

INTRODUCTION: CARIBBEAN PSYCHOLOGY—MORE THAN A REGIONAL DISCIPLINE

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Its history firmly planted in North American and European cultural settings and traditions, psychology as a discipline is becoming increasingly global. This no doubt is due to the greater recognition of the role of psychology in understanding behavioral processes and addressing human needs in an increasingly complex, interconnected world community that is marked by ever-changing political, social, and economic conditions. At the same time, several local, regional, and international organizations have called for psychological processes and human development to be defined from a pan-cultural or universalist perspective. Essentially, this would speak to behavioral patterns and processes and their underlying etiology and neurological underpinnings—those that are shared among human beings and those that are culture specific. The latter entail considerations of local customs, beliefs, and practices and physical factors within the geography and ecology of settings that influence pathways to human development, the indigenous view.

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Caribbean Psychology: Indigenous Contributions to a Global Discipline, J. L. Roopnarine and D. Chadee
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The indigenous view does not discount the cross-comparative approach to studying psychological processes (Berry, 2013). However, it does subscribe to a philosophy of the generation of scientific information from within the culture as a basis for laying the foundation for a larger, integrated psychological science field.

In this vein, cultural, cross-cultural, and indigenous psychological approaches to mapping human development and functioning across cultural communities have been instructive. Employing these different approaches, researchers have placed cultural communities along dimensions of individualism and collectivism with regard to the self, interpersonal relationships, attribution style, and well-being (see Oyserman, Coon, Kimmelmeier, 2002, for a discussion); examined parenting styles (e.g., levels of warmth, sensitivity, control) and the nature and quality of parent–child attachment relationships (see reviews by Ahmed, Rohner, Khaleque, & Gielen, *in press*; Khaleque & Rohner, 2012); determined rates of adult depression and depressive symptoms (see Pan American Health Organization, 2011, for an assessment of Caribbean countries); developed scales to measure childhood behavioral difficulties (Achenbach, *in press*); and used common conceptual models to catalog psychological adjustment to new cultural communities in several societies around the world (e.g., Berry, 2008; Sam & Berry, 2015). In these and other efforts (see Roopnarine, 2015; Gielen & Roopnarine, *in press*), researchers, including those in the Caribbean and Caribbean diaspora, have been able to carefully document common properties that are basic to human functioning across cultural settings. However, in some cases they have also noted cultural variations in the manifestations of behaviors and cultural pathways to outcomes that exhibit country-level or regional variations. This volume was conceived in the spirit of understanding and defining the particularities and complexities of a regional psychology of Caribbean peoples with an eye toward the shared meaning of psychological principles within a larger global context.

Why the need for a focus on Caribbean psychology? For one thing, as Ava D. Thompson (Chapter 1, this volume) puts it, despite attempts to develop an indigenous view of psychology, the psychological stories of Caribbean peoples have been missing from the broader international discourses in the psychological sciences. This missing link is not limited to Caribbean psychology. The same may also be said for human development in other regions such as Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and Latin America. Obviously, psychological principles that are not inclusive of other cultural groups around the world are inherently limited and fail to utilize the two-way flow and integration of scientific information from the majority to the developed world. The bidirectional flow and exchange of information could be of use in validating existing theories and constructing new ones, in shaping research agendas, in

encouraging collaborations and cross-fertilization of ideas, and in strengthening clinical practice and service delivery systems in attending to human needs more broadly. Given their different histories of oppression, experiences with colonialism, and identity confusion, a psychology of Caribbean peoples has relevance beyond its local borders. The large Caribbean diaspora in North America and Europe (e.g., Great Britain, the Netherlands) and ethnic and cultural groups in other postcolonial societies in Africa and other parts of the world may profit from knowledge systems developed in the Caribbean. Because Caribbean ethnic groups (e.g., African Caribbeans, Indo Caribbeans) in the diaspora are twice-removed from the ancestral cultures, a focus on them may offer insights into cultural continuity and discontinuity in patterns of psychological functioning and development.

Not apart from the abovementioned issues is the development of a regional understanding of a Caribbean psychology that considers the multiple needs and realities of life in the Caribbean itself. The Caribbean is a vast region, with diverse ethnic groups who speak different languages (e.g., Spanish, French, Kreyól, English, Hindi, Arabic, Dutch, different patois); have ancestral ties to Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East; are indigenous to the area (e.g., Amerindians in Guyana); and who are of Mixed-Ethnic ancestry (e.g., African Caribs). The unique geography and ecologies of these small nation states that stretch from northern South America to the eastern coast of the United States and west to Central America represent a rich and diverse cultural tapestry of life and subsistence and economic patterns. Within this diversity of ecological settings and life conditions, how individuals define the self and meet the demands of everyday life varies, often greatly, within and among countries. For example, although there may be similarities in human responses to the earthquake in Haiti, the volcanic eruption in Montserrat, the frequent floods in Guyana, and the hurricanes in Jamaica, important differences exist in how people in these small nation states approach and cope with disasters, depending on economic resources, gender ideologies, ethnicity and race, health belief systems, the availability of mental health services, and the ability of governments to act swiftly to deal with psychological distress. Until recently, these independent nation states have not been able to cooperate on the training of psychologists or in outlining the psychological needs of Caribbean peoples.

Relatedly, any approach to psychological issues in the Caribbean must take into account the unique histories and behavioral patterns of different Caribbean ethnic groups. These postcolonial societies have endured the transplantation and loss of cultural traditions through slavery and indentured servitude, invasion of the cultural psyche of individuals, political and social hegemony, and experiences with violence during slavery and colonization. Framing psychological issues in the context of oppression, resistance, and

adaptation can enhance understanding of family structures, child-rearing patterns, gender roles and gender disparities in socialization practices and interpersonal relationships, identity formation, health belief systems, views on accessing mental health services, stigma and stereotyping, attribution styles, and other aspects of everyday life in different ethnic groups and communities across the Caribbean. However, simply integrating sociohistorical experiences into articulating contemporary psychological issues is clearly not sufficient. As Thompson (see Chapter 1, this volume) and the Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Associations (CANPA) have outlined, greater consideration is needed for the worldviews and cultural patterns of living of Caribbean ethnic groups—the unique features and attributes of their cultural lives, behavioral patterns, modes and ways of thinking, and regional and within country factors—that promote and impede well-being and human capital development. Moreover, psychological theories, clinical practice, and policies that are relevant to psychological functioning should emanate from within Caribbean societies. This volume is an effort toward that end: We present a more unified view of contemporary psychological issues of Caribbean peoples that will better inform training and research efforts in the region and the diaspora and at the same time add to the overall universal body of knowledge on psychology.

THE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK

Conceptualizing a psychology of Caribbean peoples has not been an easy journey. The lack of training infrastructure, systematic mental health policies, and plans within and across countries, as well as the influence of and adherence to dominant psychological theories, clinical practices, and research findings from North America and Europe, have at times undermined the best laid plans to develop a psychological science of Caribbean peoples. Our focus on developmental, health, social, and clinical areas of psychology aligns well with the current needs of Caribbean peoples as identified by social scientists, policymakers, civil society groups, nongovernmental organizations, government agencies across countries, regional bodies (e.g., the PanAmerican Health Organization, CANPA), and international organizations (e.g., World Health Organization [WHO] and the United Nations Development Program [UNDP]). These different organizations and groups have based their recommendations on large-scale, multiple country analysis and individual studies in formulating their recommendations as to the most pressing issues affecting Caribbean peoples. For instance, in working with the United Nations Children's Fund and the Bernard van Leer Foundation, child development and early childhood education experts within the Caribbean

have targeted early parent–child relationships as important for setting the life trajectories of young children as they navigate their way through difficult home and neighborhood environments. Likewise, the WHO has provided a macrolevel view of mental health issues and systems, and the UNDP has provided some alarming statistics on crime and citizen insecurity across Caribbean countries (United Nations Development Program, 2012). In addition, the developmental, health, social, and clinical areas of psychology have generated the most scholarship by researchers within the Caribbean region and the diaspora.

To outline and lay bare some of the psychological information accrued so far within the four areas of psychology considered in this volume, we drew from a distinguished group of scholars (e.g., clinical psychologists, cultural psychologists, child developmentalists, community psychologists, psychiatrists, social psychologists, public health researchers). They are mainly from within the Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora and were trained in North America, Europe, and in the Caribbean. Their different expertise converges to provide rich accounts of culturally situated human development within the Caribbean context.

To set the stage for a regional understanding of psychological science in the Caribbean, authors of chapters in Part I, *Conceptual Issues*, of this book provide arguments in support of a regional psychology of Caribbean peoples and its role within the international arena. In Chapter 1, Thompson chronicles the development of a regional understanding of psychological principles, from the early efforts by Bahamian and Jamaican psychologists to attend to mental health needs within the context of Caribbean lived experiences and realities to recent developments to establish a regional infrastructure for training psychologists and formulating research priorities, clinical practices, and policies that advance the well-being of Caribbean peoples. She also highlights the contributions of Caribbean researchers and professionals in the psychological sciences to the development of a growing body of knowledge in seminal areas of human functioning. This is followed by John Berry's chapter, which offers compelling reasons for a more extended, global view of psychology. Berry points to the ethnocentrism of North American psychology and proposes three major approaches to interpret culture–behavior links: the culture-comparative, the cultural, and the indigenous perspectives. He makes a strong case for an integration of Caribbean peoples at the political, social, and economic levels that will permit a common identity.

Noting factors such as family structural arrangements, socialization patterns, remote acculturation, cultural belief systems, and economic and social conditions, the authors of the three chapters in Part II, *Developmental Psychology*, present a lifespan view of development patterns in Caribbean groups. In Chapter 3, which focuses on family socialization, Jaipaul L.

Roopnarine and Bora Jin provide a comprehensive overview of parenting styles; religious, ethnic, and academic socialization; and childhood outcomes across Caribbean countries (e.g., Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Jamaica). To offer continuity, the other two chapters in this section focus on adolescent and adult development. In Chapter 4, on remote acculturation, orientation to one's own culture, and a remote culture, Gail M. Ferguson covers cutting-edge research on the effects of intercultural contact and exposure on adolescent identity and child-rearing. This chapter has broad implications for the impact of cultural contact through tourism, trade, and the media in most regions of the world. Chapter 5 builds on the theme of developmental outcomes, and Ishtar O. Govia, Vanessa Paisley-Clare, and Tiffany Palmer use rigorous selection criteria to highlight factors that aid and abet adolescent and adult development. In all three chapters in this section, the authors discuss theoretical frameworks that are best suited for research on Caribbean ethnic groups.

Part III, Health and Community Psychology, begins with Chapter 6, by Lutchmie Narine, and is an overall survey of health conditions in different Caribbean countries and ethnic groups. This overview brings to the fore age and gender differences in the types of major diseases that affect Caribbean groups. Data are presented on communicable and noncommunicable diseases and the risk factors associated with their onset. Regional differences are evident in cardiovascular disease, diabetes mellitus, suicides, tobacco and alcohol use, and vehicular accidents—all on the increase in a region with underdeveloped medical care systems. It also touches on the role of psychologists in assisting to stem the tide against such health issues as obesity, alcoholism, inactivity, and disability due to health statuses that have strong behavioral components.

We chose, among the diverse health psychology issues that exist in the Caribbean, to include a chapter on Caribbean men's health. Chapter 7's focus on a range of theories on health behaviors and cultural scripts in no way implies that the health concerns and needs of Caribbean women are less important. In fact, the theories Andrew D. Case and Derrick M. Gordon explore in this chapter have implications for women's health issues, and they refer to bodies of work on women's health. In Chapter 8, Gillian E. Mason and Nicola Satchell delve into one component of health that is of central importance to women's and children's safety and well-being: interpersonal violence. Given the importance of eradicating interpersonal violence worldwide, this chapter calls attention to the history of violence that Caribbean ethnic groups have been subjected to and the socialization and acceptance of violence as possibly normative in child rearing and interpersonal relationships. It is not surprising, as is the case in other parts of the world, that the negative consequences of interpersonal violence on individuals,

families, and children are dire, its effects cascading into other institutions in the community.

Acknowledging increasing concerns about crime and citizen insecurity and a body of work on criminology based in the southern Caribbean, the authors in Part IV (Social Psychology) focus on copycat behavior (Chapter 9; Ray Surette, Mary Chadee, and Derek Chadee), fear of crime (Chapter 10; Mary Chadee and Derek Chadee), and stigmatization (Chapter 11; Jannel Philip, Rosana Yearwood, and Derek Chadee). Although copycat behavior has not been well documented in the Caribbean, it certainly has implications for bullying and for addressing violence at the societal and regional levels. Fear of crime is palpable in a number of Caribbean countries, as families, individuals, and communities retreat from participation in mainstream life and grapple with the role of ethnicity, income, and their own interpretations of incivility and fear of crime. Chapter 11, on stigmatization caps off this section. A social psychological understanding of HIV/AIDS stigmatization has broad applications in terms of health care access and delivery. The underlying social cognitive structures of stigmatization may be applicable to other areas of discrimination and prejudice, such as ingroup and outgroup relationships, fear of crime, and so on, in the more culturally diverse nations of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

The authors of chapters in the final section of the book, Part V, Clinical Psychology, discuss the prevalence of mental health disorders, their possible etiologies, and the relevance of well-established instruments for assessing mental health in the Caribbean. After providing a brief history of the evolution of mental health systems and treatment in the Caribbean, Jacqueline Sharpe and Samuel Shafe (Chapter 12) discuss prevalence rates of schizophrenia, affective disorders, personality disorders, substance abuse, and suicides and attempted suicides, and make recommendations for new research and the implementation of mental health plans and policies. Of course, in the domain of intervention strategies, one should be concerned about the cultural appropriateness and validity of instruments, mostly developed in North America, for assessing human functioning in Caribbean ethnic groups. In Chapter 13, Michael Canute Lambert, Whitney C. Sewell, and Alison H. Levitch engage in an extensive discussion of how different instruments (e.g., Brief Symptom Inventory [Derogatis & Spencer, 1993], Child Behavior Checklist [Lambert, Essau, Schmitt, & Samms-Vaughan, 2007]) fare in terms of their psychometric properties when used with Caribbean groups, a discussion that enables the reader to determine the cultural validity of assessment batteries. More important, Lambert and his colleagues carefully analyze instruments (e.g., Caribbean Symptom Checklist; Lambert et al., 2013) that were modified or developed for use with Caribbean adults and children. Of course, in the domain of intervention strategies, concerns include the cultural appropriateness and validity of

instruments, mostly developed in North America, for assessing human functioning in Caribbean ethnic groups. In Chapter 14, Rita Dudley-Grant identifies crucial mental health issues, sociocultural factors (e.g., stigmatization, immigration, gender disparity in accessing services), and diverse mechanisms surrounding clinical psychology and practice (e.g., role of spirituality), and introduces diverse intervention strategies (individual, group, family therapy) and their efficacy in working with groups in Caribbean countries.

This volume brings together major bodies of work in four areas of the psychological sciences that are pertinent to Caribbean ethnic groups. A regional focus on Caribbean psychology will not only assist in further determining and attending to the needs of Caribbean ethnic groups but will also serve as a platform for building bridges and collaborations with other regional and international organizations to enhance the development of a global psychology. This volume serves as a resource for all those concerned with the well-being of Caribbean ethnic groups and the development of the region. It should be of interest to upper level undergraduates and graduate students interested in cultural psychology, cross-cultural psychology, and ethnic studies within the Caribbean and more broadly across the world; those in the Caribbean and the Caribbean diaspora who focus on the applied, clinical, and research areas of psychology and psychiatry; other professionals, such as social workers, child development and early childhood specialists, and anthropologists; and criminologists, health professionals, policymakers, and government officials within the Caribbean and in other developing societies who focus on human development.

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