



Newsletter Editor: Shannon Suo

President's Message

Roberto Lewis-Fernández

September, 2017

Submit now for the

2018 Annual Meeting

What does culture mean? Evolving definitions in mental health service, training, and research

• **San Diego, CA**

• **April 19-21, 2018**

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If your experience was anything like mine, the summer just flew by! As its relatively slower pace fades into the background, there are lots of opportunities for re-engaging with SSPC. The deadline of September 20 for the abstract submissions to the 2018 Annual Meeting is fast approaching. The theme of the meeting, *What does culture mean? Evolving definitions in mental health service, training, and research*, provides an opportunity to reflect collectively on our work. How DO we operationalize "culture" in our everyday activity? When we teach, do clinical work, develop and implement novel programs and interventions, or advocate for patients, what is our underlying idea of what culture is? What aspects of the person's (or the group's) experience are the object of our attention? We have many implicit theories of culture circulating, sometimes even different ones for distinct components of our work. The meeting offers us a chance to discuss them, in the hope of advancing the field and our collective impact.

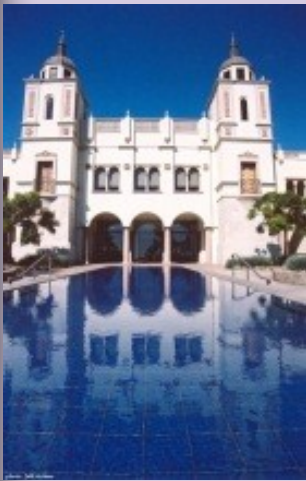
Another fantastic opportunity for engaging more actively with SSPC this fall and winter involves one of the Education Committee's projects. Under Kenneth Fung's leadership, the Committee is putting together a series of webinars for use as resources on cultural psychiatry by training programs in all mental health disciplines. A kind of "Cultural Psychiatry 101" for the digital age. A number of these webinars are in production, and the Committee can really use your help in carrying them out! If you are interested in collaborating, please contact Kenneth at kennethpf@gmail.com. Also, remember the next regular SSPC webinar is scheduled for Monday, November 13, 2017.

Finally, have you thought about joining the SSPC Board? Is there an area of SSPC activity that you are interested in pushing forward? Perhaps even an area that we are not yet exploring? Consider running for office when we contact you again about the dates of the nomination period at the end of the year.

Help us make SSPC even more relevant and important to our daily work!

From the Executive Director*Liz Kramer*

It seems like only a month or so ago that we were in Princeton at SSPC's 38th annual meeting, and I'm still coming to grips with the fact that it's really been four months and summer is coming to an end. In the final analysis, the meeting was a big success. The final head count was 130-52 physicians, 30 non-physician professionals, and 46 trainees. We also had 2 accompanying persons. Proximity to New York gave us the advantage of 30 people who registered for a single day, including several who attended for two days. 31 attendees received CME credit. Evaluation results were very good. Please see the article by Bonnie Kaiser on page [4](#).



**Joan B. Kroc Institute
for Peace and
Justice, San Diego**
sandiego.edu website

The 2018 annual meeting will be held April 19-21 at the beautiful Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA. We will critically explore the implicit (or explicit) definitions of culture that are being used in current mental health research and practice. To what extent are process-based definitions of culture replacing or coexisting alongside more static group background-based definitions? For example, is culture conceptualized uniformly in key components of DSM-5, such as in the Cultural Formulation Interview and the Culture-Related Diagnostic Issues sections of each disorder? How does serious engagement with process-based definitions affect our established practices, such as the usual medical identification of the patient on the basis of age, gender, and race/ethnicity (e.g. "23 year-old black female")? How does the global spread of mental health interventions potentially perpetuate simplistic notions of culture, to the potential detriment of programs? What role does the family play in creating/recreating these cultural influences? Does it still make sense to speak of a person's "culture" in the singular?

Conference Learning Objectives

After attending this meeting, participants will be able to:

1. Identify multiple definitions of culture from clinical, social science, and humanities fields and their implications for mental health research and practice.
2. Discuss theories and concepts relevant to culture, including identity, power, explanatory models, equity, diversity, and meaning-making and their implications in the practice of cultural psychiatry and global mental health.
3. Describe how various definitions of culture are used in diverse aspects of mental health work, including clinical care, training, advocacy, and research.
4. Integrate the multiple conceptualizations of culture into the practice of cultural psychiatry and global mental health.

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From the Executive Director, continued

We will have two plenary sessions, one a lecture and the other a panel. Speakers will include Byron and Mary Jo Good, Laurence Kirmayer, Cecile Rousseau, Elizabeth Carpenter-Song, and Helena Hansen, among others.

In addition to the two plenary sessions we will have our usual array of workshops, symposia, individual papers, a session on works in progress, trainee fellowship presentations, and a poster session. We are accepting abstracts for review until September 20 but regret that we cannot accept any late submissions. For further information please visit <https://sspc.submittable.com/submit>.

There is a new [Hilton Garden Inn in Old Town](#) at the foot of the hill near the University of San Diego campus, where a block of rooms has been booked for SSPC at \$159, plus tax. It is close to the campus shuttle that runs up the hill to the Kroc Institute. To reserve by phone, call 877-782-9444 and mention the "Society for the Study of Psychiatry and Culture at USD block" or code SP2 at the Hilton Garden Inn San Diego Old Town. Please note that this year the rate will only be guaranteed until February 16 so if that is where you want to stay please book early.

We also are working on two webinars. The first one will be on Monday, November 17 and will preview next year's meeting.

And we have begun to plan for 2019, when we will meet again in Toronto, the home of our incoming president, Kenneth Fung. This will be SSPC's 40th anniversary year and we are planning some special events and programs in honor of that date. Volunteers are needed to help research and document the history of the organization. Come on all you young turks! Here's a chance to learn more about your organization, become involved, and get your name on a publication. If you are interested and want more information or want to sign up, please get in touch with Steven Wolin stevenwolin@gmail.com or me ekramer931@gmail.com.

Infrastructure development continues and we will be completing the operations manual, master calendar and policy and procedure manual this fall and early winter. We're also upgrading and updating our website and will be adding new features over the next few months, including a listing of other related organizations' meetings. Stay tuned! Finally, we are working on a membership campaign and activating the Communications Committee. We already have beautiful flyers for membership and the 2018 meeting and will have a brochure for the annual meeting as well as a preliminary program in November.

Best wishes for a great fall and keep in touch!

The beautiful Hilton Garden Inn Old Town, steps away from the Presidio Park and right in Old Town
Hilton.com website



"Family Matters" topic well-received at 2017 annual meeting*Bonnie Kaiser*

We are pleased to report that our 2017 meeting was a success! We convened 130 attendees, among them a greater number of trainees from medicine, psychology, and other fields than in past meetings. Plenaries, symposia, and workshops explored the theme of "Family Matters" from clinical, research, education, and policy perspectives. For the first time, we offered a Works in Progress session, which received great feedback and facilitated helpful discussion for students and scholars who are in the midst of planning or conducting projects.

Thanks to all those who completed evaluations. We had a high rate of feedback this year. 93% of respondents rated the overall meeting as Excellent or Very Good. Participants were very appreciative of the opportunity to learn more about family therapy, gender and transgender issues, and refugee families. Over 80% of participants said the conference will impact their practice. Several respondents said they would love to receive more information about family-focused research and family therapy at the next annual meeting.

We received high praise for this year's program and the range of high quality presentations. Among individual sessions, Monica McGoldrick's genogram workshop and the history lecture by Stacey Peoples were among the highest rated. Participants also valued the Hughes and Spiegel lectures by Elsa Friis and Eden Almasude on "Family Based Adolescent Maltreatment in Kenya" and "Postpartum Depression and Psychosis in Refugee Women." Congratulations again to our fellowship winners!

We recognize that there was some confusion and frustration regarding the change of location and that it was difficult to get to. With the Penn Relays and the NFL Draft taking place in Philadelphia at the same time as our annual meeting, we were thankful to find space and great accommodations at the Princeton Marriott Forrestal, which attendees also rated extremely high.

We hope to see many of you at the beautiful *Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice* in San Diego next April!

2017 Lifetime Achievement Award winner, Steven Wolin (2nd from left) with Carlos Sluzki, Monica McGoldrick, and Peter Steinglass (left to right)

Photo credit: Vincenzo Di Nicola



Call for Papers for 39th Annual Meeting

April 19-21, 2018

San Diego, California

Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice

University of San Diego

Abstract submission deadline: September 20, 2017

[Click here for Abstract Submission Form](#)

What does “culture” mean?

Evolving definitions in mental health service, training, and research

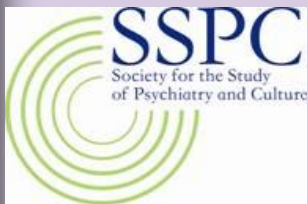
The concept of culture has continued to evolve in mental health research and practice, in parallel with critiques of group-based definitions of culture in anthropology and other social sciences. Culture is often reduced to a principal group identity, usually an aspect of the person's national or racial/ethnic background. In contrast, current definitions of culture in mental health – such as the one presented in the DSM-5 – conceptualize culture as *processual*, constituting a process of meaning-making that is under the influence of multiple collective influences that combine to constitute a person's identity. These influences arise from diverse origins, including gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion and spirituality, occupation, avocation, age, class, national and regional origin, and racialized and/or ethnic identity. Necessarily, every person's “culture” is a kaleidoscopic mix of these influences, as they become more or less prominent at any given moment, in the presence of some interlocutors and not others, and in relation to what is at stake for the person at the time.

This annual meeting critically explores the implicit (or explicit) definitions of culture that are being used in current mental health research and practice. To what extent are process-based definitions of culture replacing or coexisting alongside more static group background-based definitions? For example, is culture conceptualized uniformly in key components of DSM-5, such as in the Cultural Formulation Interview and the Culture-Related Diagnostic Issues sections of each disorder? How does serious engagement with process-based definitions affect our established practices, such as the usual medical identification of the patient on the basis of age, gender, and race/ethnicity (e.g. “23 year-old black female”)? How does the global spread of mental health interventions potentially perpetuate simplistic notions of culture, to the potential detriment of programs? What role does the family play in creating/recreating these cultural influences? Does it make sense anymore to speak of a person's “culture” in the singular?

For additional information, please visit the Annual Meeting
page: www.psychiatryandculture.org

If you have any questions, please contact

Bonnie Kaiser, Chair of the Program Committee, at bonnienicolekaiser@gmail.com, or Liz Kramer, Executive Director, at ekramer931@gmail.com, phone: (484) 416-3915.



psychiatryandculture.org

Be sure to renew your membership for 2017! Click [here](#) to pay your dues online.

Leave a legacy—consider donating to SSPC or recognizing SSPC in your will.

While dues are not tax-deductible as charitable, donations are!

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Dues are not deductible as a charitable expense, but may be deductible as a business expense. Consult with your tax advisor for details.

Contact SSPC

sspculture@gmail.com is for limited administrative functions and is not checked often. Instead, please send your emails directly to the people for whom they are intended. If you're not sure to whom they should go, send them to Liz and she will forward them appropriately. Thanks!

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