The 16th Congress of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) was held at the International Convention Centre in Durban, from 3 to 6 August 2010, themed ‘Probing the Boundaries of South African Psychology’. Unisa was well represented by a sizeable contingent of academic and student presenters and delegates swopping chilly Gauteng mornings for balmy Durban days. The Masters in Psychology (Research Consultation) (Marc) group was represented by five students.

The pre-congress programme consisted of workshops on ethics, career counselling, forensic and neuropsychology, auto-ethnography, and spiritual intelligence. The congress started on 4 August 2010 with delegates welcomed by PsySSA President, Professor Kopano Ratele. Ms Precious Matsotso, Director General of Health, officially opened the congress, followed by keynote speaker Professor Hlengiwe Mkhize, Deputy Minister of Correctional Services.

Professor Ashwin Desai from Rhodes University provided an entertaining and controversial contribution to a round table discussion, chaired by Dr Saths Cooper, on the topic ‘Are we a nation of murderers, robbers and rapists?’ The role of the media, represented by Ms Liz Clarke, News Editor of the Sunday Tribune, as contributor to the ‘doom and gloom’ view of the nation, was also put under the spotlight. Lunch followed, with an opportunity for some serious networking, and time for a closer examination of the various poster presentations on show in the foyer. The
three posters presented by the Marc group, on the Marc Room project, the Marc practical placement experience, and Mapping the Southern African Psychology Landscape, a *New Voices in Psychology* initiative, were very well received.

After lunch, presentations commenced in four separate rooms, with a symposium on the topic of the boundaries of social psychology, round table discussions on professional issues for public service psychologists and positive psychology, and paper presentations on topics including victim empowerment programmes, stereotype threat, and an examination of interracial couples in South Africa. A highlight for us was the final presentation of the day by Professor Bert Olivier, who dispensed with the usual Microsoft Powerpoint format, took the microphone and spoke from the heart on ‘Foucault and individual autonomy’.

On Thursday, the congress continued the theme of probing the boundaries of psychology, with symposia on Hypnosis and Hypnotherapy, and Child and Adult Attention Deficit with Hyperactivity Disorder. Paper presentations ranged from educational topics to examinations of parent-child relationships in low-income communities, followed by round table discussions on advocacy both in working with gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender issues, and in addressing hate crimes. A highlight of the day was the symposium on applied cognitive science and experimental neuroscience, presented by a large contingent from the University of Cape Town.
On Friday, one of our fellow Marc students, Justin Vermeulen, gave a presentation entitled ‘Redefining Psychology in a South African Context: Facilitating Epistemological Curiosity’ as part of a symposium on African psychology. His presentation was refreshing and very well received. He was probably the only presenter to start with a story and end with a poem! Next on the programme was an interesting presentation by students of the University of KwaZulu Natal on a multilingual project which involved offering some undergraduate psychology courses simultaneously in Zulu and English; a challenging undertaking.

The PsySSA Congress was a very interesting experience and a good networking opportunity. It was a chance to rub shoulders with some of the respected figures in psychology, and to see how broad the boundaries of psychology really are. It was
an occasion to situate ourselves in the psychological research community, to see the
diverse fields of interest and different methodologies which made us aware that there
is a place for a budding researcher. We, as students, were interested to see that there
was a wide range of presenters, from respected academics to post graduate students,
and we were pleased to note that student contributions in the form of presentations,
comments, and questions were welcomed.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Linda Rungasamy holds a BA degree in Psychology and Sociology and a BA
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Raymond Nettmann studied Psychology and Theology. He obtained a BA Honours
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