Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy /
Revue canadienne de counseling et de psychothérapie
ISSN 0826-3893 Vol. 56 No. 2 © 2022 Pages 236–268
https://doi.org/10.47634/cjcp.v56i2.71223

Establishing a Therapeutic Alliance With Youth Who Are Economically Disadvantaged: Misperceptions and Missed Opportunities
Forger une alliance thérapeutique avec les jeunes qui sont désavantagés économiquement : Les fausses perceptions et les occasions manquées

Shelly Mann
Athabasca University
Sandra Collins
Athabasca University

ABSTRACT
Recognition of social class as a cultural construct is slowly emerging in the counselling literature. There are prominent social discourses that blame poor individuals for their disadvantage instead of considering the structural causes of poverty. School counsellors must avoid internalizing these beliefs and marginalizing students unintentionally. Social class is often invisible, so youth who are economically disadvantaged may go unnoticed and so may not receive the support they need to overcome systemic barriers and to experience success. The authors invite counsellors to examine and challenge their own biases and assumptions regarding individuals who live in poverty and to work within schools to provide culturally sensitive and socially just leadership. They propose that counsellors adopt the working-class values of openness and honest communication in order to facilitate the formation of therapeutic alliances with youth facing economic disadvantage. The authors highlight salient points from the current literature in order to raise class consciousness and propose advocacy at the micro, meso, and macro levels. They also invite readers to engage in critical reflection on their own beliefs and attitudes about youth who are economically disadvantaged as a foundation for their continued cultural competency development.

RÉSUMÉ
On commence à voir émerger lentement dans la littérature sur le counseling une reconnaissance de la classe sociale en tant que construit culturel. Certains discours dominants dans la société blâment les personnes pauvres pour leurs difficultés au lieu de prendre en considération les causes structurelles de la pauvreté. Les conseillers scolaires doivent éviter d'intérioriser ces croyances et de marginaliser involontairement les élèves. La classe sociale est souvent invisible, et les jeunes qui sont désavantagés

économiquement risquent de passer inaperçus et de ne pas recevoir le soutien dont ils ont besoin pour surmonter les obstacles systémiques et réussir. Les auteures invitent les conseillers à examiner et à remettre en question leurs propres partis pris et idées préconçues sur les personnes qui vivent dans la pauvreté et à travailler au sein des écoles pour exercer un leadership culturellement sensible et socialement juste. Elles proposent que les conseillers adoptent les valeurs d'ouverture et de communication honnête du monde du travail pour faciliter l'établissement d'une alliance thérapeutique avec les jeunes qui sont désavantagés sur le plan économique. S'appuyant sur la littérature actuelle, les auteures mettent en lumière certains points saillants afin d'amener une prise de conscience sur les classes et proposent des interventions aux niveaux local, intermédiaire, et supérieur. Elles invitent aussi les lecteurs à amorcer une réflexion critique sur leurs propres croyances et attitudes envers les jeunes qui sont désavantagés économiquement pour continuer à perfectionner leurs compétences culturelles.

It is generally accepted that the ability to form a strong therapeutic alliance is a determining factor in counselling success (Feinstein et al., 2015; Norcross & Wampold, 2011; Zack et al., 2007). The therapeutic alliance refers to the relationship that is formed between counsellor and client, one that is built on trust, mutual empathy, cultural responsivity, and collaboration on the goals of and processes for therapy (Collins, 2018e). However, counsellors sometimes face roadblocks in developing a strong therapeutic alliance with clients where differences in culture and social location exist (Collins, 2018d), in particular school counsellors working with adolescents from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Balmforth, 2009; Havlik et al., 2017).

Although the language of counselling literature has gradually shifted away from the less complex notion of socio-economic status (SES) to a more nuanced and comprehensive identification of social class, we have used both terms in this article to reflect the choices of the authors we cited. We therefore define youth who are economically disadvantaged (YED) as school-aged children and youth from kindergarten to Grade 12 whose families are either (a) considered below the poverty line or under the low-income measure (Zhang, 2021) or (b) part of the working or poverty social classes. Cook and Lawson (2016) contended that many professionals in the counselling field conflate SES with social class, but the distinction is important in order to understand the lived experiences of YED. SES is an objective ranking of an individual or a family's economic status defined in the professional literature by income, education, and occupation (Cook et al., 2020) or by income adjusted by region, family size, and cost of living (Statistics Canada, 2021a, 2021b). Although SES influences social class, social class is a cultural construct that is much more complicated and multi-dimensional. According to Lavell (2018), members of the working class account for 54–55% of the population in Canada, while 20% of the population (consisting of members of

the poverty class) has low or no income. The working class includes the working poor who are defined by Lavell (2018) as those individuals living one paycheque away from poverty or working in non-unionized positions without health care. Social class encompasses values, beliefs, attitudes, ways of being, family dynamics and relationships, practices, and language (Cook et al., 2020; Cook & Lawson, 2016; Krumer-Nevo, 2016). Lavell (2019) contended that social class is a part of every individual's cultural identity and that it "so pervasively influences experience and worldview that class awareness is essential for effective counselling" (p. 66). Class straddlers (i.e., those who move between classes) may hold on to the sense of community, the values, and the world views of their working or poverty class origins (i.e., social class culture) even if their economic status changes (Class Action, 2015b; Lavell, 2018).

In her adaptation of Zweig's (2006) work, Lavell (2018) argued that social class should be viewed in terms of power, with the ruling class having the supreme power to influence social and political institutions at the highest level and the working class having very little to no relative power. Some of this socio-economic and socio-political power extends to the middle class, whose members tend to be professionals, managers, and supervisors (Lavell, 2018). By defining social class as an aspect of individual and collective cultural identity, we aim (a) to honour and respect the values, the beliefs, and the world views of people in the working and poverty classes and (b) to position the challenges faced by YED within the context of socio-culturally constructed narratives and structural barriers erected by dominant social classes (Collins, 2018e; Lavell, 2018, 2019). Poverty itself is often an outcome of other social determinants of health (i.e., gender inequities, social stratification, economic marginalization, classism, and other forms of discrimination) and is not a personal or community deficit (Audet et al., 2014). A contextualized view of economic disadvantage runs counter to Euro-Western and capitalist ideologies that assert the idea that individuals are free to determine their own economic destiny (Delanty, 2019). In fact, socio-cultural and structural barriers often function to limit both SES and social class mobility (Browman et al., 2019; Nangia & Arora, 2021). The impact of systemic socio-economic oppression became more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic through the disproportionate health and employment consequences for members of the working and poverty classes who lacked socio-economic privilege (e.g., job stability, ability to work from home, access to sanitation supplies and child care; Gibson et al., 2021). Youth from economically disadvantaged families experience greater negative impacts on their education, physical health, and mental health (Fegert et al., 2020) amid overall increases in health inequities (Gibson et al., 2021).

Youth who grow up in homes characterized by poverty often experience stigma and marginalization on the basis of social class, which places them at increased risk of physical and mental health challenges (Bullock et al., 2018; Foss-Kelly et al., 2017; Gibson et al., 2021; Rakesh & Whittle, 2021) and leads them to

face considerable barriers to future academic and economic success (Gorski, 2013; Havlik et al., 2017; Nangia & Arora, 2021). They may be prevented from participating fully in society because of a lack of financial resources and because of limited access to power as a result of social class status (Class Action, 2015a; Little, 2014). Many YED also experience discrimination on the basis of other dimensions of their cultural identities (e.g., gender, gender identity, ethnicity, Indigeneity, refugee or immigration status) and their intersections, which compounds socio-cultural and economic marginalization (Gibson et al., 2021; Hostinar & Miller, 2019; Lavell, 2018; Ratts et al., 2016). But without intentional observation and careful attention, social class can be invisible, so YED may not be as apt to receive the support they need from school counsellors as are people in more visible non-dominant groups (Smyth, 2017).

Given school counsellors' proximity and ease of access, they may be the best source of support for YED in terms of the daily challenges and life stressors YED are facing. Many YED will be looking for someone who is compassionate, who applies a contextualized, systematic lens in understanding their challenges, who can reaffirm to them what they are feeling, and who will give them hope for a way forward. However, some counsellors may be challenged by their own assumptions, which sometimes include the belief that poverty is the result of poor choices (Appio et al., 2013; Krumer-Nevo, 2016). These assumptions may lead counsellors to make uninformed and culturally insensitive suggestions to adolescents, such as advising them that simply by making better choices, they can have the same opportunities as their more privileged peers (Ali & Lees, 2013). YED may be characterized, in relation to their peers, by what they lack instead of by their strengths and competencies. This lack of comprehension of the systemic barriers that YED face may prevent counsellors from forming a strong therapeutic alliance and may alienate members of this population (Appio et al., 2013). Therefore, it is essential that counsellors become attuned to their pre-existing beliefs, biases, and misconceptions related to YED (Audet et al., 2014; Collins, 2018f; Lavell, 2018). We invite readers to reflect critically on their own assumptions about YED as a foundation for increasing their self-awareness.

School counsellors must also take the time necessary to listen to adolescents' accounts of their lived experiences and the challenges they face in their everyday lives, of which counsellors may not be aware (Clark et al., 2018; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016; Lavell, 2018). Counsellors must educate themselves about YED as an important foundation of cultural competency, but it is important to remember that each individual's story is unique and that each individual's experiences and needs may be influenced by their intersecting identities (Hostinar & Miller, 2019; Lavell, 2018; Ratts et al., 2016). In attending to the personal accounts of lived experiences and challenges faced by YED, counsellors can learn from clients' unique cultural knowledge and world views (Collins, 2018e). Although we do not assume that all counsellors come from middle- or upper-class backgrounds,

Lavell (2018) points to the dearth of practitioners from working and poverty classes. It is therefore critical that counsellors actively build their understanding of the world views of YED and reflect critically on how these differ from their own. Developing this connection and awareness may help to foster trust and to facilitate the formation of a culturally responsive and socially just therapeutic alliance (Collins, 2018d; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016).

I (Shelly Mann) have been working with students from a range of backgrounds in the Prince Edward Island education system for over 20 years. I invite readers to consider Jessie's story below, which I created by drawing on elements from my experience with various students I met along the way. We introduce this story as a way to bring to life some of the concepts and principles we introduce, such as the multitude of contextual factors that influence Jessie's in-the-moment reactions in this first part of her story.

It is a Wednesday in the dead of winter, and Jessie is in class for the first time this week. Her feet are wet, because she had to walk to school and there is slush on the ground. Jessie does not have boots, so she wears sneakers all winter. Jessie had a fight with her mother—again. And this time her mother kicked her out. Ever since Jessie's dad moved out West and started a new family, Jessie's mother has been drinking. Jessie's mother drinks a lot more when the new boyfriend is around. Despite Jessie trying to tell her mother that he is not a good influence, Jessie's mother does not see it.

Jessie has been couch surfing for the past week, staying with whoever will give her a roof over her head. The problem is that Jessie is running out of options. She used to be able to go to her grandmother's house when things got bad with her mother. When the heat got turned off or the electricity was disconnected, Jessie's grandmother was always there. Jessie's grandmother was the one person whom she could rely on in times of trouble. But Jessie's grandmother lives in a nursing home now and doesn't remember her. Like many people from working class or poor families, family means everything to her, and now Jessie feels like she has no one.

Jessie is hungry, cold, and hurting. When her teacher asks for an explanation for Jessie's absences, she reacts with anger and tells the teacher to mind their own business. Underneath, she burns with shame. Jessie is immediately told to leave the room and sent to see a counsellor.

There are a number of factors that might influence Jessie's encounter with the counsellor. The quality of the therapeutic alliance directly affects outcomes with youth (Norcross & Wampold, 2011). Collins (2018a) argued that cultural self-awareness forms an essential starting place for counsellors to be able to build relationships with clients that are sensitive and responsive to multiple dimensions of cultural identity, including social class. Self-awareness of assumptions and perceptions may allow counsellors to build a stronger therapeutic alliance with members of this population, to avoid alienating youth from impoverished

backgrounds, to contribute to the likelihood of meeting therapeutic goals, and to create more culturally responsive and socially just school counselling systems (Davies et al., 2010). I am very aware of how my own story has shaped my values, including my beliefs about and my compassion for YED. I have had to attend carefully to potential biases emerging from my lived experience. It has been important for me to critique in intentional ways how cultural and systemic barriers have shaped my own life so that I do not internalize and project on my clients a belief that the answer is simply to work hard and make good choices.

I grew up in the same small town that my father did. It was the kind of place where everybody knew everybody else, and if you wanted to make it your business, you could learn more than you had a right to know about anyone. I grew up very aware of class stratification. The same few people held all the power, and they decided the direction of our small town in terms of what services were offered, what roads were built, what buildings were erected, who was worthy of respect, and who was not.

My parents struggled to raise their family of five children. They both had grown up poor. But almost everyone was poor back then, so they were really no different than anyone else. My father is an incredibly smart man, but in those days most boys did not finish school. They stayed home to work on the farm or quit school early and got a job. That is what my dad did. My mother never gave up on her education. She went back to school and got her General Education Diploma (GED) and later became a licensed nursing assistant. Through lots of hard work, my dad built his business from the ground up and eventually had employees of his own. Despite their economic success and their ability to overcome hardship, my parents never forgot to be kind. They treated everyone with dignity and respect, no matter where they came from, who they were, or what their circumstances were. If truth be told, they helped a lot of people along the way; they still do.

They modelled those values for me, and I internalized them. No matter where I find myself in life, there is one constant: I wake up every day feeling grateful for the opportunity I had to go to school, to get an education, and to live this privileged middle-class life that I enjoy with my family. I have self-respect, and I have respect for others. My parents gave me this gift. My outlook on life has come from them. It is because of this background and because of my experience working with vulnerable children over the years that I have this protective instinct to champion the underdog. Not everyone who works hard is lucky enough to escape poverty, as my parents did. I have come to care deeply about social justice and about the well-being of those who are less fortunate than I am. It is from this perspective and this world view that I approach my work.

Everybody has a story. It is our responsibility—as counsellors, educators, and professionals who work with YED—to listen to those stories. To really hear them, however, we also need to become more aware of our own stories. The

problem, which forms the foundation for our arguments in the remainder of this article, is that social class remains largely invisible and that some counsellors hold assumptions, biases, and perceptions related to YED that may pose barriers to the development of the therapeutic alliance, therefore limiting their ability to work effectively with this population. We invite readers to critique their identities, social locations, and lived experiences in order to unearth and deconstruct potentially oppressive socio-cultural discourses about YED and other classist assumptions. It is as important for counsellors to unlearn unhelpful biases as it is to embrace principles and practices that support them to ally with and affirm YED experiences, strengths, and potential. By actively exploring these social class barriers, counsellors will be better prepared to help alleviate the suffering, oppression, stigma, and marginalization experienced by many YED, who are most often born into working-class or poverty-class families. Take a moment to reflect on your own class consciousness or unconsciousness. Where do you position yourself in terms of social class? How does social class influence your values, beliefs, and world views? How might your own social location influence the lenses you bring to your work with YED?

Catching Up With Class

We live in an increasingly multicultural society; therefore, counsellors must be competent to work with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. The importance of considering culture in counselling goes back at least as far as the 1970s (Arthur & Collins, 2014; S. Sue et al., 1975). Counsellors must increase their awareness of the multiple ways in which culture plays out in counselling to effect positive client outcomes (Collins, 2018a; Cook & Lawson, 2016; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019; Norcross & Wampold, 2018). That said, client cultural identity is complex and is composed of multiple intersecting dimensions of culture, some of which may hold more prominence for the client than others. Ahmed et al. (2011) asserted that cultural inquiry is imperative to developing a strong therapeutic alliance. Collins (2018d) concurred with this idea and argued that counsellors should invite dialogue about the cultural dimensions of identity that are salient to each client's presenting concerns.

Social class has been recognized only recently as a cultural factor that has a deep impact on the lives of clients (Lavell, 2018). A consistent definition of social class has eluded researchers in the past and has been a source of confusion; they have struggled to reach a consensus as to exactly what the term encompasses and how it differs from the more discrete, operationalizable variable of SES (Clark et al., 2018; Cook et al., 2020; Cook & Lawson, 2016; Liu et al., 2004; Pope & Arthur, 2009). According to Cook et al. (2020), "Social class is an intricate and complex cultural identity that includes SES factors and how they influence individuals' worldviews, values, beliefs, and ways of being" (p. 104); it may include

experiences of classism and other forms of cultural oppression emergent from intersecting dimensions of personal cultural identity. There is a wealth of research on ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other identity factors (Balmforth, 2009; Clark et al., 2018; Fuller-Rowell et al., 2012). The comparative lack of counselling literature on social class and its exclusion as a variable in other (particularly empirical) research may be related to the difficulty in defining social class (Cook et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2004).

There has also been some debate as to whether social class is indeed an aspect of culture at all (Lee et al., 2013). However, there is an emergent consensus that social class, as defined in the previous paragraph, is an all-encompassing factor that pervades every aspect of an individual's life, and it is now being given more careful attention in conversations about culture in counselling (Clark et al., 2018; Collins, 2018a; Lavell, 2018). It is important for counsellors to be aware of common experiences of working-class and poverty-class clients. It is also important to examine critically, while applying the lens of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991), the ways in which the inequitable distribution of power, structural barriers, and socio-cultural discourses reify classism, colonialism, cisnormativity, and other axes of power at the intersections of social class, age, gender, Indigeneity, and so on (Grzanka et al., 2017; Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). For example, YED with immigrant single mothers may find themselves living in poverty regardless of their class background, as a result of a combination of xenophobia, racism, and sexism (Lam et al., 2020). Social class has traditionally been excluded from this analysis, leaving critical gaps in theory and in practice. The very nature of intersectionality makes it essential to attend to each individual's personal account of their unique lived experience, which necessarily includes social class (Clark et al., 2018; Pope & Arthur, 2009; Smith, 2009; Smith et al., 2013; Thompson et al., 2012).

Critical analysis of social class also necessitates critical consciousness of the social determinant of health, which often foregrounds poverty (Audet et al., 2014; World Health Organization, 2013). Although there has been a tendency in the past to focus on mental health challenges as a function of individual deficit, current research points to the influence of social determinants on health and well-being (Adler et al., 2016; Collins, 2018f; Davies et al., 2010; Paré, 2014; Smith et al., 2013). Many challenges faced by individuals are not inherent but rather are manifestations of social inequity (Ali & Lees, 2013; Collins, 2018f; Lavell, 2014; Paré, 2014; Smith et al., 2013). Therefore, individuals seek counselling for issues that arise as a result of social injustices and unfair distribution of resources (Audet et al., 2014; Blackshaw et al., 2018; Gorski, 2016; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019).

Child Poverty in Canada: Look Beyond the Numbers

YED represent a large percentage of the lower-class population, and the numbers continue to rise. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF

Office of Research, 2016), children account for the greatest percentage of poor people in Canada, a growth trend for the past 3 decades. Canada has among the highest poverty rates in single-adult households with children (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development, 2018). UNICEF reported the relative poverty rate in Canada of children between the ages of 0 and 17 years as 13% (UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2012). Given the growth trend (UNICEF Office of Research, 2016), at least one in seven children is currently living in poverty and is economically disadvantaged. Food Banks Canada (2019) reported:

> Year over year, one of the most shocking statistics to emerge from our HungerCount report is just how deeply children are affected by low incomes and poverty in a country as rich as ours…. Hundreds of thousands of children rely on food banks each month in Canada. These numbers are not only staggering—they are unacceptable. (p. 30)

Youth in families that have sufficient financial means are most often privileged to live in relative comfort, but those facing economic disadvantage and lower social class status often experience a number of adverse effects. Children who grow up in poverty are more likely to be raised by single parents (usually the mother) and to drop out of high school (Dupéré et al., 2019; Hardy, 2006; Russell et al., 2008). YED are at higher risk for teen pregnancy, substance abuse, and to be the victims of violence (Abelev, 2009; Patel et al., 2007). As well, poverty is associated with increased risk of poor mental and physical health (Davies et al., 2010; Evans & Cassells, 2014; Goodman et al., 2010; Levy & O'Hara, 2010; Smith et al., 2013). Those who do not have sufficient financial means often struggle to supply the necessities of food and adequate housing, which is a source of constant tension and family turmoil (Evans & Kim, 2007; Teale & Scott, 2010; Vernon-Feagans et al., 2012). Adolescents of lower SES are more likely to have a parent who suffers from depression and to suffer from depression themselves (Evans & Cassells, 2014; Galea et al., 2007; Levy & O'Hara, 2010). Both people of lower SES and adolescents of any class background are at higher risk of depression, so adolescents who carry the additional risk factor of lower SES are even more vulnerable than their more affluent peers (Coley et al., 2018; Ordaz et al., 2018). Adolescents who experience poverty are more likely to struggle with increased anxiety (Levy & O'Hara, 2010; Pope & Arthur, 2009) and to live in substandard housing in neighbourhoods with more violence and higher crime rates (Hipp & Wickes, 2017). What assumptions have you made about YED in the past? To what degree have you been influenced by a lack of awareness of the structural barriers and social inequities faced by YED?

YED in Schools: Challenges and Opportunities

School counsellors are uniquely positioned to provide culturally appropriate support and to influence in positive ways the lives of YED. Schools are possibly the most influential institutions outside of the family context, and thus they provide an important source of social capital for youth in their formative years (Dufur et al., 2013; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019). They provide young people with an opportunity to develop relationships and networks (Schachner et al., 2016; Wei et al., 2011), which may benefit students well into the future and improve their lives (Bryan et al., 2011; Cappella et al., 2008). Counsellors are able to effect change, solve problems (Bemak & Chung, 2008), and assist students in meeting with success, as a result of broad and far-reaching school guidance programs (Lapan et al., 2007; Noam & Malti, 2008; Wei et al., 2011). Their training and unique positioning within the school context (Wei et al., 2011) enables counsellors to advocate for YED and for social justice more broadly (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007; Havlik et al., 2017; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019).

In spite of their professional role in working with youth, however, school counsellors may lack the competence to work effectively with YED. There are limited studies pertaining specifically to adolescents of low SES in relation to culture and counselling (Balmforth, 2009). Cohen et al. (2006) and Falconnier (2009) illustrated that treatment outcomes with individuals from lower SES backgrounds are less robust than those of their higher socio-economic counterparts. Because it is only in recent years that SES has been studied as a cultural construct (Clark et al., 2018; Lavell, 2018; Pope & Arthur, 2009), the idea of class as a separate representation of culture is evolving and has not yet been explored thoroughly. This leaves counsellors with access to a limited amount of professional literature (Clark et al., 2018; Smyth, 2017) that could help them understand the underlying cultural influences on YED and poses a barrier to culturally responsive counselling and to the creation and delivery of effective programs.

Forming Relationships With YED: Check Your Biases at the Door

The ability to establish a culturally responsive and socially just therapeutic alliance is a strong determining factor in counselling success and a core competency required of all counsellors (Collins, 2018c; Ratts et al., 2015). Therapists from disparate traditions agree on the importance of the therapeutic alliance and the crucial role it plays in influencing positive outcomes (Feinstein et al., 2015; Norcross & Wampold, 2011, 2018). All individuals have a unique and complex cultural identity; therefore, counsellors must recognize that all counselling is inherently multicultural (Collins, 2018c; Paré & Sutherland, 2016; Ratts & Pedersen, 2014). The inability of therapists to form a culturally responsive and socially just therapeutic alliance has been linked to higher rates of client attrition

(Smith et al., 2013; Zack et al., 2007) and is predictive of poor treatment outcomes (Norcross & Wampold, 2011; Zack et al., 2007). Therapists must be able to relate to clients in a way that minimizes power differentials, promotes mutual respect, and builds trust; otherwise, therapists risk alienating their clients (Appio et al., 2013; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016; Santiago et al., 2013).

Practitioners must be mindful that therapeutic conversations take place within the larger social context of the client (Ali & Lees, 2013; Arthur & Collins, 2014; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016; Paré, 2014; Smith et al., 2013). Given social narratives about poverty, social class, and YED specifically, counsellors may hold assumptions, biases, and misperceptions about the social determinants of poverty and social inequality. There is a stigma associated with being poor (Fuller-Rowell et al., 2012; Levy & O'Hara, 2010; Smith et al., 2013; Thompson et al., 2012). Many see people who are living in poverty as being responsible for their difficult circumstances (Mistry et al., 2012; Pope & Arthur, 2009; Smith et al., 2013). Even though there are several systemic, societal contributors to poverty, counsellors often see poverty in an individualistic light, pathologize clients, and assume that poor choices on behalf of the individual are the primary cause of their hardship (Appio et al., 2013; Mistry et al., 2012). Instead of analyzing critically the contribution of contextual and societal factors to poverty, counsellors may blame the victim (Ali & Lees, 2013; Pope & Arthur, 2009; Smith et al., 2013). Therefore, counsellors need to take the initiative to educate themselves about the structural causes of poverty, or they risk becoming susceptible to accepting and internalizing the stereotypical narrative of individual blame, which remains common within counselling psychology (Audet, 2016; Fox et al., 2009; Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2012) and which is promoted in the media (Cook & Lawson, 2016) and in other prominent social discourses (Pemberton et al., 2016).

These misperceptions and biases may lead counsellors to operate in ways that are not culturally responsive or socially just. Few practitioners consider structural causes of individual problems (Ali & Lees, 2013) such as disparities in opportunity or education, job shortages, or non-living wages (Zalaquett & Chambers, 2017). They tend to conceptualize the poor as lazy, uneducated, less intelligent, or lacking good decision-making skills (Krumer-Nevo, 2016; Lavell, 2018; Mistry et al., 2012). Younger children and older adults are seen as less personally culpable (Liu et al., 2004), but societal perceptions of blame start to shift when it comes to adolescents, and YED are perceived to be responsible for their own poverty (Krumer-Nevo, 2016; Liu et al., 2004). Appio et al. (2013) and Pope and Arthur (2009) argued that many in the field of counselling psychology practise classism by ignoring class distinctions as a frame of reference. Often, this is an unconscious process because of practitioners' lack of social class consciousness (Lavell, 2018) or because of their discomfort with the extent of their own privilege. Smith (2005) believed that, as helping professionals, we "avert our gaze from the poor as an unconscious way of preserving our ability to enjoy our relative good fortune amid an unequal distribution of resources" (p. 693).

Applying a systemic lens to building effective relationships with YED also requires attention to the intersections of multiple identities and multiple forms of oppression (Grzanka et al., 2017) of YED and their families. Racialized misogyny, for example, may play a role in assumptions that counsellors hold about immigrant single mothers, who may not conform to dominant individualist ideologies about parenting (Lam et al., 2020). Immigrant single mothers in this study expressed distress at parenting programs that failed to invite forward cultural strengths and knowledge and appeared to be grounded in both patriarchal and racist ideologies of good parenting (Lam et al., 2020). Racialized YED and their parents may be invisibilized or marginalized through the lens of harmful stereotypes such as the model minority construct (i.e., the assumption that Asian North American families are well educated, competitive, and middle or upper class). These stereotypes may become a source of complex intergenerational conflict for YED (Chang, 2018; Duncan & Wong, 2014; Wong, 2018), which requires appreciation of, and self-reflection on, the nuances of racialized classism by school counsellors. Although full examination of the confluence of *isms that may affect YED and their families is beyond the scope of this paper, we invite readers to consider the ways in which these intersections may invisibilize, amplify, or distort their perspectives of and assumptions about YED.

This lack of comprehension or acknowledgement of the systemic barriers that YED face, and the overt or covert expressions of cultural bias that result, prevents counsellors from forming a strong therapeutic alliance and risks alienating this population. It is not surprising that counsellors have been accused of classism, given that most come from middle-class backgrounds and have successfully navigated their way through institutions most accessible to, and congruent in values with, the middle class to further their education and career (Lavell, 2018). Middle-class Caucasian people do not see the difficulties of disenfranchised members of society; they tend to believe that all people have equal access to opportunities (Appio et al., 2013; Cook & Lawson, 2016). Despite the call for cultural sensitivity to Indigeneity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, gender, gender identity, age, and so on (Collins, 2018c; Ratts et al., 2015), this same multicultural awareness has not been sufficiently extended to social class and economic disadvantage (Lavell, 2018; Santiago et al., 2013; Smith, 2005). Unlike racism or sexism, classism often flies below the radar of our collective consciousness, even within the profession of counselling. Without critical, intentional examination and evaluation of classist assumptions and social myths, school counsellors are vulnerable to enacting unintentional bias (Cook & Lawson, 2016; Smith, 2005). Take a moment to reflect on your own position of relative power and privilege in society. How might increasing your awareness of your social location reduce the risk of bias toward YED and open doors to building effective relationships with them?

The Cumulative Power of Not-So-Small Slights: Reinforcing Oppression

Counsellors may unknowingly enact cultural oppression and reinforce experiences of marginalization or stigmatization through words and actions, often in the form of microaggressions toward YED. Microaggressions are intentional or unintentional comments, statements, or actions that serve to denigrate, diminish, and disrespect individuals from non-dominant cultural groups (Collins, 2018e; Cook & O'Hara, 2020). These "subtle and commonplace indignities communicate to recipients that they are less than dominant culture individuals, that they do not belong, and that their realities are invalid" (O'Hara & Cook, 2018, p. 255). Microaggressions toward YED by school counsellors and other staff reflect a lack of cultural self-awareness or understanding of the impact of social location (i.e., relative positioning within society based on social class) on YED (Lavell 2018, 2019; Wintner et al., 2017; Zalaquett & Chambers, 2017). For example, making culturally insensitive comments to YED (e.g., implying that if they just made better choices, they would have the same opportunities as their more affluent peers) serves to widen the already significant cultural expanse between middle-class counsellors and YED (Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019). In fact, microaggressions may contribute to allostatic load, a term referring to cumulative physiological harm as a result of repeated and sustained exposure to stress. Increased allostatic load, present in children who grow up in poverty, is predictive of negative health outcomes over time (Evans & Kim, 2012; Schulz et al., 2012). Given the negative impacts of microaggressions by school staff toward students marginalized by social class, it is important for these experiences to be studied and addressed (Wintner et al., 2017). Dominant groups in society, including school counsellors, can raise awareness of the negative effects of microaggressions by identifying them, challenging the damaging messages they convey, and refusing to accept them as part of normative social discourses (Krumer-Nevo, 2016; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019).

It's All About You: Self-Awareness as a Starting Point

Counsellors need to be aware of their own personal cultural identities and social locations, including ethnocentric world views, power, and privilege, which may form roadblocks to developing a strong therapeutic alliance with YED (Bray & Schommer-Aikins, 2015; Collins, 2018f; Gorski, 2016). Because most counsellors are from the middle classes, there is a difference between their cultural socialization and that of individuals from working or poverty classes (Appio et al., 2013; Lavell, 2018, 2019; Vontress, 2011). This cultural divergence might be likened to two people, each speaking a different language while attempting to communicate with each other. It is a barrier to initiating and maintaining a positive therapeutic alliance that must be overcome.

White, middle-class counsellors tend to come from less diverse communities (Lavell, 2018) and may be unaware that their privilege, status, and social class constitute a specific lens through which they view clients (Vontress, 2011; Zalaquett & Chambers, 2017). As noted earlier, a foundational multicultural competency is counsellor self-awareness (Collins, 2018a; Collins & Arthur, 2010b; Ratts et al., 2015). Counsellors must have a true sense of their own biases, assumptions, and world views in order to work effectively with diverse client populations and to avoid cultural encapsulation (i.e., viewing everyone and everything through their cultural lens; Arthur & Collins, 2015; Collins, 2018a). Otherwise, their attitudes and beliefs may have a negative effect on their views of people who are different from them in some way (e.g., ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender, age, ability, gender identity, social class; Appio et al., 2013; Chu et al., 2016). They must intentionally foster a non-judgmental stance that involves "suspending and being cautious not to superimpose their own values, beliefs, and assumptions" (Collins, 2018e, p. 976) on youth who are already being routinely marginalized.

More work is required to explore counsellors' inner biases and to challenge and amend existing biases to lessen their impact on the counselling relationship (Foss-Kelly et al., 2017; Ratts et al., 2016). Counsellors can develop self-awareness through engaging in self-reflective practices (Audet, 2016; Collins, 2018a; Ratts et al., 2015). Self-awareness involves a continuous and lifelong journey. Attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions change over time as a result of, and in reaction to, our lived experiences (Collins, 2018a). Counsellors, particularly those who hold dominant cultural identities, need to be mindful of their unique intersecting cultural identities and acknowledge the subjectivity of their own world views (Audet, 2016; Chu et al., 2016; Gergen, 2015). Counsellors need to ask themselves, "Now that I have this self-awareness, what do I do with it?"

The Invisibility and Inescapability of Social Class

Social class begins shaping us even before we leave the womb (Gorski, 2013). Among the kaleidoscope of intersecting cultural identities we possess, social class is universal (Clark et al., 2018). Our social class membership is fundamental to how we develop and how we negotiate our environment. It determines the level of participation in society available to us (Clark et al., 2018; Krumer-Nevo, 2016; Zalaquett & Chambers, 2017). One of the biggest challenges for school counsellors working with YED is to comprehend fully the pervasiveness of this aspect of YED's cultural identity, how it manifests itself in contrast and in relation to school norms, and the resultant challenges to personal development, emotional well-being, and school success (Foss-Kelly et al., 2017; Gorski, 2018; Lavell, 2019; Smyth, 2017).

Social class is largely invisible. Counsellors may readily recognize cultural barriers and acculturation processes faced by more visible non-dominant populations such as immigrant or refugee children as they enter school (Berry & Hou, 2016; Schachner et al., 2016), but they may not see that YED navigate a similar and equally challenging transition process as they move from one cultural context to the next (Foss-Kelly et al., 2017; Lavell, 2019; Smyth, 2017).

Research has shown that immigrant youth face numerous challenges as they enter the school system. These include the impact of personal histories of violence and trauma, limited access to proper medical care, reliance on tentative housing, food insecurity, and other forms of pragmatic and social marginalization (Marshall et al., 2016; Schachner et al., 2016; Sibley & Brabeck, 2017). The same could be said of youth from poverty-class or working-class backgrounds. Many have also witnessed or been subjected to abuse and violence, housing and food insecurity, substandard medical care, and so on (Abelev, 2009; Fuller-Rowell et al., 2012; Hipp & Wickes, 2017; Patel et al., 2007). As a result of these contextual or systemic factors, both groups are at greater risk of mental and behavioural problems (Fuller-Rowell et al., 2012; Marshall et al., 2016). Nonetheless, as an invisible cultural group, YED are not as easily identified or acknowledged as members of a distinct cultural group or as undergoing an acculturation process similar in magnitude to students from more visible non-dominant populations (Smyth, 2017). In addition, misattribution of causation and responsibility to the adolescent, as opposed to the social context, increases the invisibility of social class and marginalization of these students (Ali & Lees, 2013; Pope & Arthur, 2009; Smith et al., 2013). As a result, they may not receive the same care and attention during this transition as those from more visible non-dominant groups with similar acculturation stressors. Smyth (2017) condemned the neglect of YED, asserting that "continuing to treat social class as if it were invisible and does not exist in schooling, is no longer a viable option" (p. 214).

School is an important developmental and acculturation context for adolescents (Schachner et al., 2016). Children from working-class and poverty-class backgrounds leave the familiarity of their own environment and enter an institutionalized educational setting based on middle-class culture and values that are foreign to their own (Lavell, 2019; Smyth, 2017). They share physical characteristics and language with members of the dominant group, but their social class status puts them at a disadvantage as they try to fit in. These students are often marginalized and subjected to bullying; they may also internalize the judgments they receive from both dominant-class children and school personnel as a personal failing (Lavell, 2018, 2019; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019; Smyth, 2017). As evidenced in Jessie's story earlier in this article, this ostracizing or *othering* of students from impoverished backgrounds gives rise to feelings of shame and low self-esteem (Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019; Pemberton et al., 2016; Smyth, 2017).

Jessie didn't show up for the meeting with the school counsellor. It was scheduled during the last class of the day, but Jessie didn't make it that far. After lunch Jessie had CEO (Career Exploration and Opportunities). The teacher asked students to work in groups, to discuss their parents' career paths, and to make a collage together of key takeaways they might apply to their own future careers. Jessie immediately thought of her grandmother who, in spite of leaving school and getting married at 16, had read everything she could get her hands on. Jessie could talk with her grandmother about anything.

Things took a turn for Jessie when she was put in a group with another student who was always trash-talking her. This student immediately began to make derogatory comments about Jessie's mother, including how "she only knew how to drink, live off EI, and go through boyfriends." She asked the other group members: "What can we take away from that?"

Jessie didn't want to get into more trouble, so she bit her tongue. Eventually the group got bored, and the others began to talk about their parents: a fire chief, a store manager, a stay-at-home parent with a child care business, two potato farmers, and a school principal. Jessie did not participate, because deep down, she felt shame. When it came to Jessie's turn, the bell rang, sparing her from the need to respond.

Jessie left the school by a side door and headed down an alley where she often stopped to pick up cans on the way home. Today, Jessie didn't bother. She had no home to go to.

Jessie's story provides a glimpse into the structured learning and interpersonal barriers that arise for YED in school as well as the potential ripple effects on missed opportunities for both amplifying the strengths and resiliency emergent from their stories and ensuring access to supportive services. We invite counsellors to increase their awareness of the pervasive impact that social class has on YED in school settings (Cook & Lawson, 2016; Lavell, 2018) and to acknowledge that membership in the poverty class carries with it a set of fundamental cultural differences that set YED apart from their dominant social class peers (Lavell, 2018; Smyth, 2017). This includes recognizing YED as a unique cultural group with distinct characteristics that affect how they experience and interact with others in the school environment (Lavell, 2018; Smyth, 2017). Imagine if Jessie's class assignment had begun with a values exploration activity that explicitly included common working-class values: self-sufficiency, relationality, co-operation, hard work, communal ethic, being others-oriented, and showing respect (Lavell, 2018). How might this have engaged Jessie (and others) in foregrounding otherwise invisibilized assets of working-class culture?

Given the invisibility of YED as a unique cultural group, it may be useful for counsellors to conceive of social class differences in a similar manner to those of other, more visible groups such as new immigrants. Cultural differences attributed to social class are every bit as real, profound, and difficult to navigate as those experienced by individuals in more visible groups. What is more, these differences

are often compounded by invisibility. Even if YED are likewise members of more easily identifiable non-dominant groups (e.g., refugees, immigrants, persons with different abilities), social class differences may be masked by other, more visible identity markers. By fostering this social class consciousness (Lavell, 2018, 2019), counsellors may increase their empathy more easily, appreciate the depth of struggle these youth face, and develop a framework from which they can respond to challenges faced by YED.

Applied Practice Implications: Approaches to Working With YED

Both critical and feminist theories aim to deconstruct and challenge oppressive discourses and systemic sources of oppression that promote inequality and a lack of opportunity for marginalized populations (Brown, 2010; Creswell, 2013; Enns et al., 2012; Fox et al., 2009; Glesne, 2011; Smith, 2005). These theoretical lenses frame the discussion that follows. We also draw from the same conceptual frameworks related to multicultural counselling and social justice (Collins, 2018c; Collins & Arthur, 2010a, 2010b; Ratts et al., 2015) that we used in interpreting the existing counselling literature to suggest how best to serve the needs of YED in school settings, taking into consideration the contextual complexity of their lived experiences and world views. Applying these lenses necessitates change at the micro (i.e., individual work with YED), meso (i.e., families, schools, and community), and macro levels (i.e., broader social, economic, and political systems; Collins, 2018c). Counsellors are often on the front lines of support for YED and require competencies to address their needs at all levels of intervention (Havlik et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2011).

Change Processes at the Micro Level: Meeting YED Where They Are

Using the knowledge gained about themselves and their clients through our detailed review of the professional literature above, counsellors can begin to bridge cultural gaps by developing culturally sensitive and socially just (Collins, 2018c) relational practices and interventions to support YED. Counsellors may intervene at the micro level through individual counselling that focuses on empowering YED to identify class-based barriers, implementing strategies to overcome those barriers, assisting YED to meet basic needs, and helping them locate additional resources to address personal, interpersonal, and contextual challenges.

Consider the story of Jessie, presented earlier. Her experience would typically be conceptualized from a purely behavioural perspective, looking at how Jessie should alter her actions to conform to school expectations. Considering the underlying contextual factors opens the door for a more socially just and culturally responsive way of responding, first by “hearing” the message that Jessie is actually sending: She is (a) overwhelmed and beyond her ability to cope and

(b) facing both learning design and interpersonal barriers to engagement. To be able to receive these underlying messages, counsellors must embrace the class consciousness and cultural self-awareness highlighted in our review of professional literature.

Recent research has highlighted specific factors that may prove beneficial to working with YED like Jessie. Students from low-income households identified strong peer and adult relationships from school, family, and community as helping them to succeed despite their disadvantage (Williams et al., 2017). These factors are echoed by other authors (Lavell, 2018; Sheehan & Rall, 2011; Smyth, 2017). It is not surprising that YED referred to various caring relationships as being central to helping them cope, given that relational factors arise consistently as substantive contributors to counselling outcomes (Feinstein et al., 2015; Norcross & Wampold, 2018). In my (Shelly Mann) experience, the ability of counsellors to reflect working-class values of honesty, directness, and open communication (Lavell, 2018; Thelin, 2019) in an empathic and authentic way is key to building trust, fostering hope, and engaging YED in a collaborative, therapeutic relationship to set goals and work toward positive change. Using a strengths-based perspective (Houshmand et al., 2017; Scheel et al., 2018), counsellors can help YED to re-story their experiences and to point out the unique strengths that they possess and that have helped them to persevere despite hardship (Foss-Kelly et al., 2017). Recognizing that they have already overcome so much may help foster hope and may increase feelings of empowerment in YED.

In a qualitative study on school counsellors' work with students experiencing homelessness, Havlik et al. (2017) identified two main themes: (a) school counsellors are often the primary (i.e., first and main) source of support for these students and (b) they may feel discouraged by the complex nature and the scope of problems brought forward by YED and struggle with a sense of powerlessness to make a meaningful difference. Like Jessie, counsellors may feel overwhelmed by systemic forces of oppression on YED and struggle to find a starting place for change. However, one of the most important things counsellors can do is to listen (Lavell, 2018; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019; Zalaquett & Chambers, 2017). As Lavell (2019) stated, "Never underestimate the healing power of being heard. Listening well, and with respect, to a kid who has never felt heard is intervention" (p. 86). Listening to young people's stories of the struggles they face growing up in poverty creates empathy and can counter deficit thinking by counsellors (Gorski, 2013).

Researchers and theorists have espoused the value of openness and transparency in building relationships with clients (Enns, 2004; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016; Ko et al., 2021b; Lewis et al., 2011). Lavell (2018) pointed out that part of working-class culture involves sharing stories and communicating openly about experiences, which requires storytellers to make themselves vulnerable.

These youth *are* already in a vulnerable position by virtue of the contextual and systemic barriers they face and the potential for socio-cultural discourses about social class to introduce biases within counselling and educational systems. They are looking for counsellors who will take time, listen to their stories, and share stories of their own. Lavell (2019) shared that YED appreciated her honesty, her candour, and the personal stories she shared through self-disclosure. They felt heard and understood. YED can spend their school careers feeling invisible. Empathy and compassion begin to counteract their marginalization.

Ko et al. (2021b) positioned listening as a foundational skill at the micro level that includes both (a) giving your full attention to what the client is sharing and (b) attending to the context of what clients say to support a client-centred stance. Even if the only process of change counsellors employ is to listen and to honour the experiences of YED, including the challenges they face at personal, interpersonal, and contextual levels, they will have made a positive difference. Knowing that someone sees their struggles is, in and of itself, therapeutic (Kassan, 2019; Kassan & Sinacore, 2016; Ko et al., 2021b; Lavell, 2019).

When Jessie doesn't show up for her counselling session, the counsellor talks with the teacher who expresses concerns about Jessie's home life and about her basic health and safety needs. The counsellor comes in early the next day and finds Jessie huddled under the stairs near the front of the school. There is a breakfast place around the corner, so the counsellor invites Jessie to meet there in ten minutes, deliberately leaving the choice to show up, or not, with Jessie to foster empowerment and a sense of agency. For the next week, they meet for breakfast each day. By the end of the week, they have drafted some preliminary steps to enhance Jessie's personal and interpersonal safety and to meet Jessie's basic needs for housing and food. Jessie attends classes all week for the first time in months.

Change Processes at the Meso Level: Meeting in the Middle

School counselling progresses naturally to change at the meso level when counsellors extend their work with YED to include families, the school community, and other partner agencies; collaborative initiatives offer synergies to address student needs better (Lewis et al., 2011). Counsellors often receive specialized training in multicultural competencies (Collins, 2018e; Scheel et al., 2018), but less training is available to teachers, administrators, and other school personnel. Ko et al. (2021a) argued that applying a contextualized, systemic lens to understanding client challenges "begins with disrupting the assumptions that the cause of client distress is intrapsychic or even interpersonal" (Contextualizing Challenges and Preferences section, para. 1). Counsellors can educate others about the impact of social class discrimination for YED within the school environment by

creating programs and opportunities to draw attention to differences in privilege between dominant and non-dominant groups. They can identify the fundamental challenges that YED face at the contextual or systemic levels, which other staff may not have previously considered, making transparent the connections to, and impact on, academic performance, behaviour, and attendance (Amatea & West-Olatunji, 2007). Professional development opportunities that apply a social justice lens to deconstruct and challenge cultural assumptions and biases may foster empathy and understanding and may lead to further dialogue about helpful strategies to create more inclusive, contextualized counselling and learning experiences in support of YED.

A second step is to apply this systemic lens to programs specifically targeting YED and their families. Both YED and their parents/guardians may choose not to access counselling and other services because they have experienced discrimination based on SES or social class in the past or because these services are set up in ways that do not accommodate their working-class or poverty-class lives. School personnel need to be careful not to marginalize YED further despite their best intentions by implementing misguided programs that result in unintentional stigmatization (Gorski, 2016; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019). Because of the scope of their challenges, it can take a disproportionate amount of time for school staff to address the needs of YED. Mazzoli Smith and Todd (2019) encouraged schools to use an equity lens to look critically at their current programs and policies as a step toward removing social class biases, identifying areas where they are unintentionally stigmatizing YED, and assessing their efficacy in meeting the needs of all students. As noted earlier, foregrounding working-class values and norms will make policies and programs more meaningful and responsive to YED. Although it may be challenging for school staff to find time to do a comprehensive audit of school programs, it may save time in the long term by allowing staff to increase their awareness of social class effects, to challenge negative discourses, and to adjust current practices proactively in order to increase effectiveness (Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019).

In the same way that counsellors can engage students through open and honest communication, they can also empower parents of YED to identify and support initiatives that make meaningful change. Counsellors need to persevere through attempts to recruit working-class parents and to be sensitive to the possibility that parents of YED may be reluctant to engage in dialogue because of previous negative experiences within the school system (Bryan & Henry, 2012). Working collaboratively with families, counsellors can elicit answers to questions regarding how best to respond to the needs of YED and their families. Parents of YED are experts on the lived experiences of their children and know the unique challenges that they face due to poverty, both inside and outside of school. Counsellors can gain insight into how to mitigate barriers and roadblocks faced by YED (e.g., food

and housing security, interpersonal safety) and their parents or guardians (e.g., challenges attending meetings or accessing resources due to work demands, transportation issues, and child care availability and cost) to enhance YED wellness and academic success and to build a network of support around YED (Dupéré et al., 2019; Evans & Cassells, 2014; Hipp & Wickes, 2017; Kim et al., 2017).

Counsellors are well-positioned to be leaders in schools in confronting long-held myths about working-class youth and adults. School staff can engage parents of YED by inviting feedback before there is a problem, holding parent-teacher conferences at flexible times or over the phone, and enlisting parents' help in identifying and overcoming barriers of which staff may not even be aware. Parents' absence from school events does not equate with disinterest. Counsellors need to be aware of common barriers (e.g., lack of child care or transportation, working multiple jobs) that might result in parents not being able to participate fully in their child's education, rather than make assumptions about parenting styles or parent-child relationships (Lavell, 2018). There is no evidence to support the notion that working-class parents do not value education. Counsellors need to problem-solve around situations that paint YED and their parents in a negative light and to concern themselves with removing barriers, rather than teach resilience to students and families who already demonstrate it every day (Gorski, 2016; Lavell, 2018).

Counsellor education is another change focus at the meso level to support school counsellors in developing self-awareness and responsivity to YED. Counsellor education programs have traditionally reflected middle-class values and been accessible primarily to those in the middle class (Collins, 2018b; Lavell, 2018). It is important for counsellor educators to reflect critically on ways to increase accessibility to counsellor training for applicants from working- or poverty-class backgrounds or those who are financially limited due to other forms of discrimination and marginalization. Transforming the diversity of social class background within the profession of counselling and within schools will enhance insider perspectives on YED needs as well as increase the inherent capacity to engage YED in culturally responsive and socially just ways.

In addition, the lack of attention to social class in the counselling literature carries forward into most counsellor education programs. Lavell (2018) recommended positioning "class consciousness as foundational to multicultural counselling" (p. 171). Attention should be paid to class assumptions, biases, and relationships by integrating social class into multicultural counselling and by infusing this lens throughout the curriculum (Collins, 2018e; Scheel et al., 2018). In this article, we focused specifically on relationship-building with YED. However, attention to differences between dominant and non-dominant class values may be an important consideration in ethical decision-making (Lavell, 2018, 2019). These values are also expressed through communication patterns

(Lavell, 2018) that influence the responsive use of counselling micro skills, techniques, and styles (e.g., directive versus non-directive; Ko et al., 2021b). Attending to class world views and social locations is also a critical element of culturally responsive and socially just conceptualizations of client challenges and preferred futures (Ko et al., 2021b).

Advocacy at the Macro Level: Making Your Voice Heard

Finally, there is a greater call for counsellors to become intentional advocates for change and social justice at the macro level by petitioning social institutions, lobbying governments, and seeking to influence legislation to effect change in public policies that marginalize non-dominant members of society and perpetuate inequity (Collins, 2018c; Lee et al., 2013; Lewis et al., 2011). Intersectionality theory foregrounds interdisciplinary collaboration as a means to enhance critical analysis of, and to dismantle, siloed ways of thinking about change, particularly systems-level change (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). School counsellors can engage with social workers, public health practitioners, and other community service providers to open doors to creative, multi-level approaches to meeting the diverse needs to YED, their families, and their communities (e.g., food security programs, housing initiatives, job resources). Although some counsellors may feel ill-prepared or under-resourced to advance systems-level change initiatives, social justice action is often best approached from a team perspective. Interprofessional and interdisciplinary collaboration offers the benefits of building allies, sharing resources, offering mutual support, and identifying synergies (Collins, 2018e).

Through their daily contact with students, school counsellors are in a position to become both advocates and agents of change and to use their substantial social capital to articulate the challenges and barriers that YED face in their everyday lives and to advocate effectively on their behalf (Havlik et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2011). By first establishing respectful, responsive, and trusting working alliances with YED, school counsellors are also uniquely positioned to identify and help YED navigate barriers accessing community resources that may result from internalized classism (Lavell, 2018).

Over the next few weeks, the counsellor works with Jessie to explore her resiliency, inviting conversations about the people, starting with Jessie's grandmother, who have modelled values and strengths on which Jessie can continue to draw. They also examine in a gentle way how negative stereotypes and classist biases have been internalized by Jessie and deconstruct the shame that hides beneath her anger about being bullied. They work together to reframe Jessie's hesitation to access community services as a positive reflection of her fierce self-reliance. Jessie decides to view these services as tools, no different from textbooks, that she can choose to access in order to support her basic needs.

Final Reflections

Applying the lenses of critical and feminist theory and of current models of culturally responsive and socially just counselling to this literature review allowed us to position the experiences of YED within the framework of social determinants of health and to challenge dominant and life-limiting socio-cultural narratives and discourses. We invite counsellors to become better educated about the cultural realities of working-class and poverty-class youth. Empathy can be fostered and communicated through increased awareness and understanding to help build a strong therapeutic alliance (Appio et al., 2013; Chu et al., 2016; Davies et al., 2010). Counsellors can begin to understand the lived experiences of marginalized youth by taking the time to listen to their voices and stories (Clark et al., 2018; Lavell, 2018; Mazzoli Smith & Todd, 2019). Along with this increased cultural awareness, it is important for counsellors to increase their self-awareness about their own internal dialogues regarding YED and other oppressed populations (Audet et al., 2014; Brady-Amoon, 2011; Prilleltensky, 2008).

School counsellors are well-positioned, and have a significant responsibility, to aid and empower youth who experience oppression and lack of opportunity based on economic disadvantage. D. W. Sue et al. (2019) reflected on the need to take action "regarding the appalling worldwide silence and inaction of people in the face of injustice, hatred, and oppression directed toward socially marginalized group members" (p. 128). Within the walls of our schools, YED experience stigmatization and daily discrimination based on social class. Reliable and class-conscious adults in the educational system who truly see, hear, and support YED are crucial to helping them overcome barriers to success as they grow into adulthood. By foregrounding the social determinants of many of these barriers, we argue for counsellor engagement beyond individualized therapeutic support to take up the challenge of advocacy and social change (Ali & Lees, 2013; Arthur & Collins, 2014; Bemak & Chung, 2005; Galassi & Akos, 2004; Ortiz & Jani, 2010; Prilleltensky, 2008; Ratts, 2009; Steele, 2008). Counsellors must recognize the systemic barriers faced by YED and their families and promote systems-level changes through engagement with societal institutions and policies that perpetuate oppression (Ali & Lees, 2013; Arthur & Collins, 2014; Ortiz & Jani, 2010; Prilleltensky, 2008). They have a responsibility to give a voice to these youth (Ali & Lees, 2013; Audet et al., 2014; Smith, 2005).

Because of the dearth of research on social class generally and on YED specifically, further research on economic disadvantage as a cultural construct is needed to raise awareness of the discrimination experienced by those who live in poverty (Ali & Lees, 2013; Smith, 2005; Smith et al., 2013). In keeping with the overall theme of this article, we invite researchers to choose methodologies that foreground the voices of YED and that function as social justice initiatives (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). Participatory action research, for example, is designed not

only to engage YED and their families in articulating the challenges they face but also to empower them to collaborate actively in order to generate culturally responsive change. We also encourage researchers to continue to examine the challenges and barriers faced by disenfranchised populations such as YED and to look for ways that helping professionals can be more effective in their efforts to assist and advocate for those who are economically disadvantaged (Cholewa & Smith-Adcock; 2013; Smith, 2005; Vera & Speight, 2003).

References

Abelev, M. S. (2009). Advancing out of poverty: Social class worldview and its relation to resilience. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *24*(1), 114–141. https://doi.org/10.1177/0743558408328441

Adler, N. E., Glymour, M. M., & Fielding, J. (2016). Addressing social determinants of health and health inequalities. *JAMA*, *316*(16), 1641–1642. https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2016.14058

Ahmed, S., Wilson, K. B., Henriksen, R. C., Jr., & Jones, J. W. (2011). What does it mean to be a culturally-competent counselor? *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, *3*(1), 17–28. https://doi.org/10.33043/JSACP.3.1.17-28

Ali, A., & Lees, K. E. (2013). The therapist as advocate: Anti-oppression advocacy in psychological practice. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *69*(2), 162–171. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21955

Amatea, E. S., & West-Olatunji, C. A. (2007). Joining the conversation about educating our poorest children: Emerging leadership roles for school counselors in high-poverty schools. *Professional School Counseling*, *11*(2), 81–89. https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X0701100202

Appio, L., Chambers, D.-A., & Mao, S. (2013). Listening to the voices of the poor and disrupting the silence about class issues in psychotherapy. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *69*(2), 152–161. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21954

Arthur, N., & Collins, S. (2014). Counsellors, counselling, and social justice: The professional is political. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *48*(2), 171–177. https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/view/61030

Arthur, N., & Collins, S. (2015). Culture-infused counselling and psychotherapy. In L. Martin, B. Shepard, & R. Lehr (Eds.), *Canadian counselling and psychotherapy experience: Ethics-based issues and cases* (pp. 277–303). Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association.

Audet, C. (2016). Social justice and advocacy in a Canadian context. In N. Gazzola, M. Buchanan, O. Sutherland, & S. Nuttgens (Eds.), *Handbook of counselling and psychotherapy in Canada* (pp. 95–122). Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association.

Audet, C., Collins, S., Jay, M., Irvine, K., Hill-Lehr, A., & Schmolke, C. (2014). Poverty, mental health, and counsellors for social justice: Reflections on an interactive workshop. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *48*(3), 321–342. https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/view/60036

Balmforth, J. (2009). "The weight of class": Clients' experiences of how perceived differences in social class between counsellor and client affect the therapeutic relationship. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, *37*(3), 375–386. https://doi.org/10.1080/03069880902956942

Bemak, F., & Chung, R. C.-Y. (2005). Advocacy as a critical role for urban school counselors: Working toward equity and social justice. *Professional School Counseling*, *8*(3), 196–202.

Bemak, F., & Chung, R. C.-Y. (2008). New professional roles and advocacy strategies for school counselors: A multicultural/social justice perspective to move beyond the nice counselor syndrome. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *86*(3), 372–381. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2008.tb00522.x

Berry, J. W., & Hou, F. (2016). Immigrant acculturation and wellbeing in Canada. *Canadian Psychology*, *57*(4), 254–264. https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000064

Blackshaw, E., Evans, C., & Cooper, M. (2018). When life gets in the way: Systematic review of life events, socioeconomic deprivation, and their impact on counselling and psychotherapy with children and adolescents. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, *18*(2), 143–153. https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12156

Brady-Amoon, P. (2011). Humanism, feminism, and multiculturalism: Essential elements of social justice in counseling, education, and advocacy. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, *50*(2), 135–148. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1939.2011.tb00113.x

Bray, S. S., & Schommer-Aikins, M. (2015). School counselors' ways of knowing and social orientation in relationship to poverty beliefs. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *93*(3), 312–320. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12029

Browman, A. S., Destin, M., Kearney, M. S., & Levine, P. B. (2019). How economic inequality shapes mobility expectations and behaviour in disadvantaged youth. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *3*(3), 214–220. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-018-0523-0

Brown, L. S. (2010). *Feminist therapy*. American Psychological Association.

Bryan, J., & Henry, L. (2012). A model for building school–family–community partnerships: Principles and process. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *90*(4), 408–420. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2012.00052.x

Bryan, J., Moore-Thomas, C., Day-Vines, N. L., & Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2011). School counselors as social capital: The effects of high school college counseling on college application rates. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *89*(2), 190–199. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00077.x

Bullock, H. E., Griffin, K. M., Kent, A. H., & Toolis, E. E. (2018). Translating psychological research on social class and socioeconomic status. *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, *4*(2), 119–121. https://doi.org/10.1037/tps0000160

Cappella, E., Frazier, S. L., Atkins, M. S., Schoenwald, S. K., & Glisson, C. (2008). Enhancing schools' capacity to support children in poverty: An ecological model of school-based mental health services. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, *35*(5), 395–409. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-008-0182-y

Chang, J. (2018). Culturally responsive and socially just program development: Inviting community competencies. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 797–822). Counselling Concepts.

Cholewa, B., & Smith-Adcock, S. (2013). Counseling families in poverty: Moving from paralyzing to revitalizing. *Michigan Journal of Counseling*, *39*(2), 13–27. https://doi.org/10.22237/mijoc/1356998520

Chu, J., Leino, A., Pflum, S., & Sue, S. (2016). A model for the theoretical basis of cultural competency to guide psychotherapy. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, *47*(1), 18–29. https://doi.org/10.1037/pro0000055

Clark, M., Cook, J. M., Nair, D., & Wojcik, K. (2018). A content analysis of social class in ACA journals from 2000 to 2016. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, *9*(1), 16–27. https://doi.org/10.1080/21501378.2017.1409599

Class Action. (2015a). *Class definitions*. https://classism.org/class-definitions/

Class Action. (2015b). *What is classism*. https://classism.org/about-class/what-is-classism/

Cohen, A., Houck, P. R., Szanto, K., Dew, M. A., Gilman, S. E., & Reynolds, C. F., III. (2006). Social inequalities in response to antidepressant treatment in older adults. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, *63*(1), 50–56. https://doi.org/10.1001/archpsyc.63.1.50

Coley, R. L., Sims, J., Dearing, E., & Spielvogel, B. (2018). Locating economic risks for adolescent mental and behavioral health: Poverty and affluence in families, neighborhoods, and schools. *Child Development*, *89*(2), 360–369. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12771

Collins, S. (2018a). The cultural embeddedness of counselling: Appreciating the complexity and intersectionality of client-counsellor cultural identities. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 52–114). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S. (2018b). Culturally responsive and socially just change processes: Implementing and evaluating micro, meso, and macrolevel interventions. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 689–770). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S. (2018c). Culturally responsive and socially just (CRSJ) counselling: Principles and practices. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 2–20). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S. (2018d). Culturally responsive and socially just relational practices: Facilitating transformation through connection. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 441–505). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S. (2018e). Enhanced, interactive glossary. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 868–1086). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S. (2018f). The impact of social injustice: Client-counsellor social locations. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 179–274). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S., & Arthur, N. (2010a). Culture-infused counselling: A framework for multicultural competence. In N. Arthur & S. Collins (Eds.), *Culture-infused counselling* (2nd ed., pp. 45–65). Counselling Concepts.

Collins, S., & Arthur, N. (2010b). Culture-infused counselling: A fresh look at a classic framework of multicultural counselling competencies. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, *23*(2), 203–216. https://doi.org/10.1080/09515071003798204

Cook, J. M., Clark, M., Wojcik, K., Nair, D., Baillargeon, T., & Kowalik, E. (2020). A 17-year systematic content analysis of social class and socioeconomic status in two counseling journals. *Counseling Outcome Research and Evaluation*, *11*(2), 104–118. https://doi.org/10.1080/21501378.2019.1647409

Cook, J. M., & Lawson, G. (2016). Counselors' social class and socioeconomic status understanding and awareness. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *94*(4), 442–453. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12103

Cook, J. M., & O'Hara, C. C. (2020). An emerging theory of the persistence of social class microaggressions: An interpretative phenomenological study. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, *33*(4), 516–540. https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2019.1596880

Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, *43*(6), 1241–1299. https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Davies, E., Crothers, C., & Hanna, K. (2010). Preventing child poverty: Barriers and solutions. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, *39*(2), 20–31. https://www.psychology.org.nz/journal-archive/NZJP-Vol392-2010-3-Davies.pdf

Delanty, G. (2019). The future of capitalism: Trends, scenarios and prospects for the future. *Journal of Classical Sociology*, *19*(1), 10–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468795X18810569

Dufur, M. J., Parcel, T. L., & Troutman, K. P. (2013). Does capital at home matter more than capital at school? Social capital effects on academic achievement. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, *31*, 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rssm.2012.08.002

Duncan, P., & Wong, G. (2014). Mothering in East Asian communities: Challenges and possibilities. In A. O'Reilly (Ed.), *Mothers, mothering and motherhood across cultural differences: A reader* (pp. 161–181). Demeter Press.

Dupéré, V., Dion, E., Leventhal, T., Crosnoe, R., Goulet, M., & Archambault, I. (2019). Circumstances preceding dropout among rural high school students: A comparison with urban peers. *Journal of Research in Rural Education*, *35*, Article 3. https://doi.org/10.26209/jrre3503

Enns, C. Z. (2004). *Feminist theories and feminist psychotherapies: Origins, themes, and diversity* (2nd ed.). Haworth Press.

Enns, C. Z., Williams, E. N., & Fassinger, R. E. (2012). Feminist multicultural psychology: Evolution, change, and challenge. In E. N. Williams & C. Z. Enns (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of feminist multicultural counseling psychology* (pp. 3–23). https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199744220.013.0001

Evans, G. W., & Cassells, R. C. (2014). Childhood poverty, cumulative risk exposure, and mental health in emerging adults. *Clinical Psychological Science*, *2*(3), 287–296. https://doi.org/10.1177/2167702613501496

Evans, G. W., & Kim, P. (2007). Childhood poverty and health: Cumulative risk exposure and stress dysregulation. *Psychological Science*, *18*(11), 953–957. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2007.02008.x

Evans, G. W., & Kim, P. (2012). Childhood poverty and young adults' allostatic load: The mediating role of childhood cumulative risk exposure. *Psychological Science*, *23*(9), 979–983. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612441218

Falconnier, L. (2009). Socioeconomic status in the treatment of depression. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *79*(2), 148–158. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015469

Fegert, J. M., Vitiello, B., Plener, P. L., & Clemens, V. (2020). Challenges and burden of the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic for child and adolescent mental health: A narrative review to highlight clinical and research needs in the acute phase and the long return to normality. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Mental Health*, *14*, Article 20. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13034-020-00329-3

Feinstein, R., Heiman, N., & Yager, J. (2015). Common factors affecting psychotherapy outcomes: Some implications for teaching psychotherapy. *Journal of Psychiatric Practice*, *21*(3), 180–189. https://doi.org/10.1097/PRA.0000000000000064

Food Banks Canada. (2019). *HungerCount 2019 report*. https://foodbank.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Huger-Count-2019-Report-1.pdf

Foss-Kelly, L. L., Generali, M. M., & Kress, V. E. (2017). Counseling strategies for empowering people living in poverty: The I-CARE model. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *45*(3), 201–213. https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12074

Fox, D., Prilleltensky, I., & Austin, S. (2009). Critical psychology for social justice: Concerns and dilemmas. In D. Fox, I. Prilleltensky, & S. Austin (Eds.), *Critical psychology: An introduction* (2nd ed., pp. 3–19). SAGE Publications.

Fuller-Rowell, T. E., Evans, G. W., & Ong, A. D. (2012). Poverty and health: The mediating role of perceived discrimination. *Psychological Science*, *23*(7), 734–739. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797612439720

Galassi, J. P., & Akos, P. (2004). Developmental advocacy: Twenty-first century school counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *82*(2), 146–157. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6678.2004.tb00296.x

Galea, S., Ahern, J., Nandi, A., Tracy, M., Beard, J., & Vlahov, D. (2007). Urban neighborhood poverty and the incidence of depression in a population-based cohort study. *Annals of Epidemiology*, *17*(3), 171–179. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annepidem.2006.07.008

Gergen, K. J. (2015). *An invitation to social construction* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.

Gibson, B., Schneider, J., Talamonti, D., & Forshaw, M. (2021). The impact of inequality on mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic: A systematic review. *Canadian Psychology*, *62*(1), 101–126. https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000272

Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Pearson Education.

Goodman, L. A., Smyth, K. F., & Banyard, V. (2010). Beyond the 50-minute hour: Increasing control, choice, and connections in the lives of low-income women. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, *80*(1), 3–11. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-0025.2010.01002.x

Gorski, P. C. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap*. Teachers College Press.

Gorski, P. C. (2016, May). *Re-examining beliefs about students in poverty: The greatest need, author says, is to strengthen equity literacy*. AASA: The School Superintendents Association. https://my.aasa.org/AASA/Resources/SAMag/May16/Gorski.aspx

Gorski, P. C. (2018). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the opportunity gap* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Grzanka, P. R., Santos, C. E., & Moradi, B. (2017). Intersectionality research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *64*(5), 453–457. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000237

Hardy, L. (2006, December). Children at risk. *American School Board Journal*, *193*(12), 17–21.

Havlik, S. A., Rowley, P., Puckett, J., Wilson, G., & Neason, E. (2017). "Do whatever you can to try to support that kid": School counselors' experiences addressing student homelessness. *Professional School Counseling*, *21*(1). https://doi.org/10.5330/1096-2409-21.1.47

Hipp, J. R., & Wickes, R. (2017). Violence in urban neighborhoods: A longitudinal study of collective efficacy and violent crime. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, *33*, 783–808. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10940-016-9311-z

Hostinar, C. E., & Miller, G. E. (2019). Protective factors for youth confronting economic hardship: Current challenges and future avenues in resilience research. *American Psychologist*, *74*(6), 641–652. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000520

Houshmand, S., Spanierman, L. B., & De Stephano, J. (2017). Racial microaggressions: A primer with implications for counseling practice. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, *39*(3), 203–216. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10447-017-9292-0

Kassan, A. (2019). Using a feminist-multicultural lens when counselling adolescent females: Intersecting cultural identities and multiple social locations. In N. Arthur (Ed.), *Counselling in cultural contexts: Identities and social justice* (pp. 227–248). Springer.

Kassan, A., & Sinacore, A. L. (2016). Multicultural counselling competencies with female adolescents: A retrospective qualitative investigation of client experiences. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *50*(4), 402–420. https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/view/61111

Kim, J., Fletcher, K., & Bryan, J. (2017). Empowering marginalized parents: An emerging parent empowerment model for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling*, *21*(1b). https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X18773585

Ko, G., Anderson, M., Collins, S., & Yasynskyy, Y. (2021a). Contextualizing client challenges and preferred futures. In G. Ko, M. Anderson, S. Collins, & Y. Yasynskyy, *Fostering responsive therapeutic relationships: Repositioning microskills and techniques in service of just conversations*. Counselling Concepts. https://responsiverelationships.pressbooks.com/chapter/preferred_futures/

Ko, G., Anderson, M., Collins, S., & Yasynskyy, Y. (2021b). *Fostering responsive therapeutic relationships: Repositioning microskills and techniques in service of just conversations*. Counselling Concepts. https://responsiverelationships.pressbooks.com

Krumer-Nevo, M. (2016). Poverty-aware social work: A paradigm for social work practice with people in poverty. *British Journal of Social Work*, *46*(6), 1793–1808. https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcv118

Lam, G., Collins, S., & Wong, G. (2020). Alone in paradise: A review of the literature related to single, immigrant mothers in Canada. *Journal of the Motherhood Initiative*, *11*(1), 51–71. https://jarm.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/jarm/article/view/40591

Lapan, R. T., Gysbers, N. C., & Kayson, M. A. (2007). *Missouri school counselors benefit all students*. Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Lavell, E. F. (2014). Beyond charity: Social class and classism in counselling. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *48*(3), 231–250. https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/view/60986

Lavell, F. (2018). Storying the lives of the working class: Attending to class at the intersections of identities. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 141–177). Counselling Concepts.

Lavell, F. (2019). Go back to your trailer: Essential social class awareness for counsellors. In N. Arthur (Ed.), *Counselling in cultural contexts: Identities and social justice* (pp. 65–92). Springer.

Lee, D. L., Rosen, A. D., & Burns, V. (2013). Over a half-century encapsulated: A multicultural content analysis of the Journal of Counseling Psychology, 1954–2009. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *60*(1), 154–161. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031002

Levy, L. B., & O'Hara, M. W. (2010). Psychotherapeutic interventions for depressed, low-income women: A review of the literature. *Clinical Psychology Review*, *30*(8), 934–950. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2010.06.006

Lewis, J. A., Ratts, M. J., Paladino, D. A., & Toporek, R. L. (2011). Social justice counseling and advocacy: Developing new leadership roles and competencies. *Journal for Social Action in Counseling and Psychology*, *3*(1), 5–16. https://doi.org/10.33043/JSACP.3.1.5-16

Little, W. (2014). *Introduction to sociology* (1st Canadian ed.). BC Campus. https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/

Liu, W. M., Ali, S. R., Soleck, G., Hopps, J., Dunston, K., & Pickett, T., Jr. (2004). Using social class in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *51*(1), 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.51.1.3

Marshall, E. A., Butler, K., Roche, T., Cumming, J., & Taknint, J. T. (2016). Refugee youth: A review of mental health counselling issues and practices. *Canadian Psychology*, *57*(4), 308–319. https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000068

Mazzoli Smith, L., & Todd, L. (2019). Conceptualising poverty as a barrier to learning through "poverty proofing the school day": The genesis and impacts of stigmatisation. *British Educational Research Journal*, *45*(2), 356–371. https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3506

Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2012). *Changing directions, changing lives: The mental health strategy for Canada*. https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/drupal/MHStrategy_Strategy_ENG.pdf

Mistry, R. S., Brown, C. S., Chow, K. A., & Collins, G. S. (2012). Increasing the complexity of young adolescents' beliefs about poverty and inequality: Results of an 8th grade social studies curriculum intervention. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *41*(6), 704–716. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-011-9699-6

Moradi, B., & Grzanka, P. R. (2017). Using intersectionality responsibly: Toward critical epistemology, structural analysis, and social justice activism. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *64*(5), 500–513. https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000203

Nangia, P., & Arora, T. (2021). Discrimination in the workplace in Canada: An intersectional approach. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, *46*(2), 147–178. https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/cjs/index.php/CJS/article/view/29736

Noam, G. G., & Malti, T. (2008). Responding to the crisis: RALLY's developmental and relational approach. *New Directions for Youth Development*, *2008*(120), 31–55. https://doi.org/10.1002/yd.284

Norcross, J. C., & Wampold, B. E. (2011). Evidence-based therapy relationships: Research conclusions and clinical practices. *Psychotherapy*, *48*(1), 98–102. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022161

Norcross, J. C., & Wampold, B. E. (2018). A new therapy for each patient: Evidence-based relationships and responsiveness. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *74*(11), 1889–1906. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22678

O'Hara, C., & Cook, J. M. (2018). Doctoral-level counseling students' experiences of social class microaggressions. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *57*(4), 255–270. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12115

Ordaz, S. J., Goyer, M. S., Ho, T. C., Singh, M. K., & Gotlib, I. H. (2018). Network basis of suicidal ideation in depressed adolescents. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, *226*, 92–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2017.09.021

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development. (2018). *Poverty rate*. https://data.oecd.org/inequality/poverty-rate.htm

Ortiz, L., & Jani, J. (2010). Critical race theory: A transformational model for teaching diversity. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *46*(2), 175–193. https://doi.org/10.5175/JSWE.2010.200900070

Paré, D. (2014). Social justice and the word: Keeping diversity alive in therapeutic conversations. *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy*, *48*(3), 206–217. https://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/article/view/60996

Paré, D., & Sutherland, O. (2016). Re-thinking best practice: Centring the client in determining what works in therapy. In N. Gazzola, M. Buchanan, O. Sutherland, & S. Nuttgens (Eds.), *Handbook of Counselling and Psychotherapy in Canada* (pp. 181–202). Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association.

Patel, V., Flisher, A. J., Hetrick, S., & McGorry, P. (2007). Mental health of young people: A global public-health challenge. *The Lancet*, *369*(9569), 1302–1313. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(07)60368-7

Pemberton, S., Fahmy, E., Sutton, E., & Bell, K. (2016). Navigating the stigmatised identities of poverty in austere times: Resisting and responding to narratives of personal failure. *Critical Social Policy*, *36*(1), 21–37. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261018315601799

Pope, J. F., & Arthur, N. (2009). Socioeconomic status and class: A challenge for the practice of psychology in Canada. *Canadian Psychology*, *50*(2), 55–65. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014222

Prilleltensky, I. (2008). The role of power in wellness, oppression, and liberation: The promise of psychopolitical validity. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *36*(2), 116–136. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.20225

Rakesh, D., & Whittle, S. (2021). Socioeconomic status and the developing brain—A systematic review of neuroimaging findings in youth. *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews*, *130*, 379–407. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2021.08.027

Ratts, M. J. (2009). Social justice counseling: Toward the development of a fifth force among counseling paradigms. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, *48*(2), 160–172. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1939.2009.tb00076.x

Ratts, M. J., & Pedersen, P. B. (2014). Preface. In M. J. Ratts & P. B. Pedersen (Eds.), *Counseling for multiculturalism and social justice: Integration, theory, and application* (4th ed., pp. ix–xiii). American Counseling Association.

Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Butler, S. K., Nassar-McMillan, S., & McCullough, J. R. (2016, January 27). *Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies: Practical applications in counseling*. Counseling Today. https://ct.counseling.org/2016/01/multicultural-and-social-justice-counseling-competencies-practical-applications-in-counseling/

Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., & McCullough, J. R. (2015). *Multicultural and social justice counseling competencies*. American Counselling Association. https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/competencies/multicultural-and-social-justice-counseling-competencies.pdf

Russell, M., Harris, B., & Gockel, A. (2008). Parenting in poverty: Perspectives of high-risk parents. *Journal of Children and Poverty*, *14*(1), 83–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/10796120701871322

Santiago, C. D., Kaltman, S., & Miranda, J. (2013). Poverty and mental health: How do low-income adults and children fare in psychotherapy? *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *69*(2), 115–126. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21951

Schachner, M. K., Noack, P., Van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Eckstein, K. (2016). Cultural diversity climate and psychological adjustment at school—Equality and inclusion versus cultural pluralism. *Child Development*, *87*(4), 1175–1191. https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.12536

Scheel, M. J., Stabb, S. D., Cohn, T. J., Duan, C., & Sauer, E. M. (2018). Counseling psychology model training program. *Counseling Psychologist*, *46*(1), 6–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000018755512

Schulz, A. J., Mentz, G., Lachance, L., Johnson, J., Gaines, C., & Israel, B. A. (2012). Associations between socioeconomic status and allostatic load: Effects of neighborhood poverty and tests of mediating pathways. *American Journal of Public Health*, *102*(9), 1706–1714. https://doi.org:/10.2105/AJPH.2011.300412

Sheehan, K., & Rall, K. (2011). Rediscovering hope: Building school cultures of hope for children of poverty. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *93*(3), 44–47. https://www.jstor.org/stable/23048920

Sibley, E., & Brabeck, K. (2017). Latino immigrant students' school experiences in the United States: The importance of family–school–community collaborations. *School Community Journal*, *27*(1), 137–157. https://www.adi.org/journal/2017ss/SibleyBrabeckSpring2017.pdf

Smith, L. (2005). Psychotherapy, classism, and the poor: Conspicuous by their absence. *American Psychologist*, *60*(7), 687–696. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.7.687

Smith, L. (2009). Enhancing training and practice in the context of poverty. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, *3*(2), 84–93. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0014459

Smith, L., Li, V., Dykema, S., Hamlet, D., & Shellman, A. (2013). "Honoring somebody that society doesn't honor": Therapists working in the context of poverty. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, *69*(2), 138–151. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21953

Smyth, J. (2017). Youth insecurity in schools: What's going on with class? *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *26*(2), 211–227. https://doi.org/10.1080/09620214.2016.1191964

Statistics Canada. (2021a, March 13). *Low income measure (LIM) thresholds by income source and household size*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110023201

Statistics Canada. (2021b, March 13). *Market Basket Measure (MBM) thresholds for the reference family by Market Basket Measure region, component and base year*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110006601

Steele, J. M. (2008). Preparing counselors to advocate for social justice: A liberation model. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, *48*(2), 74–85. https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.2008.tb00064.x

Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, White allies, and bystanders. *American Psychologist*, *74*(1), 128–142. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000296

Sue, S., Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. W. (1975). Asian Americans as a minority group. *American Psychologist*, *30*(9), 906–910. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.30.9.906

Teale, W. H., & Scott, J. L. (2010). Making urban schools better places for students, teachers, and families: An interview with Charles Payne. *Reading Teacher*, *63*(8), 701–704. https://doi.org/10.1598/RT.63.8.11

Thelin, W. H. (2019). How the American working class views the "working class." *Humanities*, *8*(1), Article 53. https://doi.org/10.3390/h8010053

Thompson, M. N., Cole, O. D., & Nitzarim, R. S. (2012). Recognizing social class in the psychotherapy relationship: A grounded theory exploration of low-income clients. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *59*(2), 208–221. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0027534

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. (2012). *Measuring child poverty: New league tables of child poverty in the world's rich countries*. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc10_eng.pdf

UNICEF Office of Research. (2016). *Fairness for children: A league table of inequality in child well-being in rich countries*. https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/RC13_eng.pdf

Vera, E. M., & Speight, S. L. (2003). Multicultural competence, social justice, and counseling psychology: Expanding our roles. *Counseling Psychologist*, *31*(3), 253–272. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000003031003001

Vernon-Feagans, L., Garrett-Peters, P., De Marco, A., & Bratsch-Hines, M. (2012). Children living in rural poverty: The role of chaos in early development. In V. Maholmes & R. B. King (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of poverty and child development* (pp. 448–466). Oxford University Press.

Vontress, C. E. (2011). Social class influences on counseling. *Counseling and Human Development*, *44*(1), 1–12.

Wei, Y., Kutcher, S., & Szumilas, M. (2011). Comprehensive school mental health: An integrated "school-based pathway to care" model for Canadian secondary schools. *McGill Journal of Education*, *46*(2), 213–229. https://doi.org/10.7202/1006436ar

Williams, J. M., Bryan, J., Morrison, S., & Scott, T. R. (2017). Protective factors and processes contributing to the academic success of students living in poverty: Implications for counselors. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *45*(3), 183–200. https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12073

Wintner, S., Almeida, J., & Hamilton-Mason, J. (2017). Perceptions of microaggression in K-8 school settings: An exploratory study. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *79*, 594–601. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.07.020

Wong, G. (2018). A Chinese mother's journey to self: 有用 Moh-Yoong. In S. Collins (Ed.), *Embracing cultural responsivity and social justice: Re-shaping professional identity in counselling psychology* (pp. 115–140). Counselling Concepts.

World Health Organization. (2013, May 7). *Social determinants of health: Key concepts.* https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/social-determinants-of-health-key-concepts

Zack, S. E., Castonguay, L. G., & Boswell, J. F. (2007). Youth working alliance: A core clinical construct in need of empirical maturity. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, *15*(6), 278–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/10673220701803867

Zalaquett, C. P., & Chambers, A. L. (2017). Introduction to the special issue. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development*, *45*(3), 152–161. https://doi.org/10.1002/jmcd.12071

Zhang, X. (2021, June 11). *Low-income persistence in Canada and the provinces*. Statistics Canada. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2021004-eng.htm

Zweig, M. (2006, July 1). *Six points on class*. Monthly Review. https://monthlyreview.org/2006/07/01/six-points-on-class/

About the Authors

Shelly Mann is a registered counselling therapist in private practice in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. In addition to working in private practice, Shelly has worked with students in the public school system for over 20 years, where she focuses her efforts on advocating for socially just practices and raising awareness to the unique challenges faced by students who are economically disadvantaged.

Sandra Collins is a registered psychologist and a professor of counselling psychology in the Graduate Centre for Applied Psychology at Athabasca University. Her research and teaching focus on culturally responsive and socially just counselling practice, with a particular emphasis on creating open-source teaching and learning resources.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Shelly Mann. Email: peicounsellor@gmail.com