

## **Social Justice and Historical Repair: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture in Forensic Mental Health Services and Systems**

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Track: Clinical

CE: CPA/BBS/BRN, MCLE (1.5)

**POST TBD**

### Narrative

Race, culture, ethnicity and social diversity are inextricable aspects of our work in mental health. Forensic psychologists and mental health staff should consider these factors as well as the dynamics of power differentials in assessment, diagnoses, performing evaluations, treatment and dispositioning, forming effective working relationships, and short and long term outcomes. Professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association (APA), American Counseling Association (ACA) and National Association of Social Workers (NASW) have longstanding policies and guidelines for including race and cultural diversity in theory, research and practice. Systems inequities have been acknowledged. Services at all levels such as those in forensic mental health continue to strive for cultural humility, cultural competency and responsiveness with a vision for optimal mental health practices. This workshop will acknowledge such commitments as well as dynamically present future challenges with research, policy, practice as well as system recommendations.

As a state and nation of increasingly complex cultural diversity, we look to a future of continued forensic mental health service and system transformation. In the United States, the growth of cultural, ethnic, racial and linguistic (CERL) communities as well as sexual orientation, class, spirituality diversity both challenge and invigorate service systems to integrate culturally recognized practices into mental health treatment. Stigma, shame, experiences of service system micro-aggressions, social inequities and disproportionalities have been well documented as barriers to seeking mental health treatment (U.S. Surgeon General's Report, 2000). Historical and social injustices including those in current context have also contributed to cyclical repeated trauma that also shows up in our forensic service systems. The tide must be turned towards continuous social justice and culturally responsive practices. California reflects the progress and future of the U.S. Several continuous innovations are taking place including: a) acknowledging racial, ethnic and power disparities in forensic populations being served; b) acknowledging the experiences of cultural and racial communities in the justice system; c) incorporating culturally defined practices into health and forensic mental health care; d) recognizing and healing historical trauma as one of the components of wellness; e) forging ongoing collaborative relationships with cultural and racial communities; e) transforming practitioner and forensic system services to integrate cultural into all aspects of practice from initial engagement to improved outcomes. All of the above are occurring even amid the challenges of the current national context. The presenter will make a strong, well-grounded case for how forensic mental health services and interventions must incorporate issues of race, ethnicity and power into research, theory, practice and systems services.

The presenter will share in-depth knowledge and experiences in education mental health professionals in the context of transforming mental health care in California. The presenter has unique expertise including administrating public mental health programs, engaging in research and innovative thinking with multicultural communities as partners, and educating, supervising and training future psychologists. There will be a presentation of some of the most up-to-date systems transformations from the State of California in the USA context given the mandates of the Mental Health Services Act to transform the public mental health system with taxpayer support. As the lead for “Voices: Cultural Perspectives on Mental Health” narrative project, clips representing perspectives from diverse ethnic communities to facilitate rich audience participation may be presented. Specific focus will be on individuals impacted and served in the forensic mental health system. Narratives and situations presented in DVD clips will be used as rich sources for interaction and participant discussion and audience exchange.

The presenter will also facilitate dynamic learning through didactic presentation, videotaped narratives of forensic mental health clients addressing service disparities relevant to forensic situations in order to move towards improved mental health outcomes. To facilitate interactive learning, participants will be facilitated in sharing some of their own experiences in continuing to make their forensic practices relevant to current times and challenges. This session should particularly benefit forensic psychologists, consumers, and mental health and legal professionals who have a practice with an eye on future, cutting-edge work to make a difference with improved and more social just outcomes in increasingly racially, ethnically and culturally diverse communities in forensic settings.

## BIO

### **Matthew Mock, PhD**

#### **Professor of Psychology, Graduate School of Professional Psychology, John F. Kennedy University**

Matthew has given dynamic presentations on the relevance of cultural competence, ethnicity and multiculturalism in psychotherapy locally, throughout California, nationally and internationally. He is currently a Professor of Psychology with John F. Kennedy University. Prior to this, he was the Director and Ethnic Services/Multicultural Services Coordinator for the Family, Youth and Children’s Services of Berkeley Mental Health for 20 years. He also has a private clinical and consulting practice in Berkeley providing clinical services to children, couples, adults and families, and consultation to programs and organizations. Matthew is third generation Asian-American and has been committed to community mental health concerns, competent and responsive services to culturally diverse communities and social justice policies and practices, throughout his career. He has received numerous awards from professional organizations, guilds and programs. He is an invited speaker nationwide and internationally consistently receiving highest reviews by participants. He is the author of several book chapters and articles. Several recently published book chapters by Matthew have direct relevance to the topic including narratives of social justice, men and the deleterious influences of patriarchy and experiences in his own life that inspire ongoing contributions to achieving greater social equity.

## Learning Objectives

1. Describe three forensic mental health systemic challenges encountered by racial, ethnic, cultural communities in accessing forensic mental health services including cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic (CERL), societal, political and other stressors.
2. Explain how using narratives and depictions of diverse forensic clients can lead to innovations and transformations.
3. Describe two mental health system recommendations to improve decisions and outcomes related to racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity in forensic settings.