

Public Lecture + Dialogue Theatre

Date: March 29, 2018 (Thursday)

Time: 5pm – 6pm (Lecture) & 6.30pm - 8pm (Dialogue Theatre)

Location: VU Metrowest, 138 Nicholson Street, Footscray

Public Lecture

Privileging Omitted Knowledge Archives and Re(defining) Possibilities in Africa-Centred Community and Peace Psychologies

Time: 5pm – 6pm

Mohamed Seedat & Shahnaaz Suffla

Institute for Social and Health Sciences, University of South Africa

&

South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit

Drawing on the work of the Institute for Social and Health Sciences at the University of South Africa, in this space we will reflect on the origins and multiple manifestations of community psychology in South Africa and their intersections with peace psychology. We will map these manifestations and intersections on to the multiple knowledge archives on which psychological theory and practices seem to draw, both implicitly and explicitly. The knowledge-practice archival links imply different roles for critical community psychology and peace psychology in Southern societies such as South Africa. Located on an archival knowledge continuum, community and peace psychology may move between justifying hegemonic notions of community, peace and community practices, approaching community and peace as culturally shaped constructs, resisting the ideological and discursive influences of dominant knowledge systems, and/or experimenting with situated knowledge practices that do not offer immediate formulaic methods. Following the turn towards decoloniality, we suggest that those working within the community psychology-peace psychology nexus consider their roles in non-binary and dynamic terms so as to reconsider the knowledge and methodological claims underlying the intervention disciplines, as well as modes of engagements in society.

Presenters:

Mohamed Seedat is the Head of the Institute for Social and Health Sciences at the University of South Africa and Director of the Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, a national programme, co-hosted by the South African Medical Research Council and the University of South Africa. In his work, Mohamed has engaged multiple knowledge libraries and communities of practice as part of an ongoing project on epistemic voice and independence. He continues to wonder about and make sense of the messiness and complexities inherent to resisting exclusionary knowledge practices and finding happiness in transformative work.

Shahnaaz Suffla is a senior researcher at the South African Medical Research Council-University of South Africa Violence, Injury and Peace Research Unit, and Professor Extraordinaire at the University of South Africa. Her research interests draw from the intersections of critical community and peace psychologies, and are located within liberatory philosophies and epistemologies. Her thinking and scholarship is influenced by the vision of research as a transforming, humanising and decolonising enterprise. Her

research interests include a focus on safety and peace promotion interventions in contexts of structural violence; participatory engagement as a site of activism, resistance and social change; and Africa-centred approaches to knowledge generation. Shahnaaz's academic contributions and imaginations are situated within and supported by the work of a collective of critical scholars within her unit.

South Sudan Voice: Dialogue Theatre

Time: 6:30pm – 8pm

Booking Required: <https://ssvmarch29.eventbrite.com.au>

The current public scrutiny on young South Sudanese Australians is impacting heavily on the community as a whole as it faces numerous challenges and discriminations while adjusting and adapting to the Australian context. South Sudan Voice is a community-driven initiative to provide the community actors with new conflict transformation tools to enable diverse South Sudanese Australian community groups to speak and listen to one another, whilst also engaging non-South Sudanese communities and agencies in dialogue towards positive change.

The South Sudan Voice project applies the dialogue theatre method, devised by the new Australian company, Free Theatre. Dialogue theatre has been developed in Southeast Asia since 2014 as an applied theatre method for social dialogue and conflict transformation. Each performance consists of a 2-part process: a 20-minute drama and a 70-minute dialogue, a moderated workshop involving actors and audience. Audiences participate in active listening, critical dialogue, and ideas formulation with characters provoking and mediating a discussion that is challenging, complex, and solution-oriented. This will be complimented by an online dialogue, documenting each dialogue content and extending the process into the digital sphere.

The project is administered by South Sudan Child First Education, led by Malual Deng. The creative process is led by Pongjit Saphakhun and Richard Barber of Free Theatre Company.



SSV would like to acknowledge the support of the Partnership Fund, Department of Premier and Cabinet for the South Sudan Voice project.

