



# *Society for Cross-Cultural Research*

## **2014 CONFERENCE UPDATE FROM PRESIDENT-ELECT PAUL NGO, ST. NORBERT COLLEGE**



Greetings Colleagues!

I wish to cordially invite members and nonmembers alike to join scholars from the Anthropology of Children and Youth Interest Group (ACYIG) of the American Anthropological Association (AAA), the Division of International Psychology (Division 52) of the American Psychological Association (APA), and the Society for Cross-Cultural Research (SCCR) at next year's 43rd Annual Meeting of the SCCR, a warm and welcoming venue open to anyone with interests in culture and behavior. The conference will be held from February 12 to February 15, 2014 at the historic Francis Marion

Hotel in Charleston, South Carolina, a city that recently received "Top Destination in the World" as well as "Top U.S. City" Readers' Choice Awards in Condé Nast Traveler.

Conference registration rates are:

Members: \$130 by 13 January 2014, \$140 after 13 January 2014

Non-members: \$140 by 13 January 2014, \$150 after 13 January 2014

Retirees: \$80 by 13 January 2014, \$85 after 13 January 2014

Students: \$50 by 13 January 2014, \$60 after 13 January 2014

Banquet (All are invited): \$55

A link to register will be provided on an upcoming 2014 conference page accessible from SCCR's homepage ([www.sccr.org](http://www.sccr.org)).

In addition, anyone who would like to have work considered for inclusion within an SCCR poster session, paper session, symposium, panel discussion, or conversation hour at the conference may submit an abstract of the work (200 words maximum) by 11 November 2013.

A link to descriptions of the five presentation formats as well as submission forms will also be made available on the forthcoming SCCR 2014 conference page.

The conference hotel, which is conveniently located within walking distance of boutiques, eateries, and historic landmarks, has a block of rooms for conference attendees at the rate of \$154/night that you may access online via: [https://reservations.ihotelier.com/crs/g\\_reservation.cfm?groupID=1053287&hotelID=76320](https://reservations.ihotelier.com/crs/g_reservation.cfm?groupID=1053287&hotelID=76320)

You should not need a login code but may use "SCCR" without quotation marks if necessary. You may also call (843) 722-0600 or 1-(877) 756-2121 and mention "SCCR" if you so prefer.

Please feel free to share information about the 2014 conference with others who may be interested and to contact me ([paul.ngo@snc.edu](mailto:paul.ngo@snc.edu)) if you have any questions. You may also direct inquiries to [SCCR2014@gmail.com](mailto:SCCR2014@gmail.com).

I hope you can join us in Charleston!

Sincerely,

Paul Ngo



## Editor's Note



Dear SCCR Colleagues,

I am sure that many of you are savoring the final days of the summer.

This newsletter showcases two of our award winners: Carrie Brown, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Agnes Scott College, winner of our 2013 Leigh Minturn Award for Early Career Cross-Cultural Research, and Xuan Li, Department of Psychology, University of Cambridge, who won the 2013 John & Beatrice Whiting Award for Outstanding Student in Cross-Cultural Studies. This issue of the newsletter also includes contributions by Nicole Summers and Kavita Shah, both graduate students of psychology at Saint Louis University. Nicole acquaints us with

Dr. Ramadan Ahmed, Professor of Psychology, Kuwait University, and a longtime member of SCCR. Kavita offers us a glimpse into a lively session of the SCCR 2013 meeting, as seen through her eyes.

Many thanks to those who took the time to send in contributions to the newsletter. And for those who have not sent anything so far, please consider contributing articles, announcements for conferences, vacancy postings, calls for proposals and anything else that you think might be of interest to our members. Address contributions to: [Hema.Ganapathy-Coleman@indstate.edu](mailto:Hema.Ganapathy-Coleman@indstate.edu).

We hope you put the 2014 Annual Meeting of the SCCR on your calendar and that you'll be joining us in South Carolina for an intellectually stimulating meeting.

Sincerely,

Hema Ganapathy-Coleman  
Editor, SCCR Newsletter



## **FEATURE ARTICLE**

**Carrie M. Brown,  
Assistant Professor of Psychology, Agnes Scott College**

**Winner of the Leigh Minturn Memorial Award for Early Career  
Cross-Cultural Work**



Carrie (in red) with her 400-level students in spring 2012

First, I would like to thank my close friend, SCCR member Brien Ashdown, for asking if he could nominate me for the 2013 Leigh Minturn Award. I learned that I had received the award while attending the SCCR banquet in Mobile. Receiving the award was a wonderful surprise.

I was a graduate student when I attended my first SCCR meeting (San Antonio, 2007). My graduate advisor, SCCR member Judy Gibbons, encouraged me to attend (thank you, Judy!). I was so pleased with my experience in San Antonio that I decided I would do my best to become a “regular” at SCCR meetings. I have attended every SCCR meeting since 2007 and I hope not to break my streak any time soon.

At the 2008 SCCR meeting in New Orleans, SCCR member David Shwalb asked if Brien Ashdown and I would consider starting a student-run committee for SCCR. Brien and I gladly took on this task. Together, we created SCCR’s Student Advisory Committee. From 2008 to 2011, Brien and I worked to get more students involved in the society via several recruiting strategies, including a Facebook page for students of SCCR. We also carefully planned “student only” poster sessions, social hours, and conversation hours at SCCR meetings. My work on the Student Advisory Committee motivated me to pursue more opportunities for involvement in SCCR. I volunteered to serve on program committees and chair paper sessions at meetings. I also served as Secretary from 2009-2012. I was the first graduate student to hold an officer position with SCCR. During my time as Secretary, I had the true pleasure of getting to collaborate with many of the “greats” of SCCR. My work with SCCR during my graduate years led to my receiving the John and Beatrice Whiting Memorial Award for Outstanding Student in Cross-Cultural Research in 2010.

After receiving my PhD in experimental psychology from Saint Louis University in 2011, I began a tenure-track position at Agnes Scott College – a small, women’s college right outside Atlanta, Georgia. Inspired by my experiences working in Judy Gibbon’s Cross-Cultural Human Developmental Lab and my involvement with SCCR, I founded the Race, Ethnicity, and Culture (REC) Lab at Agnes Scott. To date, I have mentored and collaborated with five students on various research projects that we have presented at meetings of regional, national, and international organizations (including SCCR). Next year, I look forward to inviting six more students to join the REC Lab. Mentoring students is by far one of the best aspects of my job.



Carrie (in turquoise) with students, spring 2013

One of my primary research interests has been ethnic-racial socialization, defined as the transmission of attitudes, customs, motives, roles, skills, and values (as they relate to ethnicity and race) from a range of socialization agents to youth. My interest in ethnic-racial socialization led me to conduct my dissertation research on this topic among adolescents of The Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut (of which I am a member). During my two years at Agnes Scott, I have continued this line of work, shifting my focus to Asian Americans, African Americans, and European Americans. Collaborating with colleagues, I have examined ethnic-racial socialization’s role in self-esteem, identity, feelings of academic impostorism, recognition of racial micro-aggressions, and color-blind racial attitudes.

Toward the end of my first year at Agnes Scott, I shifted my research attention to Parental Acceptance-Rejection Theory, which I attribute to Judy Gibbons, who introduced me to PARTheory. Judy also introduced me to Ron and Nancy Rohner, who generously gave me several opportunities to become more involved in PARTheory. Collaborating with colleagues and students over the past two years, I have examined PARTheory’s relationship with artistic preference, self-compassion, and mindfulness. For two semesters, I have taught a 400-level Research in Developmental Psychology course. I have been able to incorporate PARTheory into the course, and students have conducted research on PARTheory’s connection with various constructs, including forgivingness, hygiene behaviors, close relationships, perfectionism, and motives to drink alcohol.

Many of the students have presented their research at our Spring Annual Research Conference at Agnes Scott, at the Georgia Undergraduate Research in Psychology Conference, and at the International Congress on Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection.

I look forward to continuing with research on PARTheory. This summer, I will research if perceived parental rejection plays a role in hoarding. Hoarding reflects compulsive behaviors that include keeping a cluttered area, having difficulty discarding items, saving too many items, and acquiring too many items (Frost et al., 2004). For both clinical and non-clinical samples, hoarding can be both an economic and social burden (Tolin et al., 2008; Tolin et al., 2010). Aspects of hoarding (Timpano & Schmidt, 2012) are connected to PARTheory's *acceptance-rejection syndrome* – a specific collection of personality dispositions (e.g., anxiety, cognitive distortions, emotional instability) that result from an individual feeling that their need for interpersonal acceptance has not been met (Rohner, 1999, 2004). However, to date, PARTheory has not been linked with hoarding. I am eager to start this project. I am also eager to begin a summer project with Brien Ashdown that will take PARTheory to Guatemala – a country that has received very little attention in the PARTheory literature.

Looking back, it is very clear that SCCR has played a substantial role in bringing me to where I am today. SCCR has given me gifts of friendship, collaboration, and professional development, for which I am very grateful.

**Xuan Li, Department of Psychology, University of Cambridge  
Winner, 2013 John & Beatrice Whiting Award for Outstanding  
Student in Cross-Cultural Studies**



With a background in developmental psychology, I am fascinated by a variety of topics that relate to human development in different cultures, with a focus on children and adolescents in contemporary Chinese societies.

My PhD research looks at the affection display by Chinese fathers toward their children, that is, how Chinese men convey their fatherly love. On the one hand, Chinese fathers remain relatively understudied in contrast to their female counterparts who make a strong presence as “tiger mothers” in both the academic and in public discourse. On the other hand, Chinese fathers have been studied, if at all, in the context of families and of Chinese patriarchy, with their own voice as individuals unheard. Thus, my work puts Chinese fathers under the spotlight as men, as parents and as individuals, with the hope that it might further the understanding of their behavior and its influence on their offspring, and contribute to the heated debates on culturally sensitive parenting.

I am currently working on a data set that I collected, in 2011-2012, from urban and rural areas in and around the city of Nanjing, one of the largest cities in the Yangtze River Delta, southeast China. Applying a mixed-method approach, I gathered information from 138 one-child families recruited via local primary schools using questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and standardized observations. The father, the mother, and the child of each family all participated in a home visit. Information extracted from different methods was then compared, and different informants' accounts on the father's behavior of affection display contrasted. Comparisons were also made between families from different socioeconomic backgrounds, such as between rural and urban families, and between those with sons and with daughters.

Preliminary quantitative data analyses revealed a complicated behavioral pattern of paternal affection display in Chinese families. The two most outstanding findings are that education is the strongest predictor of the level of paternal affection display, and that there are significant discrepancies between fathers', mothers', and children's accounts of the fathers' behavior. These results suggested that further analyses, both quantitative and qualitative are needed to better understand the details of such behavior and to identify its socioeconomic correlates. A follow-up data collection has also been planned in order to track the developmental outcome of children in these families and to establish connections between paternal affection and child development cross time.

Apart from my PhD research, other research fields I am curious about include cross-cultural family studies, gender studies, and education.

# **Psychology in the Arab World, with Dr. Ramadan Ahmed**

**Nicole Summers, Ph.D. Student, Saint Louis University**

American and European curricula teach that psychologists such as Wilhelm Wundt, Lev Vygotsky, Burrhus Skinner, and Jean Piaget founded psychology. However, modern psychology fails to recognize other international achievements in the study of human behavior and thought. In fact, psychology in the Arab World (AW) began over 1,000 years before modern psychology through contributions of several Muslim scholars: Al-Kindi, Al-Farabi, Avicenna, Maskawaih, and Al-Ghazzali. In comparison to Egypt, progress in psychological research has been slower in the rest of the AW. Published in 1998, Dr. Ramadan Ahmed wrote, in collaboration with Dr. Uwe Gielen, the first English book on psychology in Arab countries. As psychology departments develop in the Middle East and North Africa, they contribute to clinical, industrial, child development research and more. Nevertheless, according to Dr. Ahmed, several concentrations are lacking data and they should be explored in the future.

## **History of Psychology in the Arab World**

Modern Psychology began in Egypt and Lebanon during the last three decades of 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, psychology appeared in Egyptian universities but students had to go abroad to earn Master's and PhD's. In the late 1930's and early 1940's, psychology began as a profession and psychoanalysis was the dominant approach. This period witnessed the first wave of Egyptian psychologists who earned their PhDs in either France or UK. In the 1940's and 1950's, MA and PhD candidates increased in Egypt, but it was not until the 70's that psychology formed its own departments separate from philosophy or sociology. Psychology programs were not offered to the rest of the AW until the 1980's. Today one can obtain a Master's in countries like Kuwait, Iraq, Algeria, and Bahrain; however only in certain countries like Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia can one can receive a PhD.

According to Dr. Ahmed, one issue with research in the AW is that universities are not pushing for research. In addition, the majority of the work is completed solo and is not meant to advance knowledge, but to help achieve personal promotions. In general, once they begin to have families, many female Arab psychologists produce less research, shifting their focus solely to teaching psychology. Professors have anywhere from 0-2 research associates. This is unfortunate for graduate students in the AW because they lack experience to continue their education abroad.

Currently, Egypt has the most advanced psychology in the AW. Egypt has 7-8 journals in psychology and six psychological associations. Each association has its own journal. The Egyptian Association for Psychological Studies (EAPS) is one of the oldest and largest psychological associations in the AW and has over 3,500 members. Other Egyptian psychology associations include: Egyptian Association of Psychoanalysis, Egyptian Association for Sports Psychology, Egyptian Association of Mental Health, and the Egyptian Association of Psychiatry. Psychology departments at Arabian Gulf universities, however, have better facilities than Egypt and other Arab countries. Arab countries such as Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Sudan, and Yemen have their own psychological association with a limited number of members, and though there are not as many independent journals, every Arab university publishes its own multidisciplinary journal. The majority of these publications are in Arabic.

## Acceptance of Psychology and Support

Even though the Arab countries have strict social and religious laws, people are willing to participate in studies, especially if the researcher is a national. Though it is difficult to investigate certain forms of research, like sexual, political, and religious issues, for less controversial topics it is much easier to get approval to conduct a study than in the US. To conduct a study, one must seek permission from the Ministry of Education where there is a Department of Research that follows protocols similar to the IRB. Studies are typically run in the school rather than a laboratory. In the AW, the government and schools seem to embrace furthering research and permit data collection during school so long as it does not conflict with examinations.

### Dr. Ramadan Ahmed

Ramadan Ahmed began his career as a judge in Egypt but completed his PhD in psychology in Leipzig. His dissertation tested Piaget's theory in Egypt and Germany. This research was extended in Sudan where Dr. Ahmed spent several years working. He took a position in Kuwait in 1985. During the occupation by Iraq he and his family had to escape from Kuwait. In 1991, after the liberation of Kuwait, he returned because he felt his family needed to see Kuwait liberated and resolve the trauma they experienced during the occupation. Though he left Kuwait, in 1999 Kuwait University asked him to return and educate Kuwaitis, which he continues despite being separated from his family.

Dr. Ahmed's greatest contribution is writing the first book in English about psychological research in North Africa and the Middle East with Dr. Uwe Gielen. The book, *Psychology in the Arab Countries*, aimed to present Arab psychology to non-Arab countries. According to Dr. Ahmed, his initial idea for the book was not well received by all Arab psychologists. The book was published in 1998, despite the fact that some claimed they were "too busy" to contribute and thought that the book would never see publication. In 2000 he was awarded "Best Book Published" by Al Ahram (الأهرام), a leading Egyptian newspaper. In 2006, the Supreme Council of Culture in Egypt asked him to translate the book's 25 chapters into Arabic, which he did, adding a chapter on development of moral judgment. In 2008, he received the "Distinguished International Psychologist Award" by the APA (Kalpaxis & Poyrazli, 2012). He also wrote a chapter in the first book on cultural fathering: *Fathers in Cultural Contexts*. With over 30 years of research experience, Dr. Ahmed endeavors to consolidate past studies on child development in a book on child psychology in the AW.

### Suggestions for the Future

Aside from calling for more research and doctoral programs, Dr. Ahmed believes there are a number of areas that need to be explored in Arab psychology, such as early child development (2010). He elaborated that child cognitive development and achievement motivation are essential topics. There is also a need to understand the factors leading to divorce and how it influences the family. For example, in Kuwait the divorce rate is currently 30-40%. However, he notes that divorce is a sensitive subject to study in Arab countries.

Dr. Ahmed is an internationally recognized psychologist, a loving father and husband, and a modest man. He said he is a “work addict” and cannot imagine ever giving up his research and that what reinforces him to continue is the feeling of accomplishment every time he completes something. In addition to being a pioneer in Arab psychology, he has contributed to work on PARTheory, Piagetian cognitive development in children, violence, fathering, adolescence, women’s issues, identity development, and history of psychology in the Arab world.

#### References

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- Ahmed, R. A., & Gielen, U. P. (Editors) (1998). *Psychology in the Arab countries*. Cairo, Egypt: Menoufia University Press.
- Kalpaxis, G. & Poyrazli, S. (2012). Interview with Ramadan Ahmed, PhD: A Prominent Leader in Arab Psychology. *International Psychology Bulletin*, 16 (3), 39-40.

# Laboring Debates: Didactic Interactions in the Pursuit of Scientific Inquiry

Kavita Shah

Ph.D. Student, Saint Louis University

Anyone who has forgotten the feel of a rousing academic debate need only attend the right SCCR conference symposium. Although it was the last session of SCCR 2013, the Gender and Labor symposium was a case in point. Following a presentation on the division of household labor in Bangladesh by Dr. Ziarat Hossain and a talk on the customs associated with women procuring food by Dr. Herbert Barry III, Leonid Issaev, a student of Dr. Andrey Korotayev, took the stage and delivered a talk titled “Female labor force participation rate and Islam in cross-cultural perspective.”

Utilizing World Bank data, Korotayev and his students analyzed the rate of female participation in the labor force of the twenty-two Arab League countries. The group highlighted the phenomenon of women’s low participation in the workforce among Arab countries. They concluded that this finding was due to a pervasive Arab belief that it is disgraceful for a woman to work and reflects poorly on her family. While their findings deepen our understanding of a changing culture, their conclusion stimulated vigorous debate.

The author’s claims of disgrace associated with working women came from a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and a known extremist, who was later executed. Dr. Ramadan Ahmed quickly pointed out that extremists do not speak for the whole of the Arab world. Korotayev responded to Ahmed, stating that he had met with and could produce several Arab nationals who espoused the same beliefs as that late radical. Hossain cut into the exchange by redirecting the conversation toward classifications of labor. He astutely pointed out that while the lady of a home may not be employed, that is not the whole picture. Within that same home, there could be several other women working as maids who are not formally contracted and thus do not meet the standards of employment set by the World Bank. This sparked questions about the veracity of the World Bank data and its definition of labor. It was then pointed out that the United Nations’ Statistics Division accounts for such circumstances by collecting employment data for both explicit written and verbal contracts as well as implicit agreements that lead to remuneration.

In response to Hossain, Korotayev read out the World Bank’s definition of labor and argued that Arab men would not view women working in the home, for example as a maid, as work. However, this only engendered further debate. Throughout the back-and-forth, the presenters were plagued by assertions from attendees that their research was attempting to verify a cultural stereotype. The questions continued as many remarked at the absence of covariates, like socio-economic status, in the analysis, and the silence around the cases of women who did work and whether they experienced any negative consequences, like strained familial relationships. Without further evidence, the link between the low rate of labor among women in Arab countries and a supposedly prevalent stereotype remains tenuous.

In the end, only the clock proved effective in ending or more likely pausing this debate. Such discussions serve as a reminder that suggestions, debates and collaboration are the lifeblood of academic research.

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[barryh@pitt.edu](mailto:barryh@pitt.edu)

### **Newsletter Editor,**

Hemalatha Ganapathy-Coleman  
Indiana State University  
[Hema.Ganapathy-Coleman@indstate.edu](mailto:Hema.Ganapathy-Coleman@indstate.edu)

### **Webmaster,**

David Shwalb  
Southern Utah University  
[shwalb@suu.edu](mailto:shwalb@suu.edu)

## SCCR - A Community of Scholars and Students

SCCR is a **multidisciplinary** organization. Its members all share a common devotion to the conduct of cross-cultural research. SCCR members are professionals and students from the social science fields of Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, and related fields including Education, Family Studies, Social Work, Human Development, Psychiatry, Communications, Ethnic Studies, Business, etc. A distinguishing characteristic of the Society, compared with other academic organizations, is that it is fundamentally interdisciplinary and provides members the opportunity to network with scholars from a wide variety of approaches to cross-cultural and comparative research. Since its founding in 1971, SCCR has intentionally avoided growing too large, so that its members can know each other better, form lasting relationships, and provide genuine support to their colleagues and students.

### SCCR FEES

To join SCCR, submit the [online application form](#) and pay your dues online (below), or print and fill out this form and mail it to the [Treasurer](#) along with your dues payment. Membership dues are not included in conference fees, and should be sent only to the SCCR treasurer, online here or by mail. Membership in the Society for Cross-Cultural Research is based on the calendar year (a subscriber's calendar year begins the month SCCR receives the membership fee). Those who join now will receive the publications for the current calendar year, including all of the current year's issues of *Cross-Cultural Research*. Back issues of the journal are available online only.

There are three categories of membership in SCCR. Regular, Student, and Retired members receive *Cross-Cultural Research*, the *Newsletter*, 20% publisher discounts from Sage Publications and Information Age Publishing, reduced meeting registration rates, and voting privileges. Joint members share one copy of *CCR*. You may choose an alternate two-year dues payment option at a reduced rate.

Current and new members: please use the following table to choose your dues amount.

Type	One Year		Two Years	
	Single	Joint	Single	Joint
Regular	55	65	100	120
Retired	40	50	70	90
Student	35	45	65	85

<http://www.sccr.org/index.html>