

**Annie Arevalo***Exploring Culturally Sensitive Approaches for Latinx Sexual Assault Survivors: A Consideration of Narrative Therapy*

Although Latinx sexual assault survivors may encounter challenges in healing from their trauma, many face additional challenges as they may be treated with generalized, culturally insensitive approaches. The present qualitative study explores possible culturally sensitive treatments for Latinx sexual assault survivors. A review of relevant literature is provided and compared to data derived from three interviews conducted with mental health professionals who specialize in working with sexual assault survivors of Latinx ethnicity. The data was translated into thematic analysis and three main themes emerged: cultural norm influences of the population, barriers and concerns in therapy, and utilized treatments. The results of the study suggest the necessity of clinicians addressing the intersectionality of survivor and Latinx identity to provide better-adapted treatment. The discussion further analyzes the results in the context of the reviewed literature, the researcher offers clinical implications of the findings and recommends future areas of research.

**David Arevalo***Exploring How Counselors Treat Anxiety Among Collegiate Alcohol Users*

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) is the most common and effective treatment for anxiety, yet there are other treatment modalities. This study focused on exploring other forms of treatment for anxiety among collegiate alcohol users. Three mental health professionals were interviewed about their experiences with college students who use alcohol to address anxiety. The transcriptions of the interviews were coded and examined for themes. Drawing from the results and literature it was concluded that CBT is not the only effective treatment for anxiety among the college population. There are many approaches counselors can use such as with biofeedback and EMDR. Clinical implications are addressed. Areas of further research include exploration of trauma related disorders among collegiate alcohol users. Another area of further research is the impact of co-occurring disorders within the college population.

**Marc Blake***Boys Don't Cry: Utilizing a Narrative Approach to Engage Men who Struggle with Depression*

Men are diagnosed with depression less frequently than women, however, men die from suicide at a rate three times that of women. Conforming to traditional masculine ideology may contribute to men's experience and expression of depressive feelings that could account for the discrepancy. Because narrative therapy emphasizes the influences of gender on clients, the purpose of this study was to explore how a narrative approach could be beneficial for men who adhere to traditional masculine norms and struggle with depression. Three clinicians were interviewed about their experience using narrative therapy with men experiencing depression. Using a qualitative, phenomenological approach, five major themes along with fifteen subthemes emerged from the data: (1) influences of masculinity on men, (2) depression and men, (3) narrative therapy approaches and interventions, (4) challenges of engaging men in narrative therapy, and (5) the narrative therapist. The results from this study revealed insights into how clinicians practicing from a narrative perspective can work with men who conform to traditional masculine ideals and experience depression

**Nicole Campbell**

*Exploring the Use of Non-pharmacological Interventions for Senior Long-Term Care Residents*

One of the most rapidly growing populations in the US is the senior population, which consists of anyone age 65 or older. Two-thirds of seniors will require some form of long term care (LTC) services during their lifetime. There is a severe lack of mental health services available to the senior LTC population. This study examines effective non-pharmacological interventions to improve quality of life (QOL) and overall mental health for this population. There were three participants in this qualitative study who were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format regarding their clinical experience working with senior clients. The data collected was analyzed and revealed five themes. These include common problems seniors face, medication use and side effects, effective treatment interventions, access to treatment and attitudes within the counseling community regarding the specialization of working with seniors. This information will assist in the development of improved and more effective mental treatments for the senior LTC population, which comprises a large and growing percentage of the US population.

**Thomas A. Farmer**

*Clinical Observations of Fear Associated with Heightened Susceptibility to HIV Infection in Gay Men*

The HIV/AIDS crisis was (and continues to be) a source of immense suffering, grief, and loss, thus perpetuating fear associated with the possibility of contracting the virus, particularly within gay men. The goal of this present work is to explore the ways that such fears may contribute to the development and maintenance of mental health symptomologies in gay male clientele. Thematic analysis of results from structured interviews with long-practicing mental health providers suggests that fears associated with heightened susceptibility to HIV infection may contribute to depression, anxiety, OCD, intimacy issues, relationship problems, and substance misuse in gay men. These results are discussed against the backdrop of differing historical/generational narratives, and their implications for counseling treatments and interventions are considered.

**Jeffrey Markow**

*Exploring the Therapeutic Use of Video Games in Counseling*

This research study explored the therapeutic uses of video games in counseling by reviewing the available literature and interviewing three clinicians that utilize video games in counseling. Each participant was selected through snowball sampling, internet searches, as well as referrals from colleagues. The three participants were then asked a series of questions to explore in greater detail their thoughts and beliefs about utilizing video games in counseling. The researcher then analyzed the responses for emergent themes. Seven emergent themes were identified during the analysis. The resulting analysis highlighted the most prominent takeaways being that video games could be used as an effective means of building rapport with a client and skills training. This study also found that the stigmas and stereotypes related to video gaming could likely influence the dissemination of these various intervention strategies.

**Jim Minthorne**

*Finding Community During Times of Mental Health Stigma: Clinicians' Perspectives on the Corrective Experience of Group Therapy*

The present study investigates group therapy as a means of fostering community and empowering individuals who have experienced mental illness stigma. Relevant literature about

the prevalence of mental illness stigma is explored. Existing literature detailing various group therapy approaches is also discussed, with emphasis on treatment outcomes among persons with mental illnesses. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three practicing psychologists to ascertain the unique experiences of these clinicians with regard to facilitating therapy groups and broaching the topic of stigma. A thematic analysis of participant quotes revealed several salient themes. Participants noted myriad barriers related to stigma, including feelings of shame and fears of rejection. Stigma may inhibit people with mental illnesses from joining therapy groups altogether or interfere with engagement among those who have joined groups. Reported benefits of group therapy were largely related to group members feeling understood and like part of a community. The possibility of the existence of stigmatizing attitudes among mental health professionals was noteworthy and is likely important to monitor in clinical practice. Clinical considerations based on the findings of the thematic analysis are discussed in the context of informing possible future directions for group counseling interventions and research.

### **Jazmin Miranda**

#### *Clinicians' Experiences with Latino Justice-Involved Male Youth: Treatment Considerations*

This study investigates the experiences of clinicians who work with Latino justice-involved male youth. A review of relevant literature is provided and used to analyze data collected from three semi-structured interviews with clinicians who have long-established experience working with this population. Three major themes identified include: a) characteristics of Latino justice-involved male youth; b) interventions and treatment considerations; c) barriers to treatment. Findings in this study support literature related to the risk factors for legal involvement, the use of holistic treatment, and cultural considerations when working with population. Additional insights are provided related to conduct disorders as diagnoses in youth, therapists as system disruptors, innovative approaches, and trauma-informed therapy. Clinical implications, areas of future research, and limitations of this study are lastly presented.

### **Mark Myran**

#### *Masculinity's Forbidden Territory: A Feminist Approach to Treating Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*

The present study explores if there are unique benefits in taking a feminist approach to therapy with men who have a history of childhood sexual abuse (CSA). Four clinicians were interviewed to share their experiences working with trauma survivors and specifically with male survivors of CSA. A semi-structured interview was used to gather information from the participants, the data was analyzed to find emerging themes, and the results were examined to see where they confirmed, contradicted, or added to existing literature. Five themes emerged from the data: the impact of CSA, social construction of gender, the impact of power and privilege, challenges working with men, and the feminist approach with male survivors of CSA. The results suggest that socialization to gender norms can sometimes serve as a barrier for men to disclose abuse and to get the most out of therapy, and that a feminist approach has a distinct ability to break down those barriers and promote healing

### **Kelly Nguyen**

#### *Clinical Approaches in Working with Women Impacted by Same-Sex Intimate Partner Violence*

This present study investigates clinical approaches in working with women impacted by same-sex intimate partner violence. The author reviews the existing body of research, then compares it

to a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews from four mental health professionals experienced in working with this population. A primary code set was established through data analysis utilizing qualitative procedures, immersive engagement, and dialogic engagement. The emergent themes and subthemes: intersectional oppression and compounded stressors, complex dynamics of intimate partner violence, and participants' clinical experiences are discussed and analyzed. Although there is not a universal theoretical orientation utilized by the participants, they agreed on the significance of cultural humility pertaining to being aware of their own biases and assumptions.

### **Sarah Rahman**

#### *Counselors' Views on Contributing Factors to Marital Satisfaction With Muslim South Asian American Couples*

With rich collectivistic culture emphasizing the family, differing temperaments, difficulties communicating, and dealing with emotions, Muslim South Asian Americans may couple struggle to develop their identity as a couple and nurture their we-ness. This study explored contributing factors to marital satisfaction for Muslim South Asian American couples. Qualitative interviews were conducted to further understand this issue by interviewing five clinicians in the field working with this population using a semi-structured interview process.. Rigorous thematic analysis revealed five themes: protective factors in marital satisfaction, risk factors in marital dissatisfaction, sexual satisfaction, barriers to treatment, and clinical interventions and treatments. The findings support the complexities this population faces as second-generation Americans balancing their South Asian heritage and Western influences with hopes of cultivating a healthier marriage. It is hoped that this study will inform counselors, counselor educators, and trainers of numerous clinical interventions and evidence-based approaches that may be used while working with this population while understanding the cultural and religious complexities, possible enmeshment, and nuances altogether.

### **Alexandra Sharp**

#### *Exploring the Use of Dance/Movement Therapy with Clinical Populations*

Dance/movement therapy (DMT) is a creative arts therapy that uses movement and dance to help individuals become more integrated in emotional, intellectual, and motor functioning. The present study explores the use of DMT with clinical populations. Three clinicians were interviewed regarding their experiences using DMT with a variety of clients in varying clinical settings. A semi-structured interview format was used to gather information. Six themes and a variety of sub themes emerged through thematic analysis: the therapeutic relationship, DMT techniques that therapists utilize, benefits of DMT, challenges with DMT, cultural considerations, and the disconnect between academic practice and real-life experience. The results of the present study support and expand the knowledge base on the use of DMT with a variety of mental health diagnoses. This study also exposes a gap in the research surrounding the importance of the therapeutic relationship, cultural considerations, and the disconnect between academic practice and real-life experience for dance/movement therapists. Future research may benefit from studying client experiences to understand how DMT is helpful and information from clients could be used to adapt and modify academic programs to decrease the gap between practice and applicability.

### **Carla Sotomayor**

### *The Perspective of First-Generation Latinx Counseling Students*

First-generation Latinx graduate students in counseling face numerous challenges among their peers, family members, faculty, and within their institution. Within this population, there are layers of supportive and challenging factors to understand their educational experiences. This qualitative study focused on understanding the perspective of first-generation Latinx counseling students by interviewing five graduate students who identified within this population. Six themes emerged from the interviews: (a) academic experience, (b) expectation, (c) growth opportunity, (d) culture, (e) support system, and (f) challenges. From this study, it is hoped to inform faculty members, family members, and peers on the experiences of this population. By focusing on the current experiences of these students, faculty members, family members, and peers can better support them by understanding the first-hand experiences and how the layers of identities (e.g., first-generation college students, Latinx student, and graduate student in counseling) these students hold has impacted their educational experience in the process.

### **Krissy Thomas**

#### *Women Walking Alongside ADHD: Exploring the Use of Mindfulness and Walk and Talk Therapy*

The present study examines clinicians' experiences using walk and talk therapy and mindfulness practices and their value in therapeutic settings, specifically when working with female clients diagnosed with ADHD. The current literature is explored, then compared through a thematic analysis derived from data gathered from interviews of three mental health professionals who utilize walk and talk therapy and mindfulness in their practices. The emergent themes included features unique to females with ADHD, benefits unique to walk and talk therapy, challenges of the clinical experience, interventions used by clinicians, and the magic and awe of nature. Subthemes were derived within each theme and included the comorbid diagnoses and common symptoms, effects of hormones, and the benefits of ADHD; walk and talk therapy benefits for the client, for the therapist and for the therapeutic relationship; challenges of working with this population and unpredictability of the environment; interventions used to keep client's focused and the use of nature and mindfulness. All the participants talked about the benefits of walk and talk therapy and its utilization with females diagnosed with ADHD. They also described the value of mindfulness exercises in nature and its value to the therapeutic process.

### **Amanda J. Timmerman**

#### *Working with Veterans with Comorbid Posttraumatic Stress and Substance Use Disorders: An Exploration of Clinicians' Experiences*

Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance use disorder (SUD) commonly co-occur among military veterans and may have devastating consequences. Many challenges inhibit treatment of this population, but there has been limited research into the perspectives of clinicians in this field. The purpose of the present study was to explore clinicians' experiences of the nature and treatment of comorbid PTSD and SUD in veterans. After reviewing the literature, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with three therapists with experience with this population. Thematic analysis of these interviews revealed three themes: complexity of the presenting problem, treatment tailored to fit, and clinicians coming alongside veterans. The researcher concluded by connecting these results with previous findings, suggesting clinical implications, and proposing future research directions.

### **Alexandra Vavoulis**

*Exploring the Use of Yoga in Therapy to Develop a Positive Body Image with Adolescent Girls and Young Women*

This study explored the use of yoga in therapy to help women develop positive body images. Four participants reflected about their experiences of integrating yoga into counseling with women. The results suggested that most participants had a personal story and journey that brought them to integrate yoga into therapy. They reported that it was the mind body connection that made changes in body image possible through awareness and grounding which allows the client to feel calm and come into their bodies. As clients come into their bodies they can then begin to explore their body and facilitate awareness and change. Participants also cited client empowerment found through yoga as influential in their changed thoughts and beliefs about their bodies. The participants have seen positive results in their work with women and find the work rewarding as they help women rebuild healthy relationships with their bodies. This study provides a small glimpse into integrating mind body work into therapy and the potential benefits.

**Gabriela Valentina Vazquez**

*Exploring Clinical Experiences with Ambiguous Loss Among Latinx Immigrants*

The present study explores clinical experiences with ambiguous loss in the Latinx immigrant community. The existing literature regarding the experience of ambiguous loss among migrants and their families is reviewed. Qualitative data that was gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with four clinicians experienced in working with Latinx immigrants. The interviews revealed three main themes and a variety of subthemes. The themes include the understanding, clinical assessment, and clinical treatment of ambiguous loss in Latinx immigrant communities. The discussion and analysis of the results highlight the complexity of ambiguous loss emphasizing the understanding of motives for migration, the role of acculturation, and the emotional and relational consequences of these experiences. The participants discussed clinical concerns that arise with ambiguous loss and a variety of treatment approaches that can be helpful to Latinx immigrants. All participants endorse the incorporation of a culturally sensitive framework suitable for Latinx individuals and several supported the use of relational-cultural therapy as a specific modality to integrate this framework.

**Kaiya Leilani Richards Wright**

*Clinical Approaches to Enhancing the Mental Health of Youth Experiencing Juvenile Chronic Pain*

The present study investigates clinical approaches in counseling youth experiencing juvenile chronic pain (JCP). Qualitative data was gathered and analyzed from four interviews of mental health experts in the field of juvenile and adult chronic pain, which revealed three major themes: understanding JCP, the lived experience of JCP, and treatment approaches for JCP. Participants supported an integrative approach to counseling, including the use of acceptance and commitment therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, and family systems therapy, with an emphasis on building mindfulness and pain acceptance. One participant supported the use of eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy as an approach to treating adults with chronic pain. The study concludes with a discussion of the clinical implications of the research, areas of future research, and the limitations of the present study.

**Albert Xiong**

*Am I Gay and Asian Enough?: Exploring Affirming Treatment Approaches with Gay Asian American Men in Counseling*

The present study explored how intersectional prejudice affects the experiences of coming out, internalized racism, and mental health outcomes of gay Asian American men. Affirming treatment approaches were also examined in relation to their presentation in counseling. Four mental health professionals were interviewed regarding their experiences working with the target population and their insights regarding the socialization of gay Asian American men. Six themes emerged from the interviews: fostering belonging and acceptance, affirming clients' authentic selves, intersectionality of value systems, pressure to conform, practicing cultural competence, and processing loss associated with coming out. Findings suggest that gay Asian American men strongly value family ties and harmony, complicating the process of coming out. Further, as gay Asian American men strive to achieve a sense of belonging, they may struggle to integrate conflicting values that arise from their intersectional identities. Gay Asian American men may benefit from counseling that prioritizes trust and community-building.

**Weiping Yang**

*Enhancing Boys' Resilience After Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence*

This study investigates boys' recovery from exposure to inter-parental intimate partner violence, potential resilience-enhancing factors, and treatment approaches. It includes a review of literature and a thematic analysis of three interviews with expert clinicians. Five primary themes emerged: Trauma symptoms and other features of IPV exposure, the role of fathers, the role of mothers, boys' resilience, and treatment considerations. Clinical implications include counselor awareness that fathers may engage in subtle and not-so-subtle triangulation efforts undermining the mother-son relationship and that IPV-exposed boys and mothers may need support in setting boundaries with fathers continuing unhealthy relationship behaviors past parental separation.