The Work of the Counselor" by Leona Tyler, a person I came to know, like, and respect very much later in my doctoral work at Oregon. Through her I had a chance to meet and interact with a number of the early stars in our field and related areas. This included Carl Rogers, B. F. Skinner, Albert Ellis, Rudolph Driekurs, Bill Masters, Gerry Patterson, and George Kelly. These were all exciting people, some more likable than others. One of the things I learned quickly was that holding differing views could be done very passionately and respectfully. The debates

between Rogers and Skinner were often contentious but I soon learned that they held each other in high esteem and were good friends. The same often could not be said about some of their disciples/followers.

I believe that I was extremely lucky to have gotten in on the ground floor of both the growth of counselling and of behaviour modification and its evolution. I soon focused more and more on what I've often called "intimate relationships, the good and the bad side". My clinical work, research, and teaching, while covering a lot of ground, have focused in this arena.

Coming to the University of Calgary on completion of my doctoral work and internship has turned out to be a terrific choice. Over the course of 41 years on faculty I have had the pleasure of working with both colleagues and students who have enriched my life. It has given the opportunity to have a great deal of diversity in my work, both in the populations involved and the nature of involvement. I think that this is one of the great advantages of counselling psychology. The training is applicable to many areas and concerns. I do at times lament at the extremely narrow training of some modern day psychologists who seem to lack a very broad background in the discipline of psychology-perhaps unwarranted. I do take some solace in the recent requirements for backgrounds in basic areas of psychology.

Overall, the most gratifying parts of my career have been both the clientele and most of all the colleagues I have been so lucky to work with both on and off the campus. This brings me to another aspect of my career that has been rewarding and that is the involvement in a wide variety of professional organizations at the local, provincial, national, and international levels. I would highly recommend to new psychologists that they seek out opportunities to serve their profession as both the activities and again the people you'll meet will benefit you both personally and professionally. It has been a helluva ride and never boring! I thank all who have made it great.

2008 Student Awards

2008 Master's Thesis Award

Becky Stewart, Trinity Western University

Attachment and Women's Coping with Sexual Assault

In this study, the Listening Guide method was used to explore the experience of PTSD and coping, for a sample of 32 female survivors of sexual assault in adulthood. The women were involved in two sets of interviews: the first exploring their experiences based on four general questions; the second based on

individualized follow-up questions derived from the first interview. The initial analysis of interview data identified overall themes in the women's coping behaviours (e.g. social withdrawal), as well as relationship and general life changes (e.g. view of self and others). Subsequently, the emergent themes and patterns were explored in terms of the women's attachment styles. Specifically, each woman's narrative was placed into one of three groups, based on their dominant attachment style (as identified by the Adult Attachment Interview), and another complete Listening Guide analysis was conducted for the entire set of interviews within each attachment group. Finally, the themes that emerged within the three groups were discussed in light of the themes that emerged from the other groups, in order to identify similarities and distinctives among the different kinds of women. Overall, the women experienced shifts in how they viewed themselves, others and their relationships in many ways. Prominent themes that emerged out of the initial analysis included issues with support, increased distrust, and avoidance. Attending to attachment style was useful in deepening understanding of how the women coped: although no additional themes emerged from the attachment-related analysis, the way that many of the themes were expressed in the lives of the women appeared to be linked to attachment styles of those women. For example, substance abuse was true for women in two of the three attachment styles, although the underlying motivations behind this behaviour seemed to be different in the securely attached women than in the dismissing women. The clinical implications of these patterns of findings are discussed in terms of the need to provide appropriate supports, and the usefulness of considering attachment style when developing treatment plans for women who have suffered a sexual assault.

2008 Outstanding Master's Conference Poster

Natalie Hansen and Marla Buchanan, University of British Columbia

When sex hurts: Couples' experiences of female sexual pain

The experience of pain during or after sex is a common phenomenon among women; however, little is known about its impact on members in a couple relationship. Framed by a bio-psychosocial perspective of pain, a narrative study was employed to address this gap in the literature. The following research question was posed: What are couples' experiences of recurrent physical pain on the part of the female partner during or immediately following sexual contact? Eight Canadian participants (four

men and four women) were recruited from the community and shared their stories of female sexual pain in individual narrative interviews. The range of age of the participants was 23 to 37, and the participants varied on marital status, socioeconomic status, and cause of sexual pain. Holistic-content and thematic analyses (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, 1998) were conducted and resulted in eight unique stories and five themes. The stories were written in the first-person, with the participant's language, and provided an in-depth look into the experience of sexual pain. Themes salient to the experience of female sexual pain were uncovered: Adapting to a different sexual relationship, shifts in sexual self-view, challenges to creating a family, difficulties with dealing with medical professionals, and coping. Implications for counsellors were discussed.

2008 Outstanding Master's Conference Poster

Olga Oulanova and Roy Moodley, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

Counselling and traditional healing: Exploring an integrative model

Given that mainstream mental healthcare inadequately addresses the psychological needs of indigenous clients, there is revival in the use of traditional healing practices among Canadian Aboriginal communities. As a result of this recent resurgence, therapeutic benefits of Aboriginal healing are receiving much attention in counselling research. In evaluating interventions with Aboriginal clients an argument is repeatedly made for incorporating indigenous healing practices. However, concrete recommendations are missing on how to utilize traditional healing conjointly with Western counselling. To address this limitation, we interviewed Canadian mental health workers who routinely carry out such integration. These individuals employ both Western psychological interventions and Aboriginal traditional practices. Qualitative data from discussions of their integrative efforts were analyzed via the Grounded Theory approach. We propose an explanatory model for ways in which integration of Aboriginal traditional healing and Western counselling is presently carried out in the context of Canadian mental health. We discuss these findings with regard to providing adequate psychological services for Aboriginal clients. Broader implications for the role of culturally-grounded helping approaches in the mainstream mental healthcare system are also addressed.

2008 Outstanding Master's Conference Poster

Images and Ideals: Counselling Women and Girls in a "Thin-is-in" Culture

Reana Saraceni and Shelly Russell-Mayhew, University of Calgary

Research suggests that the prevalence of ultra-thin female images portrayed in the media encourages female preoccupation with body dissatisfaction and weight loss.

The current study analyzed body measurements, weights, and heights of Playboy Centerfolds across four decades from 1960 to 1999. Significant results show that bust and hip size have decreased relative to waist size, producing a more tubular body shape. Weights have not varied significantly whereas heights have increased an inch with each decade. The total percent of Playboy Centerfolds meeting criteria for anorexia nervosa is 45.3%, and none of the models were either at, or above 100% of their expected weight. Analyzing Body Mass Index (BMI) of Playboy Centerfolds indicates there is less body weight variability in the 1990s than the 1960s, suggesting body weight standard has become more and more restrictive.

Call for Nominations

Counselling Psychology Section: Distinguished Member Award

The Distinguished Member Award is intended to recognize someone who has made significant contributions to the field as a practitioner or as a researcher. We are looking forward to receiving nominations and presenting the award in Montreal.

In addition to being a member of the Counselling Psychology Section, the nomination criteria include:

Nominee will preferably have been active in the profession for at least 10 years.

Nominee has made a distinguished contribution in one or more of the following ways:

- Outstanding counselling service.
- Scholarly research, which has moved the profession of counselling forward.
- Development of counselling materials which has contributed to the provision of service by others.
- Outstanding service to professional association, in particular to the C.P.A. Counselling Psychology Section.

- Other factors that will be considered are:

Influence of the work to the profession of counseling (e.g., is the work moving the profession forward?).

Breadth of influence (e.g., how many people have been touched/affected by the work?).

Documentation of these accomplishments can include:

- Statement from the nominator providing rationale for nominating this individual.
- Curriculum Vitae of the nominee.
- Sample of work, evaluation of work, letters from clients/colleagues, detailed descriptions of work, publication record, listing of positions held, and/or service contributions.

Please send nominations by April 30, 2009 to:

Sharon Cairns (scairns@ucalgary.ca).

Section 24 Student Awards Nominations

Each year, the Counselling Psychology Section makes available four student awards. A monetary award of \$100 is presented in each of the following categories:

Best PhD Dissertation
Best Masters Thesis
Best Masters Conference Poster
Best Doctoral Conference Poster

PhD Dissertation and Masters Thesis Awards

For dissertation and thesis awards, students need not be a member of the Counselling Psychology Section; however, the person who nominates the student's work must be a member. The student's work can only be nominated once for each award. The research must have been successfully defended within 2 years prior to the annual award submission date of May 15.

Please submit 2 copies of a maximum 30-page summary of the research study with a letter of nomination from a member of the Counselling Psychology Section to:

Dr. Colleen Haney
Student Award Coordinator
Scarfe Library 287,
UBC,
2125 Main Mall,
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4
colleen.haney@ubc.ca

NOTE: Submissions must be in APA style.

The deadline for submission is May 15, 2009

Conference Poster Awards

For conference poster awards, students should be prepared to discuss their poster with two Section 24 members who will come and speak with students during their poster display at the CPA Convention.

Counselling Section Executive

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