

**Marisa Cordella**  
(*Monash University*)

**I'm feeling bloody sick: health, cognition and culture**

This paper explores the concept of health within a cross-cultural framework where health perception is defined as a culture-bound phenomenon. Examples are drawn from western and non-western cultural groups to explain how the concepts of distress, stress and the representation of emotions may vary significantly according to how people construct and interpret them.

It is argued that although translators and interpreters may provide the appropriate technical terminology for translations from one language to another, a big challenge arises when professionals are required to provide translations of some health concepts that may not necessarily have an equivalent meaning in both cultural-language groups. In this regard, this paper will discuss the problems which derived from the translation of the World Health Organisation's SRQ 'Self Reporting Questionnaire'. I will also outline some alternative linguistic strategies available to medical practitioners, clients and interpreters as well as suggesting that those of us working with languages should educate the general public and (possibly) health professionals on the importance of understanding the concept of health beyond our cultural comfort zone.