Title: Building Cultural Safety through mutual respect: Examples from Indigenous populations and Institutions in Canada.

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Cultural Safety famously emerged from a cultural template informed by the physical example of Sharps Safety. Practitioners who practice Cultural Safety expect to constantly self monitor their behaviour and attitudes to avoid creating a cultural unsafe space for patients.

However, health care practitioners must also remain cognizant of their own professional cultural space – one that is bounded by legal and professional standards. In other words, Cultural Safety cuts both ways. Some patients demands and requirements may be culturally mediated, but mutual cultural safety requires practitioners to create a space that both patients and practitioners can reside in without violating either cultural rules. Examples from culturally appropriate birthing centres in the Canadian Arctic can be used to construct a model in which we, as professionals can act as mediators between the health care system and patients' own cultural space – creating a common ground in which a culturally safety and professional integrity can both thrive.

Biography:

Vasiliki Douglas has completed her undergraduate Nursing education at the University of British Columbia, undergraduate and graduate degrees in Classics and History at McGill University and a doctorate in Nursing and Anthropology at the University of Alberta. Her postdoctoral research was at the University of Northern British Columbia. She has published extensively in peer reviewed journals in Nursing, Anthropology and Arctic Studies. She is the author of the first Nursing textbook in Canada to focus on Aboriginal health and cultural safety.

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