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“Derivative Family Construct” among Filipino Amerasians Research Paper Presented at University of the Philippines-Diliman Asian Center Cross-cultural Identities Forum

QUEZON CITY, Metro Manila, the Philippines – The phenomena of the “Derivative Filipino Amerasian Family” found among Filipino Amerasians residing in Angeles City nearly 20 years after U.S. military bases closed in 1992 was discussed in an academic research paper presented by P.C. “Pete” Kutschera, Ph.D., at the University of the Philippines-Diliman Asian Center Forum on Cross-cultural Identities (Narratives of Resistance and Adaptation) here today. The condition was found among seven of the 16 sample participants interviewed extensively in the qualitative casework methodology dissertation study, “Stigma, Psychosocial Risk and Mental Health Symptomatology among Amerasians in the Philippines” published in 2011.

A licensed New York social worker and visiting professor and director at the Philippine Amerasian Research Center, College of Social Work, Systems Plus College Foundation (SPCF) in Angeles City, Luzon, Dr. Kutschera found that earmarks of the construct include a pattern of Filipina mothers bearing multiple children of U.S. servicemen of different racial and ethnic makeup. Another was mothers often but not always engaged as prostituted women or in casual, sex industry liaisons. Sometimes these mothers would attempt to pass such life style choices onto their children in inter-generational fashion. Derivative Amerasian families also exhibited aspects of severe family dysfunction and disorganization including parental absenteeism or abandonment, lack of consistent authority at the helm, housing insecurity or a history of homelessness, transient or itinerant lifestyles, physical and mental abuse, neglect or violence, possibly of a sexual nature, and generally materially impoverished lives.

“We found the use of this term to be common among social workers, home care aides and social services personnel working with this population; most often these professionals used it in detached clinical terms. Conversely, it was also common usage among Amerasians themselves, but often in a negative or pejorative way.” Dr. Kutschera said the term apparently originates from the historical definition of a derivative, often found in the chemical or financial industry. It means an end product comprised of different or varying sources of origination, and one which is often created over time, in a step-by-step process.” Kutschera co-authored the paper with Mary Grace Talamera-Sandico, RSW, MMPM, a faculty instructor at the SPCF’s College of Social Work and former social services manager for the Philippine Children’s Fund of America. She assisted Kutschera in his research from 2007-2010.

Kutschera said that “most significantly, five of the seven participants in the study identified as coming from derivative families presented moderately to severely elevated depression and anxiety scores on the Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS), an Australian developed health inventory measuring core mental health symptomatology indicators.” The paper may be accessed on the AmerasianInstitute.org website.