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ICISS-2014 Vancouver Conference Research Paper: Second Generation Military Filipino Amerasians Show Significant "At Risk" Conditions

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada - A six-month long pilot study involving 2nd generation African (black) and Anglo (white) Military Filipino Amerasians drawn from Central Luzon's "AMO Amerasian Triangle" says earmarks of an "at risk" population are present and more empirical research is needed to crystallize troublesome characteristics reflected in an original (N=8) sample. Stigmatization and psychosocial risk levels may not be as intense, as newer Amerasians become acculturated and assimilated into younger mainstream Filipino populations. However, like their first generation Amerasian parents - 2nd generation offspring suffer both socioeconomically and psychologically from abandonment or estrangement as a result of absentee fathers and missing patriarchal roots. "Moreover, the unequal burden that mothers of 2nd generation Amerasians have borne in bringing up their children" is significant. Among numerous conclusions, the study maintained there is palpable evidence "Amerasian households (are) continuing to be affected negatively by remnants of the military prostitution system and the omnipresent Philippine sex industry."

Other findings included "unrelenting levels of chronic poverty, familial disorganization and dysfunction and lack of Amerasians' access to adequate medical/mental health preventative care and treatment services. The deeply traumatizing conditions facing an unknown number of 2nd generation Amerasian street children revealed new territory for study. Finally, how much (are) the at risk conditions described in this paper ... affected by the general poverty line in the Philippines and how many are consequences of the broken, troubled past of Amerasians?" On an optimistic note, the report specifically noted that the signing of the 2014 R.P. - U.S. Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), finalized during President Barrack H. Obama's Spring, 2014 visit to Manila, raises the possibility for positive progress or policy changes affecting long neglected military Filipino Amerasians. "While EDCA will mean more U.S. troops (on the ground), it may also provide opportunities to revisit U.S. government policy of Filipino Amerasian neglect," the study noted. The report specifically listed such entities as the Office of the President of the United States, the State and Defense Departments, U.S. Embassy-Manila, U.S. Agency for International Development-Philippines and the Department of Health and Human Services "as potential leaders to marshal forces to examine the reprehensible conditions faced by abandoned U.S. American military blood progeny."

The Philippine-based research paper was presented June 11 on the first day of the Ninth International Conference on Interdisciplinary Social Services (ICISS-2014) conducted at the world academically-ranked University of British Columbia (UBC); a major public university enrolling 57,000

students at its Vancouver and Okanagan Valley campuses. UBC is consistently rated along with McGill University, Montreal, and the University of Toronto as among Canada and North America's top research and academic institutions. The conference drew academicians, researchers, faculty, business executives and private sector managers, doctoral candidates, graduate assistants and students from six continents. Dr. Bill Cope, ICISS 2014 Conference director, praised the research paper titled, *Episodic Stigma, Psychosocial Risk, and Stress Confronting 2nd Generation Military Filipino Amerasians: A Multiple-case Pilot Study*. "(It) played an important role at ICISS-2014 which examines the nature of disciplinary practices, and the interdisciplinary practices that arise in the context of 'real world' applications. It also interrogates what constitutes 'science' in a social context and the connections between the social and other sciences.

"Clearly we felt this heretofore unstudied aspect of the Amerasian condition in the Philippines was a sound fit for ICISS-2014 in Canada because military Amerasian human travail breeches the far reaching character of the scientific and the social. You've got a struggling, marginalized and misbegotten population essentially brought into this world almost accidentally by powerful geo-political and military industrial complex forces not at all of their own making," declared P.C. "Pete" Kutschera, Ph.D., Director of the Philippine Amerasian Research Center (PARC), Systems Plus College Foundation (SPCF College), Angeles City, Philippines and Chief Academic Officer/Founder of the New York-based non-profit Amerasian Research Network (ARN, Ltd.).

Dr. Kutschera, 70, who briefed the paper at UBC on the first day of the conference, June 11, was one of four other co-authors, part of a working group of Pan Amerasian subject researchers studying the issue in the Philippines, East/Southeast Asia and North America. Field researchers who directly interviewed sample participants on site from the Olongapo City, Metro Manila and Angeles locales - "AMO Amerasian Triangle" - included Prof. Jose Maria G. Pelayo III, SPCF College Psychology Professor and Director of its Social and Psychology Research Unit and Prof. Mary Grace Talamera-Sandico, former SPCF College faculty, licensed social worker and Professor, Department of Social Work, Don Honorio Ventura Technological State University, Bacolor, Pampanga. Other contributing authors were Dean Elena Cachio-Tesoro who heads the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy at Ventura State University and Phil M. Kutschera, a licensed New York master social worker, Research Officer and Advisory Board Member, ARN, Ltd., New York. The report was edited by Dr. Marie A. Caputi, Ph.D., veteran social science researcher and Contributing Faculty, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Walden University, Minnesota, USA. "We must express special tribute to Ms. Adrian Bettridge-Wiese, Support Services Director at ICISS-2014, UBC-Vancouver, and her professional staff, who rendered an immeasurable level of assistance in the climatic months, weeks and days leading up to our presentation on the Canadian Pacific Coast," Dr. Kutschera stated. Both Dean Cachio-Tesoro and Phil M. Kutschera also attended the paper presentation event.

The pilot study research, employing a quota or essentially random sample selection methodology posed five key questions covering aspects of: 1.) Stigmatization and discrimination of the nature previously reported by biracial, first generation African and Anglo Amerasians in previous studies, 2.) Knowledge, memories or anecdotes pertaining to the participant's U.S. service member, corporate contractor or civilian U.S. employee grandfather and recollection of specific Amerasian roots as related by family members or acquaintances, 3.) An individual description of socioeconomic (SES) income levels and earning power and potential psychosocial physical risk and mental stress factors including history of homelessness, joblessness or underemployment, education levels, access to medical/mental health care, social isolation, verbal harassment and name-calling experiences, if any, 4.) Personal knowledge that grandparents or parents may have been involved in the military prostitution or Philippine sex

industry in the past or present and what if any ostracism experienced due to such involvement, and 5.) Questions pertaining to medical and mental health history including treatment experiences or diagnoses for core mental health symptomatology (anxiety, depression or stress). Participants selected were drawn from two age brackets; adolescents, ages 13-19, and young adults, 20-39, with equal numbers of females and males and blacks and whites.

Case study adolescent profiles included: Jane, 14, an Anglo female from a relatively normal middle class family that included her Filipina Amerasian mother and two other 2nd generation siblings. Her Filipino father was an NCO in the Philippine Air Force stationed in Angeles, site of the former Clark U.S. air force base; "A.C.," a 13-year old Anglo teenager who lived as a *Batang kalye* or "street kid" after being abandoned on MacArthur Boulevard, Angeles City, by his Amerasian mother at age 7; Cherry Mai, a 16-year-old African who lives in relative poverty in Manila with her Amerasian mother. A public high school graduate, Mai dreams of a university or professional education in the future despite features of a "broken family." She also claims to have experienced name-calling or *panunukso* (ridicule) at school because of her dark, African skin, facial features, and different hair texture. *Negra* is a common epithet she was labeled. Juan Robert, 14, African Amerasian, resides in Metro Manila with his Amerasian mom and three siblings in extreme poverty. A total of six family members dwell in a two room concrete block house renting for P2000 (US equivalent \$50.00) per month. As a teenager Juan's grandmother was apparently human trafficked from Mindanao and worked as an entertainer in an Angeles club before her grandfather, a U.S. serviceman, apparently "bought her" from the bar operator and they cohabitated together in Manila when her first generation Amerasian mom was born.

Among the adults are Dovie Jean, a 36 year old African Amerasian widow who labors for pittance wages as a *tindera* (sales lady) in an Olongapo City *palengke* (wet market). A high school graduate, she never opted to attend college because she wanted a family of her own and married a black Amerasian with whom she had a son; the father died not long afterward. Dovie Jean's mother was a Leyte provincial native who worked in the Subic Bay U.S. naval base town as a club entertainer for years and it was there that she met Dovie's first generation Amerasian father. Dovie's father split not long after she was born and she never knew or can recall ever meeting him. Dovie claims she never learned the true story of her Amerasian dad's whereabouts because her Filipina stepfather was the one who really raised her. Daryl, 25, is a single African who lives with friends and has a thick strain of U.S. American mixed blood given that both his grandfather and father were black American military personnel and his mother is African Amerasian. Technically, he is part of an uncommon genre - both a first and 2nd generation Amerasian, though his family shows strong aspects of the *Derivative Amerasian Family Construct* or inter-generational involvement in military prostitution and Philippine sex industry traditions. Daryl claims, however, being black and Amerasian is easier on younger generations because younger Filipinos who he associates with are more accepting and even hospitable to such African persona traits as being a good dancer, appreciative of hip hop and contemporary music forms and being skilled at basketball, a highly popular sport in the islands.

Pedro Carlos, 27, is a white Amerasian who lives with his Filipina wife and their two children (6 and 7) in Metro Manila. He forges an admittedly meager existence as a "trike" or motorized tricycle taxi fare driver. The trike job was a step above previous gigs (i.e., car washer, gardener and janitor). Like many first and 2nd generation military Amerasians, Pedro never knew his Amerasian dad or his Anglo Amerasian grandfather whom his mother described as a U.S. Army enlistee transiting through or assigned in the Philippines sometime during the early part of the Cold War Era which stretched from 1946 to 1991. Finally, Sheryl, 24, is the product of a typically impoverished and loose, dysfunction Amerasian family. The mother of three boys, ages, 3, 6 and 7, she lives in a substandard housing unit in

Manila with her husband who toils on construction jobs when he can find work. This compels Sheryl to take in backbreaking work as a "stoop labor" launderer which she sometimes works at six days a week and 12 hour days. Similar to other interviewees, Sheryl's intergenerational Amerasian moorings are murky and incomplete. She knows nothing about her white Amerasian grandfather, nor her first generation Filipino Amerasian father. Like so many Filipino and Filipino Amerasian working and poverty class males, her father sired a child with a woman out of wedlock and then abandoned her. Sheryl's mom met her dad, an off duty Philippine Army soldier, in a nightclub where she worked as a bar waitress/entertainer. She became pregnant with Sheryl and not long afterwards became estranged from Sheryl's natural father. When Sheryl attempted to press her mom for even basic details about her dad she was continually rebuffed.

Through cross-case and in-case analysis researchers also determined:

--The sample was deeply impoverished and low SES marginalized. As such. 2nd generation Filipino Amerasians may be treading a "fine line" between stigmatization, discrimination and high psychosocial risk suffered as much by being poor as they are by being biracial Americans, a subject of possible future research.

-- A recurring pattern of 2nd generation Amerasians living in households inhabited and often raised and nurtured by Amerasian mothers. Strikingly, in not one instance did any sample participant disclose they had lived in a household under the care of their first generation Amerasian father. Moreover, a majority of sample participations claimed being told their fathers disappeared, abandoned households, or practiced cohabitation rather than wedlock arrangements with their mothers. Not one reported either intimately knowing or being in some way guided or mentored in their upbringing by their fathers, a ubiquitous finding among first generation Amerasian families.

--Second generation Amerasian households were subject to multiple physical or mental health psychosocial risk and stress factors including permutations of abandonment by the father, low income and poverty, housing insecurity, underemployment, low education levels and restricted access to care. Specific mental health stress factors included intermittent claims of experiencing or witnessing biracial stigmatization and discrimination, verbal harassment, psychosomatic complaints or possible somatic illness and derivative or disorganized family construct issues.

--At least half the sample (Anglo: Jane and Africans: Cherry Mai, Daryl, and Dovie Jean) sought or naturally developed Amerasian social connectivity. Possibly Africans exceeded Anglos in this behavior given that their darker skin and distinct African physical features may have yielded clearer or stronger racial or ethnic identities bonding them together. Conversely, Anglo Amerasians over the years have generally reported a higher degree of acceptance, acculturation and even exaltation among mainstream Filipinos.

--The street kid profile in the case of "A.C." validated a similar portrayal presented by 2nd generation Olongapo City street child "Margarita" in the acclaimed, 2010 documentary film *Left by the Ship* and is worthy of special attention. A valid question is how much of an aberration are such runaways, or in the case of "A.C.," a castaway among contemporary 2nd generation Filipino Amerasians? Previous anecdotal and news media reports and some researchers reported a plethora of street children abandoned in military base cities in the years leading up to the 1991-1992 military bases departure. Vietnam-American War (1964-1975) researchers and news media reported similar occurrences on the streets of Saigon and other Viet urban centers. Never accurately determined, however, is precisely how many first generation

Amerasian street children and people existed, remained overlooked, were undernourished, left permanently to their own wits, perished, starved to death or were even murdered. A new question this report raises is to what level does this phenomena occur among 2nd generation Amerasians in the Philippines?

NOTE: A complete, no cost copy of the ICISS 2014 Conference "2nd Generation Amerasian" research paper may be accessed directly from the ARN, Ltd. website: www.amerasianresearch.org/gen2

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