

October 2011

Research Reporter

“The Illness Beliefs, Perceptions, and Practices of Filipino Americans with Hypertension” by Felicitas A. dela Cruz, RN, DNSc, FAANP



Practitioners, 20 [2008]: 118-127). Using four focus groups of twenty-seven participants, medical records, and stringent analysis of all research data, they uncover some reasons for why Filipino Americans have difficulties coping with hypertension. They also propose educational programs that could greatly assist this population.

Some of the reasons why certain Filipino Americans may not take their prescribed blood pressure medication follow: (1) the side effect of sexual impotence may cause shame; (2) stressful lives because of heavy family and work responsibilities cause forgetfulness; (3) frequent urination may occur; (4) stomach problems may result; (5) they do not like to be reminded that they are sick. Their hypertension is exacerbated by the typical Filipino diet favoring much fat and salt and by lack of an exercise program. Many think they can recognize when their blood pressure is high because of headaches, palpitations, dizziness, irritability, chest

pains, and other symptoms, but their perceptions that these signs relate to hypertension may be false.

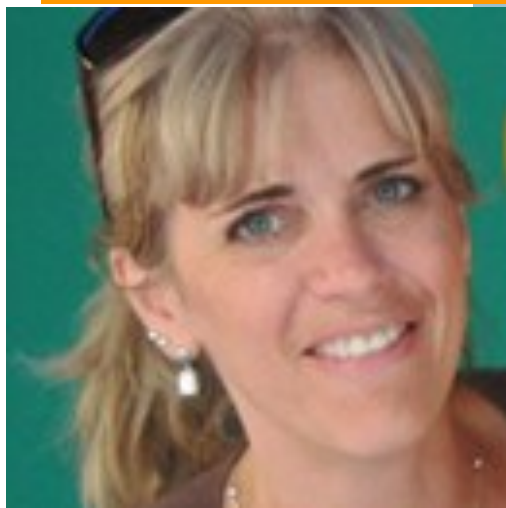
Some of those diagnosed with high blood pressure resort to drinking herbal teas, undergoing acupuncture, and using a Filipino massage therapist. They also laugh, pray, and engage in church activities which seem to reduce their stress.

Dela Cruz and Galang affirm that there is a definite need “to provide CV [cardiovascular] health promotion information and education to FAs [Filipino Americans] with HTN [hypertension] that are sensitive, congruent, and tailored to their day-to-day cultural, economic, and social realities.” Since Filipino Americans “are deeply religious, churches...can serve as venues for community-based CV health promotion activities.” The sooner such steps are taken, the better.—Carole J. Lambert



Felicitas A. dela Cruz, RN, DNSc, FAANP, Professor of Nursing, and Carmen B. Galang, RN, DNSc, Assistant Professor at California State University, Long Beach, reveal interesting findings in their “The Illness Beliefs, Perceptions, and Practices of Filipino Americans with Hypertension” (*Journal of the American Academy of Nurse*

“Preacher, Shepherd, Judge: The Role of the Outlaw Prophet in American Film” by Heather Clements, Ph.D.



Heather Clements, Ph.D., Professor of Theology and Philosophy, comments on the odd use of scripture by renegade heroes in three films in her “Preacher, Shepherd, Judge: The Role of the Outlaw Prophet in American Film” (*Journal of Religion and Film* 12.2 [Oct. 2008]). “The Preacher,” played by Clint Eastwood in *Pale Rider*, Reverend LaSalle,

played by Anthony Perkins in *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*, and Jules Winfield, played by Samuel L. Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*, all fluctuate between passivity and violence as they decide who deserves mercy and who deserves justice and punishment. Clements suggests that these figures incarnate many Americans’ self-righteous individualism and understanding of non-violence and violence. She notes, “The maverick cowboy anti-hero who answers to his own code of honor, enforced by redemptive violence, is a quintessential symbol of this American ethos.”

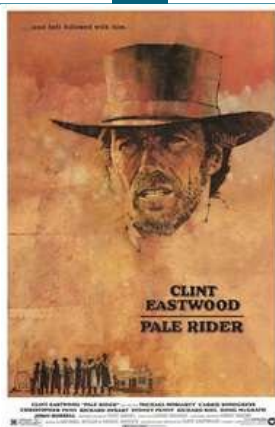
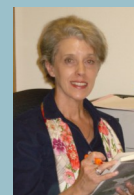
Pale Rider’s title echoes Revelation 6:8: “He who sat on the ashen [pale] horse had the name Death, and authority was given to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by the wild beasts of the earth.” In this film “The Preacher” joins abused min-

ers to resist hydraulic gold miner Coy LaHood’s thugs’ violence against them, their families, and their property. However, as the conflict escalates, he “beats up the strongest of the thugs, scarifying them all off, and recites a common pseudo-biblical aphorism: ‘The Lord certainly does work in mysterious ways.’” Later, when bribed, “The Preacher” cites Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13: “‘You can’t serve God and mammon both.’” Ultimately, when all negotiations have failed, “The Preacher” removes his clerical collar and puts on his gun: “He hides and shoots LeHood’s deputies, who have been chasing and shooting at him, in the back.”

In *The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean*, Reverend LaSalle reads from the Bible and “spew[s] such pseudo-biblical commentary as ‘They are a stench and an abomination’ and ‘Blessed is the Lord thy strength that teaches thy hands to war and fingers to fight.’” More specifically, Psalm 23 is heard, and Psalm 58:6-11 serves as a recurring leitmotif in this film which is used by both of the two adversaries, Reverend LaSalle and Roy Bean, each claiming God on his side.

Clements finds *Pulp Fiction* to be “the most explicit with regard to both violence and theological reflection.” Jules Winfield quotes “a jumbled paraphrase of Eze-

kiel 25:17 before murdering his victims. Like the outlaw prophets in the earlier films, he combines quoting the Bible with his own authoritative-sounding or at least self-empowering pseudo-biblical language.” Clements finds that “[t]he [three] films’ critical and popular success suggests that American audiences and film makers clearly understand and accept each protagonist’s paradoxical redemption through his own unique interpretation of the relationship between traditional religious teachings about righteousness and the apparently unrighteous use of violence. . . . in spite of the biblical norm of non-violence embodied by the very scriptures each anti-hero quotes in these films, American filmmakers and audiences (like the protagonists themselves) consistently connect scriptures and their religious heritage with an ethic of ‘righteous’ or even ‘redemptive’ violence.” Indeed, Hollywood’s conflicted approach to the ideas of redemptive violence and a spirituality of non-violence accurately reflects and helpfully illustrates that same ambivalence and confusion among American Christians in general.—Carole J. Lambert



“Family Forensic Psychology” by Robert Welsh, Ph.D. and Marjorie Graham-Howard, Ph.D.



Robert Welsh, Ph.D., Professor of Graduate Psychology, Lyn Greenberg, and **Marjorie Graham-Howard, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Graduate Psychology, introduce the challenging, complicated field of “Family Forensic Psychology”, Chapter 50 of James H. Bray’s and **Mark Stanton’s** *The Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Family Psychology* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). Family forensic psychology (FFP) “lies at the intersection of family psychology, forensic psychology, and the legal system.” Forensic psychologists often serve the judicial system by providing evaluations, expert testimonies, research, teaching, consultations, and even interventions. Family forensic psychologists particularly help families, attorneys, and courts.

In addition to needing greater expertise than a licensed psychologist, the Family Forensic Psychologist must provide “a more critical evaluation of hypotheses related to the case; careful data collection, as appropriate to the psychologist’s role; and [he or she] carefully limit[s] advocacy and opinions expressed to what is appropriate to the psychologist’s role and available information.” The authors elaborate on the Family Forensic Psychologist’s service in child custody and juvenile dependency cases.

They note that Family Forensic Psychologists can experience “unusual pressures...to conform (or prompt a child to conform) to some adult’s position in the pending legal action” relevant to child custody cases. To perform well, then, FFPs need to know “legal and practice standards

and the boundaries of each professional role....FFPs must also be familiar with current research on divorcing/separated families, child development and adjustment, cultural issues, domestic violence and child abuse, the impact of parental conflict on children, children’s suggestibility and interviewing, conflict resolution, and the impact of various post-divorce family changes, such as blended families and relocation.”

Regarding juvenile dependency cases, FFPs may serve by assessing, after much data collection, “factors that contribute to delinquent behavior and [make] recommendations for disposition” as well as by identifying learning disabilities or cognitive deficits. They can determine whether a child is competent to stand trial, whether he or she should be transferred to adult court, and how risky the child’s behaviors may be in the future.

FFPs obviously face numerous challenges which require utmost competence and courage.—Carole J. Lambert



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From left to right:

Carole Lambert, Ph.D.

@ clambert@apu.edu

626.815.2085,

Director of Research

Lou Hughes, Ph.D.

@ louhughes@apu.edu

626.815.6000 x 3343,

Director of Sponsored Research & Grants

Kevin Huang, Ph.D.

@ Shuang@apu.edu

626.815.6000 x 6505,

Director of Undergraduate Research

Susan Ferrante, B.S.

@ sferrante@apu.edu

626.815.2082, Administrative Assistant

& IACUC Coordinator

