



**WINTER  
2020**

**PSY.D PROGRAM  
NEWSLETTER**

ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY SEATTLE

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:



### DR. MELISSA KENNEDY



#### WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I was born in St. Louis, Missouri. I completed my undergraduate studies at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, Illinois. After college graduation, I returned to St. Louis for about six years and then moved to Chicago. We lived in Chicago for about 12 years before moving to Seattle in 1998.

So, I grew up in the Midwest, but now I'm from Seattle. It's really my home.

#### WHAT DREW YOU TO BECOME A PSYCHOLOGIST?

As cliché as this sounds, I am genuinely intrigued by people. I think the human brain is the most interesting thing on the planet, and people are fascinating. I've approached the field from more of an intellectual perspective than a desire to help others, if I am honest. Though, while I believe I am a solid and effective clinician, I didn't come to the field to be part of a helping profession.

As I ponder the deeper levels of this question, I can think of several points in my life that drew me into the field, though it wasn't a straight path – more moments of philosophical influence. As a child, the story from Dr. Seuss, *What Was I Scared Of?* – “he was just as scared as I” taught me we are all the same emotionally. As a teen, the hilarious and poignant *Catch-22* – wasn't it saner not to want to be in combat? In my late twenties, the death of my mother, with whom I had a healthy and strong relationship, and learning how to grieve while raising a daughter of my own. More than a decade of work working with international teens and American families as a non-profit director with an educational foundation. All of these experiences drew me over time to this field.



# DR. KENNEDY

## WHAT WAS YOUR DISSERTATION TOPIC IN GRAD SCHOOL? CAN YOU DESCRIBE WHAT THE DISSERTATION EXPERIENCE WAS LIKE FOR YOU?

My topic was change through relationship. My dissertation was entitled Experiencing Interpersonal Grace: Transformation Following Experiences of Disgrace. (Thank goodness, it's been long enough that I actually had to look up the exact title). I wanted to understand what happens within relationship that allows people to grow and change. What about a relationship fosters healing for the other? From my life and my research, I believe that we grant one another grace – unearned favor – and it is through grace that we heal and change. While similar to the theological concept of grace, my construct is removed from a spiritual relationship and brought into human relationship. It is about what passes between people – and how the gift of belief in a person changes and allows seeking and, sometimes, reaching potential.

I wanted to study this idea of relational grace but wanted to be as scientific as possible in my approach. So, I selected a dissertation chair that was a hard-nosed, challenging statistics professor – a very quantitative researcher herself. I worked hard to explore the topic as empirically as possible. But in my MA program, I had cut my proverbial research teeth on qualitative research and believed I would end up there eventually. And I did. I still remember after much literature review and drafting ideas, when my chair said, you are going to have to do this research qualitatively. So, I did. I interviewed participants who self-identified as having experienced disgrace and subsequent healing through relationships. Using qualitative methods, I explored the data and found support for my hypothesis – relationships with people who believe in us fosters our ability to grow and change. Community is healing and makes a difference in a person's ability to feel fulfilled, grow and develop.

## DR. KENNEDY

So, how was it? It was two years of frustration and joy (the end!). At 186 pages, it was the longest dissertation in the SPU library at that time, so it was a lot of writing, rewriting. It incorporated my love of philosophy, my passion for growth, my belief in relationship at the core of what makes life survivable. It was a process of personal growth and an equal amount of hard work.

### **DID YOUR EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS GOING INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL CHANGE BY THE TIME YOU GOT OUT?**

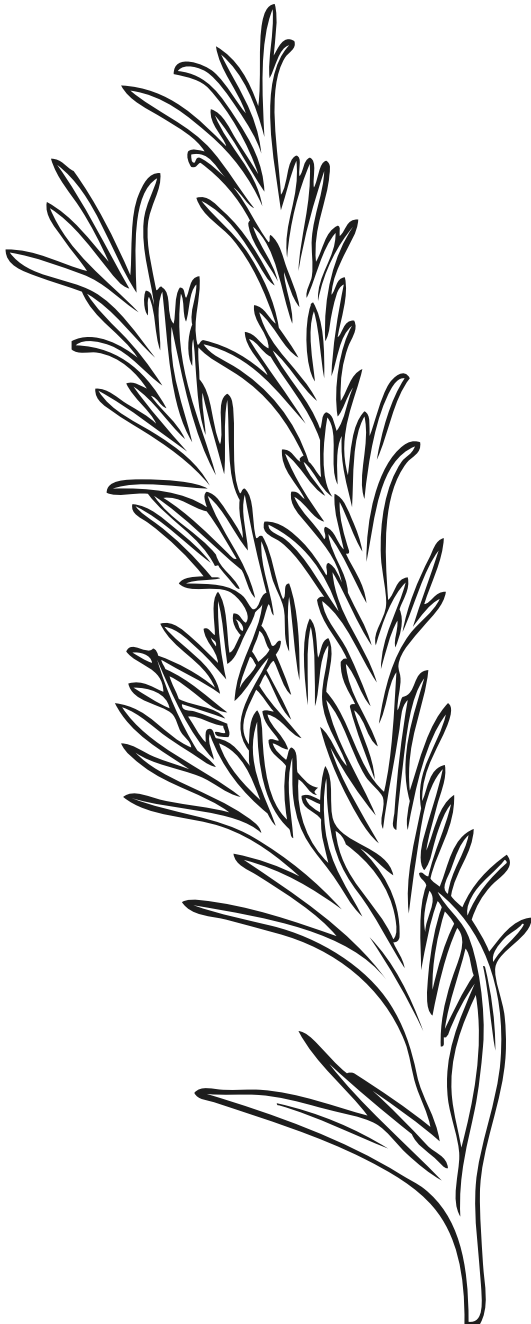
I began in my graduate experience at Seattle University with an MA in Existential Phenomenological Psychology, wanting to study the intersection of philosophy and psychology and how it addresses the questions of human experience. Never thinking I wanted to be a clinician, but rather a philosopher and researcher. But I was encouraged to do a clinical practicum and found I liked clinical work – that was a surprise to me, as I hadn't started out wanting to be a therapist.

Upon graduation from that program, I immediately entered into a clinical doctoral program at Seattle Pacific University because I didn't think I knew enough to really muck around in people's psyches, and I simply wanted to learn more about being human. The two biggest surprises in that program were discovering my fascination with the brain through my neuro classes and discovering my love of teaching in my fifth and final year.



# DR. KENNEDY

Overall, in two programs and seven years of graduate school, each time I started in one place, I followed my curiosity and ended up somewhere else.



## **WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU HAVE LEARNED IN YOUR TIME AS A PSYCHOLOGIST?**

We thrive as humans in relationship. Without healthy connection with others, the unique challenges we face based on our genetics and brain chemistry, interacting with our environment, can overwhelm and sometimes destroy us. Through genuine and authentic connection to another human, we can find a path through the challenges of the world.

## **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT TEACHING GRADUATE-LEVEL STUDENTS?**

My favorite part of teaching is learning with my students. One of my professors said once that the combination of clinical work and teaching was perfect because doing clinical work, we take in and hold other's stories, and through teaching, we pass on stories to our students. I have found this to be true for me. I love the discussions with students, watching the excitement that learning can provide. I actually love reading papers and entering into dialogue around ideas.

# DR. KENNEDY

## FUN FACT ABOUT YOU?

After college, with a BA in French and International Affairs, I interviewed with Central Intelligence Agency to be an “overseas operations officer”. I was told that I appeared too compassionate for the work, and it was suggested that I pursue graduate studies in international affairs.

## ANY BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS?

So very many. Without too much thinking: Non-fiction: Eric Kandel’s books – The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind, and Brain, from Vienna 1900 to the Present and The Disordered Mind: What Unusual Brains Tell Us about Ourselves. Or Yuval Noah Harari’s book: Sapiens. I haven’t read his latest Homo Deus yet.

I read a lot of mysteries for relaxation and prefer series for their character development; my favorites are the series by Louise Penny and the books of Elizabeth George. Finally, my current, favorite cookbook – Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat by Samin Nosrat. If you don’t have time for the book, watch her Netflix series by the same title.



## FAVORITE HOBBIES?

I love cooking and baking. I spend as much time as I can reading. I greatly enjoy time with my husband, daughter and my friends. Few things warm my heart as much as sitting down to a long table of family and friends to talk and eat together. I enjoy art and theater. And taking walks in our woods.

# DR. KENNEDY'S ADVICE

## ANY ADVICE FOR CURRENT GRADUATE STUDENTS?

“ Don't give up. You may reach a point where you are hardly sick of being a student – hopefully at that point, you are passed the place of no return – where you are too far in it to back out! This field needs you – other people need you to help them find healthy relationships and ways to cope with the world. You, personally, need to learn all of these skills you are learning because you, too, are a human and what you are learning is all about being a human in the world. Follow your own path – you'll find your way if you are open and genuine with yourself and others. There are so many absorbing and fascinating things to do in this field. Try more than one over your career ”

- Dr. Melissa Kennedy





# WSPA CONFERENCE 2019



**PROUD TO HAVE OUR  
STUDENTS AND  
FACULTY REPRESENT  
OUR SCHOOL AT  
WSPA!**

**Coloring Inside the  
(Guide)lines: An  
Introduction to Awareness  
for Multiculturally  
Competent Practice** – Jude  
Bergkamp, Psy.D., Lindsay  
Olson, BS, and Abigail Martin,  
BA

## **KELLE AGASSIZ'S EXPERIENCE (3RD YEAR STUDENT):**

" This year at the WSPA Conference, the Forensic Research Group – Stephanie Bowser, Amber Silverwood, Jude Bergkamp, Psy.D., and myself, presented our research regarding implicit bias in corrections. Our project collaborated with the Washington State Department of Corrections to explore the impact of implicit bias in correctional services, including classification, custody, medical and mental health services, discharge, and probation. This research has developed into an ongoing pilot project with the Washington State Department of Corrections. Regarding my overall experience at the WSPA 2019 Conference, it was great seeing Dr. Bergkamp receive the Distinguished Psychologist Award for his notable contributions to the field. I also enjoyed spending the afternoon with psychologists from all over the state of Washington and seeing the research conducted by students from local universities."

# WSPA CONFERENCE 2019

CONGRATULATIONS DR. BERGKAMP!



**JUDE BERGKAMP,  
PSY. D.,  
PROGRAM CHAIR,  
CORE FACULTY,  
AND OUR  
SOCIAL JUSTICE  
CHAMPION!**

## **DR. JUDE BERGKAMP RECEIVES DISTINGUISHED PSYCHOLOGIST AWARD:**

"Given in recognition of significant contributions to the field of psychology.

This award recognizes outstanding professional contributions to knowledge, to applied psychology in professional practice, or in the public interest, while a resident of Washington State." (WSPA)

# DISSERTATION DEFENSES:



## SEEMA BUKSH'S PUBLIC LECTURE AND ORAL DEFENSE TITLE: SEXUAL DESIRE AS EXPERIENCED BY SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN LIVING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

"Cultural beliefs and values play a significant role in the conceptualization, expression, and experience of sexual desire and functioning. Previous studies have found higher mainstream acculturation was associated with higher sexual desire and arousal. Many of these studies have also linked the cultural effects on sexual functioning to culture-differences in sexual conservatism. Within South Asian culture there is a propensity towards sexual conservatism, especially in relation to female sexual desire, yet research with regards to sexual desire and South Asian women is absent from the literature. Given the dearth of research related to this topic, further research in this area is warranted. This study used the Vancouver Index of Acculturation (VIA) and the Sexual Desire Inventory-2 (SDI-2) to investigate the relationship between acculturation to mainstream (Canadian) culture and sexual desire and enculturation to heritage (South Asian) culture and sexual desire in South Asian females living in BC. Results of this study found a positive relationship between acculturation to mainstream culture and sexual desire. No evidence of a significant relationship between enculturation to heritage culture and sexual desire was reported. Exploratory analysis of demographic factors found that as age increased acculturation scores decreased; parents and pregnant women reported higher enculturation and lower acculturation scores; non- parents scored higher on sexual desire; married participants reported lower acculturation scores, and participants in a relationship (but not married) reported the highest levels of sexual desire. Moreover, participants who identified as having Hindu or Islamic belief systems reported lower average solitary sexual desire scores than participants from other spirituality/religious groups. Finally, there were small positive correlations regarding those who agreed with statements related to female sexuality and their VIA and SDI-2 scores. Keeping in mind that this study was the first to explore sexual desire and South Asian women, findings from this study may further build on our understanding of South Asian female sexual desire as well as assist in supporting the sexual health of South Asian women."

# DISSERTATION DEFENSES:



**MICHELLE EHLE'S PUBLIC LECTURE AND ORAL DEFENSE**  
**TITLE: DEATH ANXIETY & LIFE SATISFACTION: A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

"There are two certainties in life: we are born, and we will die. Everything in between birth and death is our life. This truth leads many individuals to existential questions: What is the meaning of life? How do we become satisfied with life, knowing that death is impending? Does awareness of death motivate how we live? Death anxiety is a well-studied subject; well over 500 studies provide information on who is the most fearful of death among a variety of groups (women verses men, religious verses secular, youth verses elderly, et cetera). These studies also use presuppositions to explain fear of death, such as, elder individuals have less fear of death due to life experience, a practical reason that makes sense and is likely true. My study looks beyond practical reasoning. I used descriptive phenomenological research to explore the subjective experiences of six individuals, to look beyond presuppositions and examine personal reasoning, and explore if there were commonalities between experiences. This study found ten (10) commonalities within the subjective experience of each participant that influenced each person's fear of death. In the whole these commonalities describe the structure of a phenomenon, experiences that alters the fear of death and influences actions taken in life. The commonalities are loss, selfishness, worry about the process of dying, helplessness over what cannot be controlled, common daily fears, meaning-making that is embedded in general reasoning, reports of self- protection, pleasure-seeking drives, struggles with internal Steen Halling, Ph.D. and external values, and a feeling of relief that is found in those who have lost a loved one to chronic illness. This study provides an enhanced understanding of how individuals process death anxiety."



# DISSERTATION DEFENSES:



**VERONICA FELSTAD'S PUBLIC LECTURE AND ORAL DEFENSE**  
**TITLE:** CULTURAL DIFFERENCES, SOCIAL SUPPORT, AND THERAPY OUTCOMES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN INDIVIDUALIST AND COLLECTIVIST CULTURES

"Social support plays an integral role in our lives, and recent research demonstrates that the presence or lack of social support has a potential impact on factors of interest to psychologists, such as therapeutic progress and therapeutic alliance. There is a lack of research demonstrating the relationship between social support and treatment outcomes and the role culture plays. This quantitative international study aimed to explore cultural variances in perceptions, utilizations, and functions of social support, particularly between individualist and collectivist cultures, and the potential effect these variances had on the relationship between social support and therapeutic outcomes. Sixty clients and eleven therapists, divided among Bogota and Seattle counseling centers, participated in this study by completing pen- and paper-based questionnaires that included measures of social support, client's perception of therapy progress and therapeutic alliance, and therapist's perception of therapy progress and therapeutic alliance. Using nonparametric testing the study sought to find differences and similarities among these factors. Additionally, it explored whether culture had an impact on how people perform in therapy and the relationship between their therapeutic alliance and relationships outside of therapy. Even though the study did not yield statistically significant results, this study was able to highlight areas for future research to continue exploring cultural differences in social support, therapeutic progress, and therapeutic alliance. Focusing on the importance of social support integration in therapeutic interventions and streamlining the measures may be a next step for future research. It is hoped that this study may lead to further examination of social support with regards to therapeutic treatment and culture in order to improve mental health outcomes."

# WINTER 2020 COMMUNITY MEETINGS (\*)

**JAN. 11, 2020**

WHAT IS THE STATE-OF-  
THE-SCIENCE IN  
MILITARY TRAUMATIC  
BRAIN INJURY?  
JAY M. UOMOTO, PH.D.

**JAN. 18, 2020**

PROMOTING BRAIN HEALTH  
AND READINESS:  
INNOVATIONS REFLECTED IN  
THE JOINT BASE LEWIS-  
MCCHORD TBI RESEARCH  
PROGRAM  
JAY M. UOMOTO, PH.D.

**FEB. 1, 2020**

INTRODUCTION TO BASIC  
PRINCIPLES AND NEW  
TRENDS IN PRE AND  
PERINATAL PSYCHOLOGY  
CHERYL R. AZLIN, PSY.D., DCT

**FEB. 8, 2020**

THE INTEGRATION OF THE  
SCIENCE OF SAFETY AND  
RESILIENCE INTO PERINATAL  
CARE: A NEW TREND FOR  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
KATE WHITE, M.A., BCBMT,  
RCST, CEIM, SEP

# WINTER 2020 COMMUNITY MEETINGS (\*)

**FEB. 15, 2020**

**AMPLIFICATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN DOCTORAL CURRICULUM; A REVIEW OF AUS PSYD CURRICULUM FROM DISRUPTION TO RECONCILIATION**

JUDE BERGKAMP, PSY.D., DANA WATERS, PSY.D., MIKE TOOHEY PH.D., AND CHRIS HEFFNER, PH.D., PSY.D.

**FEB. 29, 2020**

**THE RECOVERY CAFE' METHOD OF TREATING SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND HOMELESSNESS**

RUBY TAKUSHI, PH.D.

**MAR. 7, 2020**

**THE SCIENCE OF INTIMACY**  
PAUL DAVID, PH.D., FACULTY  
AUS CMFT PROGRAM

**FEB. 14, 2020**

**FACULTY-STUDENT MEETING**

# INTEREST GROUPS



## **A.W.A.K.E. WITH DR. WATERS:**

Research Group: The Autistic Women's Advocacy, Knowledge, and Empowerment Project (The AWAKE Project): An online social justice, advocacy and psychoeducational program for autistic women.

## **THE OTHER ISMS WITH DR. SAKUMA:**

Speciesism, Carnism and Anthropocentrism: Research in these areas will take the form of studying our 'complex relations with animals and psychological reactions associated when our behavior or worldview is threatened.



## **POSITIVE PSYCH. WITH DR. HEFFNER**

Positive psychology is the scientific study of strengths that enable communities and individuals to thrive. The mission of this Interest and Research Group is to support opportunities for collaborative learning, research, and skill development related to positive psychology and strength-based.



# INTEREST GROUPS



## SOCIAL PRIVILEGE WITH DR. BERGKAMP

The goal of this research group is the construction of a developmental model of social privilege; awareness to allyship. Social privilege has been defined as unearned benefit and advantage at the cost of others, based on social membership usually ascribed at birth.

## TRAUMA INTEREST GROUP WITH DR. HEUSLER:

Research teams concerning a particular topic or category in trauma studies may form at the suggestion or direction by a Faculty Liaison or by students with the guidance of a Faculty Liaison. This group is still in the process of brainstorming trauma research ideas.



## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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*Make 2020 the year  
of Involvement!*

# QUARTERLY TRIVIA- EPPP PRACTICE!

*Submit your responses to Samantha Hoffmann via email (shoffmann@antioch.edu) for your chance to win a prize!*

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## QUESTION 1

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**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES THE MAIN GOAL OF ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT THERAPY?**

- A) Achieve the client's full human potential
- B) Observe the self accurately
- C) Reduce psychiatric symptoms
- D) Enhance psychological flexibility

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## QUESTION 2

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**WHICH ELEMENT IS MISSING IN THE CANNON-BARD THEORY OF EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE?**

**STIMULUS -> \_\_?\_\_ -> THALAMIC PROCESSING -> BEHAVIOR**

- A) Cognitive Interpretation
- B) Emotional response
- C) Autonomic arousal
- D) Cortical Processing

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## QUESTION 3

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**KELMAN (1958) POSITS THAT WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS WHEN PEOPLE CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR TO EITHER OBTAIN A REWARD OR AVOID PUNISHMENT?**

- A) Disassociation
- B) Identification
- C) Compliance
- D) Internalization



# **HAPPY WINTER 2020!**

ANTIOCH UNIVERSITY SEATTLE

**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION OR  
QUESTIONS:**

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**PSY.D. NEWLSETTER -** *end*