**Hein Heuvelman**

**Title**: A comparative analysis of social risk factors for psychotic symptomatology in ethnic minority populations in the UK, the US and the Netherlands - Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council on a +3 studentship

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**Background**: After having completed a BSc Degree in Sociology at the Erasmus University Rotterdam, I joined CCSR in 2007 as a student on the MSc programme in Social Research Methods and Statistics. During 2008/9 I held a post as research associate after which I started my PhD research in 2009.

**PhD**: The relationship between ethnic minority status and psychotic illness has become an object of increasing interest in the social and medical sciences over the past few decades. Some ethnic minority groups appear to display worrying levels of susceptibility for psychotic mental disorders while other groups remain relatively unaffected. The reason for this “ethnic” risk for psychosis remains unclear although previous research suggests the possible relevance of socio-environmental factors in the etiology of schizophrenia and other psychotic mental disorders. My research aims to explore the relationship between these socio-environmental risk factors and psychotic symptomatology and to provide a detailed comparison of various types of risk factors operating across ethnic minority groups in the UK, the US and the Netherlands. In addition to this I aim to critically evaluate various types of screening instruments that are used for measuring risk of psychotic illness in population-based survey research in a latent variable modeling framework.

Research questions I aim to answer are:

* To what extent can ethnic variations in risk for psychosis be explained in terms of differences in levels of socio-economic resources across these groups?
* What differences are observed for first generation-immigrants and successive generations in terms of risk for psychosis? How do levels of risk relate to national contexts?
* When individual level characteristics are held constant, what relationships exist between area-level risk factors such as socio-economic deprivation, high levels of urbanicity and low levels of own-ethnic density on the one hand and risk of psychosis on the other?
* Are screening instruments used for measuring risk of psychosis reliable when applied in a cross-cultural setting?

**Methods and data**: The data I will analyse as part of this research are those from the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNSEM), the Ethnic Minorities Psychiatric Illness Rates in the Community (EMPIRIC), The National Comorbidity Survey Replication (NCS-R), the National Survey of American Life (NSAL), and a population sample that was taken as part of a study conducted in the Southwest of the Netherlands (Bevolkingsonderzoek Welbevinden).

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