



Family Process Institute, Inc.

www.FamilyProcess.org

2019 New Writers Fellowship

Biographies

Ruvi T. Tsokodayi, MS, MFT



Ruvi Tsokodayi (pronounced “SOH-KOH-DAH-YEE”) is a Doctoral Candidate in Human Development and Family Science at Virginia Tech. She began her doctoral studies in Fall 2014 after earning a master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy from Mercy College in New York, and a bachelor’s degree in Health Sciences also from Mercy College. While at Virginia Tech, she has taught courses in early childhood development, child and adolescent development, and field study. Her research interests broadly focus on children’s socio-emotional development and mental health, parent-child interaction and parenting determinants, and the role of socio-cultural factors in individual and family development. Her current research specializations are in refugee migration stress and family development, and her manuscript is titled *Refugee migration stress and its impact on parental self-efficacy and parent-child interaction*.

Meg D. Bishop



Meg Bishop is a second year Ph.D student in the Human Development and Family Sciences Department at the University of Texas at Austin, working in Dr. Stephen Russell's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: Health and Rights Lab. Meg's research examines the factors that influence identity development, health, and well-being among LGBTQ+ populations. Meg's current projects focus on intersectional approaches to sexual and gender minority identity development, exploring how unique social locations shape development over time. Meg aims to produce rigorous research that informs programs and policies for eliminating disparities experienced by LGBTQ+ populations.

Title of Manuscript: Variability in Sexual Identity Development Milestones in a Nationally Representative Sample of LGB People



Family Process Institute, Inc.

www.FamilyProcess.org

Natasha A. Cox, MA-MFT



Natasha Cox is currently a doctoral candidate in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at Virginia Tech. They completed a master's degree in marriage and family therapy from Syracuse University as a Ronald E. McNair Graduate Fellow and graduated with honors from Elizabeth City State University with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in Spanish. Their paper is titled, "Becoming a Black man: A qualitative examination of identity management, sense of belonging, and informal support systems of Black transmen."

Yunyu (Kathy) Xiao, M.Phil



Kathy Xiao is a fourth year PhD candidate from Silver School of Social Work, and a predoctoral fellow from the McSilver Institute for Poverty Policy and Research, New York University. Yunyu's research focuses on addressing health disparities in suicidal behaviors among adolescents and young adults. She has been published in top journals such as the *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *Journal of School Psychology*, *Psychiatry Research*, *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, and *Health Behavior Research*. She is the awardee of the Kenneth Lutterman Award for Best Student Paper in *2018 American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting*, honoring her paper entitled "Cumulative social network risks and youth resilience towards suicidal behaviors". Her paper entitled "Social network risks and multiple health behaviors among adolescents: The moderating role of future orientation" also received the Outstanding Student Poster in *2019 American Academy of Health Behavior (AAHB) Annual Meeting*. During the New Writers Workshop, Yunyu is going to polish her proposed article entitled "*Transitions in Social Network Patterns and Associations with Suicidal Behaviors: A Latent Transition Analysis from Adolescence to Middle Adulthood*".



Family Process Institute, Inc.

www.FamilyProcess.org

Elizabeth A. McNeilly, MA



Elizabeth McNeilly is a doctoral student in Adult Learning through the Werklund School of Education at the University of Calgary, Canada. Her doctoral research explores the transformative (Mezirow, 1991) experiences parents of transgender and gender non-binary children undergo as they reconcile conventional Western beliefs with emerging conceptualizations about gender identity development. Her article title is aptly named Reframing families: Transforming meaning in families with gender-expansive members.

Alaysia M. Brown, MS



Alaysia Brown received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a minor in English from the University of San Diego in 2016. She is currently a third-year doctoral student in Human Development and Family Science at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Her research interests include understanding the physical and psychosocial implications of race, ethnicity, and phenotypic-stratification within racial and ethnic communities. She is also interested in exploring how family and sociocultural processes—including the intergenerational transmission of relationship quality (ITQR)—influence the formation, quality, and stability of adult romantic relationships. Her project through the Family Process New Writers' workshop is titled *"Coping with double jeopardy: The association between racial discrimination, aggressive coping, skin tone, and psychosocial health"* and seeks to examine how skin tone and parental messages endorsing aggressive coping contour the association between within-group discrimination and psychosocial health.



Family Process Institute, Inc.

www.FamilyProcess.org

Charlie Huntington



Charlie Huntington is a PhD student in Clinical Child Psychology at the University of Denver. His research focuses on adolescents' and adults' romantic relationships and sexual health, and he has a background in sexual assault prevention research and intervention work. His project for the New Writers Fellowship will use multilevel modeling to explore how Latinx and non-Latinx adolescents differ in their romantic relationship and sexual attitudes and behaviors, and what implications these differences have for sex and relationship education programs.

Dev Crasta, PhD



Dev Crasta, Ph.D. is a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Veterans Affairs Center of Excellence for Suicide Prevention whose work focuses on the promotion of healthy and supportive family relationships. Dr. Crasta's translational approach to addressing these problems uses basic research techniques to understand how cultural context impacts relationships. These findings then inform the development of online treatments that can adapt to different contexts and benefit families at the population level. His manuscript, "Home is where the heart is, but where is home? Understanding couple functioning in its larger neighborhood context," attempts to integrate findings from sociology, developmental, and public health researchers on how neighborhoods shape romantic relationships. Dr. Crasta hopes the framework proposed in this article will help researchers evaluate whether their theories and treatments work consistently across different types of communities.



Family Process Institute, Inc.

www.FamilyProcess.org

Jaime Fuentes-Balderrama



Jaime Fuentes-Balderrama was born and raised in Mexico. He has received three academic degrees from Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City (including an undergraduate degree in psychology, a CACREP accredited master's degree in community counseling and a doctoral degree in psychological research). Undergraduate assistant professor since 2016 and graduate assistant professor since 2017 in Mexico. During the 2018-2019 academic year he completed a fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin under Dr. Rubén Parra-Cardona focusing on the implementation of culturally sensitive parent management training for Latinx immigrants. Currently a member and active collaborator in the Mexican Counseling and Psychotherapy Association (AMOPP) striving for a more ethical, regulated and efficient practice of psychology in Mexico. His main research interests are parental practices as both protective factors and predictors of problem behaviors in preadolescents, parental attachment and preadolescent development.

Aleja Parsons, PhD



Dr. Parsons' research focuses on the alleviation of relationship and family distress in underrepresented populations, with a specific emphasis on African American couples and family systems. The primary goals of Dr. Parsons' work are to a) identify culturally unique factors that mitigate destructive processes in marginalized communities and b) develop effective culturally relevant interventions. Clinically, Dr. Parsons has intensive training in couples therapy working with a range of marginalized populations (including the LGBTQ community, people with physical and cognitive disabilities, and Veterans). Dr. Parsons received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from the University of Denver and is currently a tenure-track faculty member at New York University and a member of the Family Translational Research Group. The manuscript she will develop as a New Writers Fellow is titled "Racial Ideology and Romantic Processes: How Perceived Discrepancies Affect Dedication, Satisfaction, and Aggression for African American Couples."