Meeting Community Needs That Cannot Wait

I feel a strong sense of impatience as president because there are many needs in our communities that can’t wait for us to study further, debate longer, contemplate the optimal approach. The vast majority of these individuals thought their life trajectories would be different, more positive, more blessed. We have all learned that there are no guarantees in life.

In 1999, Ted and Nancy Sizer wrote a compelling, brief book called, *The Students are Watching*. The book poignantly conveyed how inner city children come to school every day and wait for the adults around them to fix their schools. They wait for cracked windows to be repaired, broken shades to be replaced, and chipped paint to be redone. They know that if they lived in a wealthy community, or perhaps even one not so wealthy but with a majority of white students, these things would be fixed. It’s not clear what the adults are doing that keeps them from meeting these students’ needs; what we can see is that things, often legitimate things, seem to intervene and the horizon for action is no closer to being reached.

Better to Act and Plan than Wait and Hope

There are no guarantees in life and waiting and hoping are not my favorite strategies. In May 2007, my older daughter, Sara Elizabeth, got married. She was privileged to have both of her parents and her spouse’s parents attend, and on our side of the family, she watched all four of her grandparents walking down the aisle. It’s hard to describe what a gift this was. A year later, May 2008, my father had passed away unexpectedly, my wife’s parents were in an assisted living facility, and my mother was feeling quite alone in the world. There are no guarantees in life.

I became president-elect of SCRA upon arising from observing shiva, the week long mourning period in the Jewish religion, for my father. I became president upon completing the first year of mourning, and all of the obligations that this observance entails. During this year, I have spent a great deal of time with mourners and with senior citizens dealing with catastrophic or chronic disabilities and/or health issues. The vast majority of these individuals thought their life trajectories would be different, more positive, more blessed. We have all learned that there are no guarantees in life. As a corollary, we also have shared many examples of waiting to do something important until “the time was right” or the individual “felt ready.” Most people regretted having not started down important roads earlier.

In 1999, Ted and Nancy Sizer wrote a compelling, brief book called, *The Students are Watching*. The book poignantly conveyed how inner city children come to school every day and wait for the adults around them to fix their schools. They wait for cracked windows to be repaired, broken shades to be replaced, and chipped paint to be redone. They know that if they lived in a wealthy community, or perhaps even one not so wealthy but with a majority of white students, these things would be fixed. It’s not clear what the adults are doing that keeps them from meeting these students’ needs; what we can see is that things, often legitimate things, seem to intervene and the horizon for action is no closer to being reached.
solution, or finish all the things on our “to do” list before we get to them. I see now more clearly than ever the crisis in dealing with our growing population of senior citizens, especially those who are lacking in money, education, English language sophistication, and support of all kinds. For the past decade, I have shifted the locus of my school-based work to low performing urban schools, and I have seen and experienced the inadequacies of our piecemeal and program-focused work on prevention and competence enhancement in the face of staggering needs.

I recall hearing a talk in 1990 by Dr. William Foege, then Director of the Carter Center, who spoke about how he was credited with eradicating world smallpox mainly by finding ways to bring vaccinations to every tiny village on earth. He said that if we simply implemented what we know and did no more research, we would increase human life expectancy worldwide by over 6 months. While of course he was not advocating to end research, his point was that we had lost a sense of proper balance. Generating findings and publishing them does not give them impact. We must focus more on practice, policy, implementation, and sustainability within the framework of values that define community psychology.

As I am coming to realize, it is difficult to accomplish substantial things during the presidency of SCRA in only one year. Clearly, we need to think of ways to ensure greater continuity of leadership, or at least direction. I can take this up with my fantastic predecessor, Anne Bogat, who has dedicated herself to the presidency with admirable energy and persistence, and Mark Aber, our President-Elect, who brings deep commitment and focus to SCRA. But what ultimately matter more than what the president and executive committee do is what the membership does. And so, I want to implore you to strike the words, “wait and hope” from your vocabulary and replace them with “act and plan.” I ask you to take an action-research approach and move forward while always checking your progress, rather than waiting.
until the road is clear ahead of you. Even if the road were to be clear, it would not stay clear for long.

My Presidential Priorities and Your Action Agenda

In my presidential election “platform,” I placed a priority on practice and policy, undergraduate education as the “farm team” into our profession, and early career and career paths as key foci for the continued vigor of the field of CP and SCRA as an organization. I also want to focus on SCRA’s complex role as international community psychology grows. I have undertaken a systematic review of our committees, interest groups, and task forces. They all should be active, or else transformed or transferred. Each of these groups covers a topic for which important action is needed. I have been fortunate to work closely thus far with the SCRA Practice Group and Social Policy Committee, and I know that by the time you read this, I will have worked with others as well. I mention this to encourage you to use our revitalized website, <http://www.scar27.org> to learn more about our various groups, see which are active, join one, and if you don’t see a support structure for what interests you, contact me about creating something: <SCRA27mie@AOL.COM> and eventually the President’s Blog on the SCRA website. Only by our members committing to work in a collaborative way can SCRA and its subgroups have a positive and powerful impact. If you are not getting a response from the group you are trying to reach, contact me or other members of the executive committee and we will follow up. Just don’t give up!

Come to the Biennial, June 18th-21st in New Jersey

Prepare to come to the biennial. It is our great gathering place, and we need members and potential members of our organization to come, share, learn, speak up, and network. We need people to respond to upcoming calls to mentor our graduate students and new professionals at the biennial. It will take place at Montclair University in New Jersey, in the shadow of Manhattan, from June 18th-21st. You will find a call for papers and other information on the website. I realize that for many of you, SCRA competes for your professional attention with other organizations. Please give more of your attention to SCRA in the coming months and years. We are poised to make a difference. We have been the conscience of APA and we need to go farther. The time has come to follow up on the work of José Ornelas, Chair of the 2nd International Conference on Community Psychology in Portugal in June 2008, and partner with our international colleagues to establish a World Congress of Community Psychology. By combining our collective voices in areas of common concern, of which there are many, we can have an impact on important social justice issues.

Help SCRA and Let SCRA Help You Take Action

I ask that you consider how SCRA can help you take action on issues that are of concern to you. Those who are beset by problems locally and globally are watching to see who will help. They realize there are no guarantees in life and that help may never arrive. We cannot afford to wait for the best time to act, or hope that the situation will get better or easier to act upon. We are the Society for Community Research and Action, and now is the time for action. ✿
From the Editor—
Elizabeth Thomas, University of Washington Bothell

I am pleased to share this Fall 2008 issue of The Community Psychologist with you. Thanks to all of the column editors and contributors for their excellent work in this edition.

In addition to the regular columns, this issue features a special section edited by Maurice Elias. The introduction and three articles in the special section, “Service Learning, Youth Empowerment, Civic Engagement and the Direction of Community Psychology Research and Action,” explore the multiple connections between service learning and community psychology and provide examples that bring these connections to life. The articles also raise great questions for further research, practice, and reflection.

This issue also includes a report from the 2nd International Conference on Community Psychology held in Lisbon, Portugal in June 2008. José Ornelas, Chair of the Conference, provides a compelling account of the conference for those of us who could not attend and invites readers to join a global coalition for community psychology. The 3rd International Conference will be hosted in Puebla Mexico in 2010. In June 2009, SCRA members are invited to attend the Biennial Conference hosted by Montclair State University in New Jersey, USA. An article by Chris Corbett in this issue urges your participation as leaders and participants in workshops at this biennial conference, building on the success of the diverse and innovative workshops at the Portugal Conference.

Many thanks to Anne Bogat, Past President of SCRA, for her guidance and contributions to TCP, and for her outstanding work for the division more generally. Thanks also to Maurice Elias, incoming President of SCRA. Mo’s first Presidential Column is both inviting and inspiring. Finally, a special welcome and thanks to Louis Brown, the new Editor for the Self-Help/Mutual Support column; Nicole Porter and Judah Viola, who are taking the lead for the Social Policy Committee; and Fernando Estrada, new Student Representative and TCP Column Editor.

These new TCP column editors join a great team of column editors who share exciting work by SCRA students, researchers, practitioners, and teachers each issue. They also highlight many ways that readers can connect and bring new energies to SCRA and to community-based work. So I encourage you to let them know what you may bring to support, challenge, and strengthen these efforts. And enjoy this Fall 2008 issue of TCP.

Book Reviews
Edited by Raymond Scott


~Cathy E. Lawrenz

Oxford Houses are a breath of hope for those wanting to recover from alcoholism and addiction. The traditional acute care model of detox and limited inpatient stay and/or intensive outpatient treatment has historically not been that effective (Valliant, 1983). Left to their own devices and in an unsupportive and perhaps hostile environment, those who have exited an inpatient treatment program all too often succumb to relapse. On the other hand, the environment of community and support found in an Oxford House is making a noticeable difference in the success and sobriety of its residents. The high cost of substance abuse to society has a no-cost-to-society solution in Oxford Houses.

Leonard Jason, Bradley Olson and Karen Foli give us a masterful look at this relatively new phenomenon in the world of substance abuse treatment—which is actually working. The purpose of this book is to disseminate this encouraging information about Oxford Houses and the lives affected by them. That it does, and in a very winning way. It also shares basic tenets of community psychology and shows us what the best of community psychology’s research and action look like.

To this end Jason and Olson engaged the professional writing services of Karen Foli, clinical nurse and freelance writer. Together they have creatively developed and embedded fifteen years of action research and collaboration of DePaul University’s Center for Community Research and the Oxford House movement into a very readable and vivid story about the Oxford House approach to substance abuse. Research from this collaboration has been previously presented in different formats—a 2006 special monograph issue of the Journal of Prevention and Intervention in “Communities and Creating Communities for Addiction Recovery: The Oxford House Model,” also published in 2006, but in Rescued Lives the research is deftly brought to life. We see and feel the human spirit in the stories and hear the residents moving about the rooms in the descriptions of the Oxford Houses. Findings from the studies are woven into the narrative and are accessible and easily understood in context.

The book has three stories it shares: that of the founder, Paul Molloy, an alcoholic; the stories of Oxford House residents—some current and some who have moved on; and the stories of the researchers. Molloy’s story made me laugh out loud. It was a laugh of exasperation, it was audible, and it showed me how engaging this book is. Indicative of the current practice of inpatient treatment and consequent release into an unchanged environment, a newly sober Molloy returns to see his old boss with the joyful news of “I’m sober,” only to be invit-
# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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**SOCIAL POLICY**

Nicole Porter, DePaul Center for Community Research

**WOMEN**

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| EUROPE/MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA | David Fryer, U. of Stirling, Scotland |
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| | J. Eric Stewart, University of Washington Bothell |
| | Maria Chun, University of Hawai‘i Regina Langhout, University of California, Santa Cruz |

# INTEREST GROUPS

## AGING

The Aging interest group focuses on the productive role of aging in the community and the prevention of mental health problems in the elderly.

**Chair:** Margaret M. Hastings, (847) 256-4844, margaretmhalt69@earthlink.net

## CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

The Children, Youth & Families interest group facilitates the interests of child and adolescent development in high risk contexts, especially the effect of urban poverty and community structures on child and family development.

**Chair:** Richard N. Roberts, (435) 325-4771

## COMMUNITY ACTION

The Community Action interest group explores the roles and contributions of people working in applied community psychology settings.

**Chair:** Bradley Olson, (773) 325-4771

## COMMUNITY HEALTH

The Community Health interest group focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the community.

**Chair:** Richard O. Roberts, (773) 325-4771

## DISABILITIES

The Disabilities interest group promotes understanding of the contributions of people with disabilities.

**Chair:** Katherine E. McDonald, kmcdona@pdx.edu

## DISSEMINATION

The dissemination of prevention and support among community psychologists who are interested in research/service/policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.

**Co-chairs:** Richard Jenkins, jenkinsr@nida.nih.gov

## LGBT

The LGBT interest group seeks to enhance development of prevention and promotion research, foster active dialogue about critical conceptual and methodological action and implementation issues, and promote rapid dissemination and discussion of new developments and findings in the field.

**Co-chairs:** Monica Adams, madams8@depaul.edu

## PREVENTION & PROMOTION

The Prevention & Promotion interest group focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the community.

**Chair:** Bradley Olson, (815) 256-4844, lounsbud@mskcc.org

## REGIONAL NETWORK

The Rural interest group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.

**Chair:** Cécile Lardon, (909) 474-5781, clardon@uaf.edu

## SCHOOL INTERVENTION

The School Intervention interest group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.

**Co-chairs:** Paul Flaspohler, flaspopd@muohio.edu

## SELF-HELP/ MUTUAL SUPPORT

The Self-Help/Mutual Support interest group is an international organization of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help groups and organizations.

**Chair:** Louis Brown, ldb12@psu.edu

## SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH & ACTION
ed out for a drink. He goes, he drinks, and he’s back drinking as heavily as before. I knew it was coming and it still got me; it captures the status quo.

The book begins with a brief but excellent historical overview of substance abuse in America. The first personal story comes in chapter 2 with Paul Molloy’s account of his fall from grace and the establishment of the first Oxford House in 1975. The narrative resumes with an examination of the current state of treatment models including inpatient and outpatient care, therapeutic communities, self-help modalities such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Oxford House. The next chapters bring more stories and deal with entrance and assimilation of individuals into the house—learning to live sober, becoming responsible, working on relationships, and being accountable for their actions. Here are a few words from a resident who now enjoys the quiet, comfortable everyday life and who sounds pretty content with things:

I was in the VA for eight and a half months, and they were a lot stricter than what it was here. It’s a lot less structured than what I had come from, so I adapted to it real well. This house has just basic simple things that normally, everyday people, who aren’t alcoholics and addicts would do. They clean up after themselves; they’re in at a decent time at night.

We go to a couple of meetings. We have the business meeting here. We take care of the lawn and generally just exist as a good citizen of the community of the Oxford House that we’re living in. A lot of people who are alcoholic and addicted aren’t the best citizens of their community.

Part two begins with the expansion of the Oxford House movement both in numbers of houses (over 1200 now) and the variety of populations served: women, women with children, criminal offenders and other disenfranchised groups. The stories and data from the research describe these groups and their characteristics, the houses, the neighbors’ attitudes toward the Oxford Houses and the tenants, the process of how Oxford House works and why Oxford House works. In chapter 10 an invitation is extended and next steps offered to the reader along with a frequently asked question (FAQ) section and the presentation of the nine Oxford House Traditions, the organizational principles which provide guidance and continuity between houses.

Does Oxford House work? Chapter 11 discusses compelling evidence of the success of Oxford House:

The study by DePaul University demonstrates a cost-effective, long term solution to keep people from drugs, increase employment, and reduce criminal recidivism. Most importantly, it takes a democratic, liberating approach to these problems. We need to spread the news about this model.

United States Representative
Danny K. Davis D-IL

Jason, Olson, and Foli take the time in chapter 12 to present community psychology values and tenets and to explain the role of the research team in the light of participatory research. Throughout the book, one can sense the respect of the research team for the Oxford House residents and the growing trust and relationship that build between university personnel and the grassroots organization. At this point we hear the stories of the researchers, and we get a glimpse into their process of defining their relationships with Oxford House. We learn that questionnaires and some data collection methods were influenced by the residents. The researchers listened to the voices of those residents and a reciprocal partnership was born.

Finally, we learn of a new paradigm, “bridging and transitioning” as proposed by Johnson & Hunt (2007). The Oxford House approach certainly fits into this model. Looking to the future the authors propose application of the Oxford House Traditions to even more diverse groups such as gang members. The time is now. There may need to be rebellion, but this approach can not be ignored. It works.

I may have missed the point of directing the next steps and FAQ material directly to the reader in chapter 10. It sounds like material that should be in a prospectus or brochure for prospective residents rather than this book. I also may have missed a more current assessment of the efficacy (or lack thereof) of the current inpatient/outpatient treatment paradigm. Valliant’s work in 1983 seems somewhat out of date.

The book includes a photo gallery where the faces of the houses are as proudly displayed as the faces of the residents, highlighted pages with actual news coverage of study findings, an appendix which contains material from the Oxford House website, references, and an index.

I would recommend Rescued Lives to all students of community psychology, but it would be valuable to any student of the social sciences and psychology. It is such a good example of the action research values and of how to make research palatable and meaningful to a broad audience. This is an essential tool for use with legislators, funders, and neighborhood organizers. Clinicians and those working in the field of addictions will find this book extremely helpful.

References


Community Action
Edited by Bradley Olson

Motivational Interviewing: Possible Guidelines for Working in Communities

~Jordan M. Braciszewski, Wayne State University, & Erin R. Droege, Michigan State University

Julian Rappaport (2005) urges that to genuinely promote social justice and raise critical consciousness, community psychology must “transcend the limits of conventional science.” One attempt to transcend these limits is evident in collaborative methods that focus on increasing collective engagement, utilizing strengths and resources within the community, and fostering iterative cycles of knowledge and action that attend to social inequalities (e.g., participatory action research; for a review, see Israel, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998). Yet no research tradition is without its challenges. For example, community members are often hesitant to trust researchers and organizational structures can display inequities of power, disagreements over priorities, and conflicts over values and perspectives (Israel et al., 1998), all serving as obstacles to collaborative research and action. Often, individuals and organizations also struggle with ambivalence, at least initially, whenever they attempt to bring about positive forms of change (Olson, Jason, Ferrari, & Hutcheson, 2005). Citizens are fed up with crime on their streets but can feel powerless to make change. The city needs their community businesses to be ADA compliant but feel overwhelmed by the amount of work required to achieve that goal. Many community members, including developers, would like to see more affordable housing, but within each person and throughout the group, they are often conflicted about how to best achieve that goal.

Addressing the challenges facing collaboration and community change may require community psychologists to develop some new competencies. These include ways of interacting with people and strengthening one’s skills in communication, conflict resolution, negotiation, group facilitating, and humility.

of power, disagreements over priorities, and conflicts over values and perspectives (Israel et al., 1998), all serving as obstacles to collaborative research and action. Often, individuals and organizations also struggle with ambivalence, at least initially, whenever they attempt to bring about positive forms of change (Olson, Jason, Ferrari, & Hutcheson, 2005). Citizens are fed up with crime on their streets but can feel powerless to make change. The city needs their community businesses to be ADA compliant but feel overwhelmed by the amount of work required to achieve that goal. Many community members, including developers, would like to see more affordable housing, but within each person and throughout the group, they are often conflicted about how to best achieve that goal.

Addressing the challenges facing collaboration and community change may require community psychologists to develop some new competencies. These include ways of interacting with people and strengthening one’s skills in communication, conflict resolution, negotiation, group facilitating, and humility. Clearly, students interested in pursuing community-based research and action need to learn practical strategies in order to “transcend” the limitations of conventional research training.

Unfortunately, there continues to be a substantial disconnect between theory and practice (Tseng et al., 2002). How many times have community psychologists, especially graduate students, become inspired by a particular theory or method only to find themselves beset with the lack of practical guidance for actually doing the work? If our field is to live up to its values and convictions, equal emphasis on both the theory and practice of community-based research is required. We attempt to address this disconnect by presenting Motivational Interviewing as one useful strategy toward research-based forms of community action. Adopted from clinical psychology, motivational interviewing as it is used here is a client- or community-centered collaborative style for bringing about community action by helping a group to explore and resolve forms of ambivalence (see Miller & Rollnick, 2002 for the more traditional, clinical uses of the approach). Motivational interviewing helps to locate a community’s intrinsic motivation to change stemming from the group’s own concerns, experiences, and goals. Consistent with the values of community psychology, the technique downplays professional control, instead reinforcing the power of a community to discover their own unique route to change.

The Spirit of Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing takes a strengths-based orientation toward resolving ambivalence: not, “What’s the matter with this client/community?” but rather, “What matters to this client/community?” Not, “Why isn’t this person/neighborhood motivated?” but, “For what, precisely, is this person/neighborhood most motivated?” Motivational interviewing is also a flexible approach. Rather than insisting on an exact formula or rigid set of procedures, it is simply a way of being with and for people. It is a facilitative approach to communication that evokes natural change (Rollnick & Miller, 1995; Sobell & Sobell, 1993). Collaboration is central to the spirit of motivational interviewing with an aim to be supportive rather than persuasive, working with people by exploring versus exhortation. Motivational interviewing also emphasizes the need to reflect upon one’s own values, opinions, and investments before entering into collaborative partnerships.

The spirit of motivational interviewing is also exemplified through the means of evocation. Traditional methods of mental health work have often focused primarily on invoking information and imparting rules, ways of living, and instructions on how clients can should stop behaving “maladaptively.” This traditional approach is not on par with a collaborative model, nor is it effective at facilitating long-term change. Instead, motivational interviewing can work to elicit information from community members, allowing all parties to learn about each other and to mutually discover how change might be best created. The spirit of motivational interviewing is also illustrated through its respect of autonomy. Not only does the approach honor a community’s self-direction, hopes, goals, and values, but it also promotes growth and long-lasting change by leaving responsibility for that change with the community and individual community members.
**From Spirit to Practice: The Psychological Components of Motivational Interviewing**

*Expressing empathy.* Building relationships with individuals or communities often proves to be a difficult task, regardless of the challenge at hand. At the individual level, clients, even those voluntarily seeking help, can be skeptical about the change process and might be guarded when in session. At the neighborhood level, decades of mistrust between communities and universities have created barriers to successful partnerships and collaborative interventions (Israel et al., 1998). Thus, whether working at the individual or community level, building rapport and trust is a paramount step toward promoting change. In line with the spirit of motivational interviewing, an empathetic communication style is a key characteristic.

Techniques such as reflective listening, asking open-ended questions, and affirming and validating people’s experiences are the foundation of the motivational interviewing paradigm. With these skills, the counselor/researcher/collaborator can begin to understand the client’s/community’s perspectives without judging, criticising, or blaming. Such empathy and acceptance is not necessarily the same as agreement or approval, a consideration that is helpful when dealing with ambivalence to change. For example, while some obstacles to change may be insurmountable, other barriers can be worked through. Motivational interviewing allows the counselor/researcher/collaborator to listen with an accepting mind without completely endorsing all perspectives, which can be especially important when negotiating with stakeholders who possess divergent views. The critical point here is to respectfully listen and understand others’ perspectives in order to normalize their experiences of ambivalence, whatever they may be. Non-acceptance can only lead to the stunting of growth; however, as we begin to accept people as they are, everyone in the process is freer to move along the stages of positive change.

*Developing discrepancies.* There is more to the motivational interviewing approach than simply empathizing with and normalizing feelings of ambivalence. Community members who have suffered from years of drug use would likely benefit from changes in outlook toward themselves, society, and the world. A community plagued by gang violence would grow and flourish if they could help bring about reductions in these activities throughout their neighborhood. Working toward these goal-directed outcomes is the second major technique of motivational interviewing. From Miller and Rollnick (2002), motivational interviewing is “specifically directed toward getting people unstuck, helping them move past ambivalence toward positive behavior change” (p. 38). While this latter definition is value laden, motivational interviewing, particularly from a community-based perspective, allows individuals and communities to define “positive” change in their own terms by helping them to better understand the discrepancies between the current challenges in their community and their broader goals and values for the future. An individual client may use drugs but also wants to finish school. A community might be ridden with crime but still wants better schools for their children. Consistent with the spirit of motivational interviewing, the developed discrepancy is between the client’s/community’s current behavior/situation and their values and goals—as opposed to someone else’s (e.g., courts, parents).

*Rolling with resistance.* Keeping with the theme of collaboration, motivational interviewing takes the perspective that arguing with someone for change, even if they have voiced a desire to change, is counterproductive. People are likely to feel an internal opposition to such a conflict-centered approach and thereby more steadfastly maintain their current situation, no matter how undesirable they may find it. In contrast, when using motivational interviewing, the community psychologist attempts to reframe such resistance, working to help continue the client’s/community’s momentum toward change (i.e., rolling or flowing with resistance). When working with different stakeholders in the community, one group might say, “Those residents are impossible to work with. We’ll just develop our organization and forget about engaging them in our decision-making.” To which a motivational interviewer/collaborator might say, “On the one hand, you want to have an effective community organization. On the other hand, you’re saying you want to forget about stakeholder input. Given that your organization must target relevant community problems to be effective, and that community members are your best ‘experts,’ where does that leave you?” It is important to avoid sarcasm with this technique, but instead to respond to resistance in a manner that reflects and understands it without reinforcing it. The point is not to provide answers; doing so only increases the potential for “yes, but” answers from the group. According to the spirit of motivational interviewing, the person is autonomous, as is the community. People can think for themselves, and have great ideas about how to move forward. It is our job to work on that change with them.

**Supporting self-efficacy.** As mentioned above, traditional approaches to change have been more invoking than evoking. As such, they focus mostly on telling clients or communities how to change before thinking about other important preliminary steps, such as should the person change, can the person change, and will the person change. Motivational interviewing views this model as putting the cart before the horse, as telling a person how to change is likely to be fruitless if they shouldn’t, can’t, or are unwilling to change. The notion of “supporting self-efficacy,” on the other hand, deals primarily with the question, “Can I change?” A general goal of motivational interviewing is to enhance the community’s confidence toward action, particularly in their capacity to cope with obstacles and move forward toward a greater sense of empowerment.

**Motivational Interviewing in the Community**

As previously mentioned, motivational interviewing is not a new theory for working in communities. Rather, it is a mindset or way of communicating and being with people that effects change. Although community-based research theories like PAR provide an innovative and intriguing model for collaboration, a gap still exists between these theories and their practical implementation. Motivational interviewing provides guidelines for this work while attending to the primary values and goals of community psychology and community-based work. Evidence for the utility of motivational interviewing in the community has been indirectly found through the use of a complimentary approach called the Transtheoretical Model (TTM) (Prochaska, DiClemente, & Norcross, 1992). While a full description of the association between the TTM and motivational interviewing is not possible here (see DiClemente & Velásquez, 2002, for a brief review), these models go hand in hand and have influenced each other’s development (DiClemente, 1999; Miller & Rollnick, 1991; Rollnick, Mason, & Butler, 1999). Researchers have also applied the TTM to communities, neighborhood orga-
organizations, and mutual-help groups, to much success (Olson et al., 2005). Taken together, along with the shared characteristics between community-based research methods and motivational interviewing, the application of the framework to community-based efforts is only a matter of practicalities.

Obstacles, Practical Considerations, and Next Steps
Several obstacles remain as we begin to develop an idea for how motivational interviewing works at a community level. First, avoiding the pitfalls of telling a community how it needs to change is paramount. Generating preconceived notions of where and how a community should change runs counter to the foundation of both motivational interviewing and community psychology. Keeping the community’s autonomy, experiences, values and—most importantly—their goals a priority is the most critical challenge.

Although there are other challenges to consider, motivational interviewing offers a promising approach for working with neighborhoods, organizations, and other projects. Because of this promise and the challenges, we hope to further refine and present a fuller working model of motivational interviewing at the community level soon. We hope readers are as excited about this idea as we are and encourage any and all thoughts, ideas, and constructive criticism of this effort.

References

Community Action Research Centers Network
Edited by Chris Keys, Bob Newbrough, Bradley Olson, & Yolanda Suarez–Balcazar

Using Research and Engagement to Inform Policy Making
~Alan J. Tomkins,
University of Nebraska Public Policy Center

The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center specializes in policy-relevant research and engagement activities in five areas:

1. Access to Government Services
2. Application of Information Technology to Health & Human Services Delivery Systems
3. Behavioral Health and Human Services
4. Public Participation in Policy Making
5. Water Resources

In its ten years of operation, the center has worked closely with a broad range of stakeholders. For example, in Nebraska we regularly work with offices in the executive branch of government (e.g., governor’s and lt. governor’s offices, many divisions of the Health and Human Service System, Corrections, etc.), the Nebraska unicameral legislature (senators, committees, and legislative and committee staff), and the judiciary (e.g., the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Nebraska Court of Appeals). Our projects have involved community and faith-based organizations, advocacy groups, private foundations, not-for-profits, employer/business representatives, and residents. Somewhat naturally, as the only public university in the state, much of the center’s activities are with policymakers and other stakeholders in state government, although we also work with local elected officials and communities across Nebraska. An increasing part of our work, however, has been with federal offices such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The Public Policy Center has demonstrated its ability to develop processes in which diverse stakeholders create a common vision: a statewide study bringing vested stakeholders (including custodian and non-custodian parents) together to agree on criteria for child support collection and distribution; a statewide study including public and private organizations developing a vision for and implementing a study of the perceptions and experiences of minority and disenfranchised individuals in the state’s justice system; and a statewide project to integrate behavioral health services at the local and state levels and to expand access through the inclusion of faith and community-based organizations. Through its collaborative processes, the Public Policy Center has achieved success in both the process of undertaking policy analysis as well as changes in systems and processes. The center regularly convenes statewide conferences, trainings, meetings, and stakeholder groups representing diverse viewpoints and constituencies.
The center collaborates with faculty and students across the university, but most of our work is conducted by center research staff and graduate and undergraduate students. There are currently twelve researchers with backgrounds in:

- psychology (3)
- psychology-related fields (2)
- law (3)
- agricultural economics (1)
- business (1)
- nursing (1)
- political science (1)
- public health (1)
- social geography (1)
- sociology (1)

(Note: Three of us are jointly degreed, and we all take pride in our multidisciplinary collaborations.)

At this time, we have two clinical psychology graduate students working at the center, one graduate student in educational psychology, one in law-psychology, and one in sociology. There are ten undergraduates—interestingly, the modal major is political science and international studies.

At this time, the center balances nearly forty projects. Many of them are small, or the project involves a center researcher for just a small portion of time, but several are quite large and extensive. For the past five years, the center has obtained external funding ranging from $1.5M to $2.6M, averaging slightly less than $2M annually.

One project this past year was especially interesting. In the spring of 2008, the Public Policy Center was asked by the city of Lincoln to coordinate the public input activities the mayor wanted to undertake. The goal was to inform him and the city council on Lincoln’s budget and spending priorities for the year. Lincoln decided to “budget for outcomes,” and, as part of this process, the mayor wanted to involve the public. The center used five different public input techniques to get the information for the city:

1. A random digit dial (scientific) telephone survey of 605 residents was conducted (including oversampling of minority residents).
2. A deliberative discussion (modeled on deliberative polling techniques developed by Fishkin) was held. This six-hour session included 51 of the survey respondents.
3. Data from a non-random survey was collected, allowing residents to submit their answers to budget priority questions online or via “hard” (i.e., paper) copy. Over 1,200 residents responded.
4. Five town hall meetings were held. Nearly 200 residents came to these meetings, all of which were attended by the mayor and city department heads.
5. A small focus group was held.

All in all, we worked with several other organizations in the effort, most notably and actively the Lincoln Community Foundation (the primary philanthropy organization in Lincoln) and Leadership Lincoln (the community’s primary leadership organization). Nearly 2,000 residents provided input as part of this initiative.

We measured the public’s confidence in the government, their perceptions of fairness, and their knowledge about the city’s budget and spending. One of the most significant and promising of the findings was that when we worked directly and extensively with the public in the deliberation effort, there were marked increases in their confidence in the city, in their perceptions of fairness of the budgeting/spending process, and, what is more, the residents’ knowledge increased substantially on most of these items that can be seen as so critical to the civic process. Most importantly, the policy makers relied on the information provided by the public. The mayor and council routinely referred to the public’s input as they negotiated the city’s 2008-09, $165M budget. We are currently obtaining post-budget data from city officials to document the extent to which they found public input to be successful. Stay tuned! ☀

Author’s note: Alan J. Tomkins, JD, PhD, directs the University of Nebraska Public Policy Center. The center’s website address is <http://ppc.nebraska.edu/>. Alan can be reached via email at <atomkins@nebraska.edu>.

References

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**Community Health**

Edited & Written by Shannon Gwin Mitchell & David Lounsbury

**Update on Biennial and Special Issue of AJCP**

We launched our call for papers on the topic of *Social Ecological Approaches to Community Health Research and Action* this past spring. The call went out through numerous professional List-serves and websites, and across multiple disciplines engaged in community health work. We are pleased to announce that we received a wonderful response to our call for papers and the interest group members, along with several guest reviewers, are currently completing the review process. Those articles accepted will be included in a special issue of *AJCP* and the first authors will also be invited to present their paper at the 2009 SCRA Biennial to be held at Montclair State University, New Jersey.

We want to thank all of you who forwarded our call for papers to your colleagues in other fields and other academic departments. We received submissions from several countries and numerous disciplines, and we feel that the submissions we received nicely capture a variety of facets of health, as well as the complex work presently being done in the field of community health.

Several Community Health Interest Group members have also become involved with the SCRA biennial planning committee in order to provide assistance and integrate our presentations into the larger conference. ☀
Steve Fawcett is Kansas Health Foundation Distinguished Professor in the Department of Applied Behavioral Science. He is also Director of the Work Group for Community Health and Development (<http://communityhealth.ku.edu>), a World Health Organization Collaborating Center at the University of Kansas. Steve grew up in Providence, Rhode Island, part of an Irish-Catholic family with a strong sense of social justice. A VISTA volunteer right out of college, he had patient community teachers while working as a community organizer in low-income public housing. His vision of mentoring students, particularly those from ethnic minority communities, starts with engaging students in problems that matter to them and to the communities they serve.

What follows is my conversation with Steve Fawcett—my friend, colleague, and former academic advisor. We talked about his views regarding being a mentor, especially for ethnic minority students.

How do you approach mentoring doctoral students?

Mentoring, like other forms of leadership, is largely about unleashing talents. This starts with engaging students in addressing what matters to them and those they serve. Ideally, students are engaged in socially-important research and consultation projects within the first few weeks of beginning their graduate training.

I approach mentoring with a mix of humility and gratitude. Serving as a student’s academic guide is quite humbling since we have so much to learn from each other. I am very grateful for each opportunity to be a mentor. There is deep joy in establishing relationships with younger colleagues that persist. It is always fun to hear about what a former student has contributed to the science and practice of building healthy communities.

How do you see your role as a mentor?

Early on, my main role is to facilitate discernment—enabling the student to see her gifts and where she will put them. There is a three-fold test for discerning a vocation (or a professional field):

1. Does this activity feel right to me?
2. Does it seem right to others who know me and care about me?
3. Do I have the opportunity to do this work?

As a guide, I have the duty to help students discover the work that “lights them up.”

Once the student figures out what she can and will do, then the mentor’s job shifts to assuring opportunities to learn and contribute, and preparing students for those opportunities.

Describe how you balance conducting your own research while mentoring students to prepare them for their chosen work?

Our KU Work Group tries to maintain a somewhat diverse set of opportunities for engagement within our mission—promoting community health and development through collaborative research, teaching, and service. When there are different projects going on that address socially-important goals, such as work in community health or youth development or community development, there is usually something that will be meaningful to each member of the team.

Sometimes the fit between personal and group goals comes relatively easily. For instance, if a student has a passion for reducing disparities in health outcomes—and this fits with the mission of the overall research group—we can seek grants and other opportunities for research and practice in that area. By contrast, if the student’s interests are fairly narrow, such as reducing disparities in a particular disease or condition with a particular group or gender, then the perfect opportunity may not emerge for some time.
The strategy that works best for us is to create a rich ecology for engagement in learning and doing. If the research group is addressing issues that matter to communities, there is always more work to be done than there are people in the team. That means that each student’s gifts will be able to be expressed. The best test of a rich learning environment is whether all students and staff are fully engaged in the work before us.

Describe experiences where you were more or less successful as a mentor? What did you learn?

I learned fresh lessons about the importance of listening. The author Steven Covey talks about “seek first to understand” (not to be understood). As a mentor, I need to understand what interests and experiences the student brings to our relationship and what history they have with others like me. What was rewarding in their past relationships with teachers and mentors? What was punishing? What does the student want to gain from our relationship?

As a mentor, I cannot presume that the student will trust me. If a student’s past experiences with educators have been poor, I will have to earn their trust gradually—by doing what I say I will do.

I have been least successful as a mentor when the student, despite my protestations, did not believe that he had both the ability and opportunity to succeed. If a student is unsure of their abilities, I need to look for opportunities for them to experience early successes in this work. Sometimes a student has a history of being told that they are not smart enough to be getting a PhD. This can be very difficult to overcome. As a mentor, I try to acknowledge my own doubts and personal limitations. We must also assure an environment and social climate in which students can see others like themselves who have succeeded.

Focus on learning how to understand and address problems that matter to society. Your choice of problem should pass the “grandmother test:” if your grandmother cannot see the value of what you are learning and doing, then you should also wonder about whether it will be meaningful for you.

What strategies have you developed to retain ethnic minority graduate students?

Two approaches have been particularly helpful in retention: assuring opportunities for meaningful engagement and having a community of support for learning and doing. A new student should find opportunities to become engaged immediately in the group’s community research and action projects. When students are engaged in meaningful ways, everyone in the team has a stake in students having the requisite skills.

A community of support is also critical. When students are part of a team working on common projects, each member depends on the abilities and contributions of others. This helps assure accountability for learning and doing what is needed. It also contributes to a web of supportive ties among students, faculty and staff, and those in the communities we serve.

In a community research team, knowledge is constructed by all the parties: students, faculty and staff, and community members. In participatory research, we all come together to reflect on and make sense of the process and outcomes of the effort. In this research process, graduate students and all other parties are treated respectfully and given voice. When all parties have meaningful roles, each of us is more likely to get and stay engaged in this work.

How do you support faculty development with new ethnic minority faculty?

This is a great time to be a young applied researcher with experiential knowledge about living and working in cultural communities. The National Institutes of Health and other funders place a premium on being able to engage diverse communities in addressing community-defined issues related to health and human development.

As a more senior faculty member, I try to support young faculty in pursuing opportunities for grant funding in community-based participatory research (CBPR) and other areas that fit their interests. I also try to share my social capital of relationships by helping to connect them with colleagues inside the university, in professional societies, and in the communities with which we learn and serve.

What advice do you share with incoming ethnic minority students about succeeding in graduate school?

Focus on learning how to understand and address problems that matter to society. Your choice of problem should pass the “grandmother test:” if your grandmother cannot see the value of what you are learning and doing, then you should also wonder about whether it will be meaningful for you.

If your purpose is unclear or not meaningful to you and others, it will be difficult to persist in the long and challenging road of graduate school and professional life. When you are working on something that matters, others will be more willing to support you—both financially and socially.

Try to learn how to do things that are necessary for others’ success. Then, people will have a stake in what you are learning and doing.

You are among the very few people in the world who are preparing themselves for community research and action at this high level. Use your time to discover your talents and how and where you can apply them to make a difference.

And, most importantly, have fun doing this good work! ☺
The SCRA Council of Education Programs (CEP) is proud to recognize Marek P. Wosinski as the second recipient of the CEP’s Outstanding Educator Award. The purpose of the Outstanding Educator Award is to recognize an SCRA member who has made exemplary and innovative contributions to the education of students about community psychology and community research and action. This award is based on excellence in the following criteria:

1. Promotion of innovative strategies in education that integrate community psychology theory and action
2. Significant contributions to the structure and process of education in community psychology, research, and action
3. Consistent, high quality teaching and mentorship contributing to the professional development of students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action
4. Contribution to fostering a positive climate that supports undergraduate and graduate students in their setting

Based on recommendations from students and colleagues, Dr. Wosinski clearly excels in these areas.

Dr. Wosinski received his PhD in 1979 from the University of Warsaw, Poland. He has held a variety of academic and administrative appointments in his career. Most recently, he has been a senior lecturer at Arizona State University since 1990, associate professor at the Warsaw School of Social Psychology (Poland) since 2003, and facilitator of University-Community Partnership for Social Action Research Network (UCP-SARNet) since 2006.

Dr. Wosinski is recognized for his innovative online teaching practices, his inspirational annual summer institutes in community psychology, and his leadership in developing the University-Community Partnership for Social Action Research Network <http://ucpsarnet.asu.edu/>. His career has spanned three decades, and he has taught over 35,000 students (15,000 at ASU alone).

Online Teaching

According to students and colleagues who recommended Dr. Wosinski for the award, “taking CP classes online in order to reach wider audiences which include both students at ASU and students at Warsaw School of Social Psychology, he has masterfully adapted to the changing times...” He brought in 40 professionals representing different community organizations to participate in discussion panels on different community issues and incorporated these videos into his subsequent online instructional materials. He also developed a study abroad version of the course in which he took students to Poland and to Puerto Rico. “An explicit objective of his undergraduate community psychology courses is to prepare citizens who are educated in community psychology principles that include a deep respect for social justice, diversity, and social responsibility.”

Summer Institutes

Dr. Wosinski has brought together students, leaders in the field, and community organizations for two summer institutes (2006, 2007), and is planning his third on Community Response to Disasters. These institutes require enormous efforts in planning, obtaining financial resources, and documenting the proceedings. Students are touched and inspired by these amazingly valuable institute experiences.

By introducing students and involving community organizations and practitioners for the wellbeing of the entire community Dr. Wosinski has not just contributed to the field but he has managed to change the way students learn, interact, and get involved in the area of community.

UCP-SARnet

“The mission of UCP-SARnet is to create a global internet community composed of community practitioners, students and university faculty with the purpose of sharing knowledge, visions, ideas, learning/teaching opportunities, and practical solutions for community practitioners. As facilitator, Dr. Marek Wosinski worked tirelessly, effectively and productively to take care of the whole process of this project. He initiated every important evolutionary phase of UCP-SARNet and made invaluable contributions to UCP-SARNet’s development. Briefly, without his critical endeavor, it would be impossible for UCP-SARNet to reach the current significant stage.” The UCP-SARNet will provide a library of internet resources for community practitioners, students and instructors teaching community-related courses and will give members an opportunity to collaborate across borders. An example of this may be developing partnerships with regional offices of the United Way in Uganda, Ghana, Philippines, Mumbai, and Poland. “By introducing students and involving community organizations and practitioners for the wellbeing of the entire community Dr. Wosinski has not just contributed to the field but he has managed to change the way students learn, interact, and get involved in the area of community.”

We sincerely recognize and congratulate Dr. Marek P. Wosinski for his contributions to education in community psychology and are pleased to award him the SCRA CEP Outstanding Educator Award.

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I receive occasional questions regarding the structure and activities of the International Committee. Therefore, it would be useful to begin with a description of the structure and activities of the committee.

Structure and Activities
The International Committee (IC) is very loosely structured and engages in a very limited number of activities. The committee meets only at the biennial meetings and elects a chair for two years. The IC facilitates the participation and contribution of community psychologists to SCRA activities. Anyone attending the biennial meeting can participate in the committee meeting—SCRA membership is not a requirement.

The committee meeting at the 2007 Biennial in Pasadena was fruitful but the early hour certainly discouraged attendance. (The committee hopes the timing would change at the next biennial.)

In Pasadena, members of the SCRA International Task Force participated in the committee meeting. I, as the chair of the committee, was invited to join the task force. The intention was to explore the ways in which international activities can be pursued in line with SCRA principles and to find ways to support community psychology (CP) around the world.

Tips for SCRA Biennials
At the IC meeting in Pasadena, several participants voiced their concerns about having a biennial at the Hilton. The concerns included the contrast between the settings where CP is practiced and the luxury hotel setting and the ecologically-unfit hotel practices (e.g., extreme AC usage, sunlight-proof meeting rooms, excessive food wrapping, etc.) There was also concern regarding sessions where the exchanges excluded non-native speakers. A suggestion to draft guidelines for planning CP-friendly, ecologically-sound, and inclusive biennial environments was accepted.

Niki Harre (New Zealand) and Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu (Turkey) undertook the task of putting a draft together for review. Niki Harre prepared an excellent draft for input and two tip sheets were quickly produced. At the last stage, Mañuel Riemer (Canada) was invited to contribute—particularly to the tips for ecologically-sound conferences. The final draft was circulated for feedback (among a number of colleagues in the UK CP email group, as well as in the International Task Force email group). The draft was also displayed as a poster at the 2nd International CP Conference in Lisbon in July 2008.

The final draft can be found below. The final tip sheets were sent to SCRA Executive Committee following the 2nd International CP Conference in Lisbon.

Diversity in SCRA Biennials
The cost of travel to the U.S. is rapidly increasing. This should be considered in the allocation of travel support for participants from overseas. The limited amount of travel funding makes it very difficult for community psychologists from developing countries to travel to the biennial. The committee feels it is very important that SCRA provides more funding to ensure the presence of colleagues at the biennial. A budget increase was requested from the SCRA Executive Committee.

International CP Conferences
The 2nd International CP Conference was held in Lisbon in July 2008 and served as a forum for vibrant discussions. David Fryer describes the significance of the conference on page 23 of this issue of TCP.

The 3rd International CP Conference is going to be held in Puebla, Mexico on June 3rd-5th, 2010. The theme is Contemporary Social Problems and Community Agendas. The host of the conference will be colleagues at the Universidad Iberoamericana Puebla. The event promises to be an exciting and vibrant forum for community psychologists as well as for people engaged in community-focused work as a professional, activist, or citizen. The event is expected to showcase exciting work being carried out in Mexico, Central and South America, and draw attention to work with indigenous people.

For further information, support and all forms of input, please visit <www.3iccp2010.org>.

Community Tips for SCRA Conferences

Community psychology (CP) as a field has a commitment to social justice, diversity, inclusion, and social change. CP conferences are becoming more diverse in terms of participants’ backgrounds, native languages and needs.

How about shaping CP conferences to fit with these values and participants’ needs?

Tips for the Organizing Team

Travel, Accommodation & Costs
- Low-cost accommodation options should be available and advertised on the conference website. Ideally, low-cost accommodation should also be the most accessible, making it the default choice for participants. Lower costs make a big difference for participants with little or no travel funding and low income.
- Hold the conference near an airport, or provide low-cost shuttle service to/from the airport.

Venue & Spaces
- Consider suitability of the site for disabled participants.
- Provide “chat-friendly spaces.”
- Consider quick access to emergency care.

Participants of the International Committee meeting at the SCRA Biennial Conference in Pasadena (June 7th-10th, 2007) discussed issues regarding the way CP conferences are held and agreed that a tip sheet for conference organizers and participants might be useful. Niki Harre, Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu and Mañuel Riemer drafted the tip sheets.
• Consider minimizing the distance between venue and local sites where CP is practiced.
• If the venue is a commercial one, consider the management’s history of labor conflicts.
• Provide free or low-cost internet access.

Food, Health & Childcare
• Provide at least one meal each day as part of the conference package.
• Provide different types of food (based upon information collected at the time of registration). At a minimum vegetarian options should always be available. Or go green—see below.
• Consider venues and suggestions for group dinners. Group dinners are useful for interest groups and help participants who might feel a bit isolated.
• Provide information on how to access childcare services during the conference.
• Provide resting area(s) and a study/meditation room.

Tips for Participants

• Conferences are for learning and participants are there to learn collectively. Removing obstacles to learning is a responsibility that everyone should share.
• Know your audience. It is fine for chairs and speakers to ask if there are non-native English speakers in the room. Native speakers should not talk very fast, or use slang, abbreviations and mannerisms to express themselves if there are non-native English speakers in the audience.
• Always allow time for questions and comments at the end of a session. Allow more time for non-native English speakers. Always identify yourself before asking questions.
• Establish procedures that encourage all participants to contribute fully to workshops, innovative sessions, town meetings and committee meetings. The chair can facilitate exchanges. Participants raise hands to speak and must be acknowledged by the chair to speak. The chair (or someone else) can keep a list if many people want to talk. A space at the end of a session allows anyone who has not yet contributed to do so.

Green Tips for SCRA Conferences

The environment is an inseparable part of human existence and communities. Global climate change is threatening the environment. Conferences often have unintended ecological impact: they contribute to global climate change and environmental damage.

How about making CP conferences more environmentally friendly?

Tips for the Organizing Team

Venue & Spaces
• Prefer venues that maximize the use of natural light, heating and cooling. The venue should have recycling and provide recycling boxes. If this is not provided, consider if recyclable material can be collected and delivered to a local recycling depot.
• Accommodation should be located in walking distance or accessible by public transport. If a banquet or another conference event is held off-site, keep it within walking distance.

Materials
• Most people have multiple conference bags. A conference bag that can be used for other purposes is less likely to end up in a landfill. Also consider collecting information at the time of registration: some participants might prefer a paper bag (or no bag at all).
• Provide recycled and recyclable conference materials.
• Avoid excessive paper use (e.g., use both sides of the paper for handouts).

Food & Health
• Prefer reusable plates, cups etc. for conference meals. To the extent this is not possible, consider use of fully biodegradable products that can be composted.
• Avoid serving pre-packaged food.
• Encourage participants to bring their own reusable water bottle and provide readily available water jugs.
• Prefer organic, locally produced food.
• All meals should by default be vegetarian given the fact that environmental impact of producing meat is significant. At the point of registration people can mark whether they prefer a meat-based meal.
• Avoid “ice cold” refreshments. Energy used for ice cold drinks is excessive. Avoid carbonated soft drinks. If that is not possible, provide healthier options.

Carbon Offsetting
• Consider working with an organization to calculate the carbon emissions generated by the conference and how it might be possible to offset these.
• Inform conference participants about the process of carbon offsetting.

Tips for the Participants

• Recycle materials and containers that you have used.
• Avoid taxis whenever possible. Avoid limos and other non-sensible forms of transportation.
• Use “free” resources responsibly.
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Concerns
Edited & Written by Colleen Loomis

Contextualizing LGBT Identities Outside of North America, Western Europe, and Australasia


Within the LGBT Interest Group there are some discussions about the emergence of LGBT identities and organizations around the world during the past two decades. Along with this growth comes a pressing need to attend to the social, political, and historical contexts in which LGBT identities develop. Community psychologists can play an important role in this growth by ensuring that an ethnographic approach is used, even in cases where one identifies as an insider to a nation, culture, or community. Often, work in this area is performed by well-meaning Westerners who bring their cultural reference to bear on other cultures. Given the global growth of LGBT identities being made public, and the accompanying research and action, the leadership of the LGBT Interest Group decided to do a mini-series on considerations for international work. This column is the first of two parts and developed as a result of in-depth conversations with Rich Jenkins. In the next edition (Winter 2008) Gary Harper will report on the LGBT Institute that preceded the International Community Psychology conference held in Lisbon, Portugal June 2008.

Over the past two decades, LGBT identities and organizations have emerged in many parts of the world. Aspects of these social changes appear at least superficially like the changes for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgenders that we have seen in North America, Western Europe, and Australasia, yet many of the underlying cultural and social dynamics may be very different. The implications of emergent LGBT identities for community psychology are becoming evident, as in the case of the Second International Conference on Community Psychology’s invitation to develop a workshop on LGBT issues. In addition, many of our interest group members have become active in projects that cross national boundaries. The heterogeneous patterns of LGBT identities and the variations in their emergence across the world, as well as differences in the character of organizations, are important considerations for building collaborations. These factors often have been neglected despite their potential importance for community psychologists and others. This paper focuses primarily on emergent LGBT identities and organizations outside of North America, Western Europe, and Australasia.

Cultures, historically, have tended to view sexuality in terms of gender or sexual orientation, whereas contemporary concepts may include both (Parker, 1998). Gender in this case can refer to male and female genders, as well as “third genders” such as Native American “two spirits,” the hijra (eunuchs) of Pakistan, and the kathoey of Thailand. Local norms sometimes categorize these “third genders” as a “second kind of female,” attending primarily to persons born as biological males who adopt the behavior, dress, and other attributes of females (e.g., Jackson, 1997; Rajabali, Khan, Warraich, Khannani, & Ali, 2008). In most cases, these “third” genders overlap with our contemporary, Western concept of transgenders, i.e., people of one gender inhabiting the biological body of another, although the links to another gender may be more linked to spiritual identification (Rajabali, et al., 2008) in other cultures. In some societies, these “third genders” also have included “masculine” biological males whose objects of desire were male, but who were locally considered to be part of a gender that mostly had outwardly female manifestations of gender (e.g., Jackson, 1997; Rajabali, et al., 2008). Although “third genders” often have had important historical niches within a society, e.g. political advisors (Rajabali, et al., 2008), they’re current status tends to be as marginal figures, and they sometimes have been identified with criminal behavior, sex work, and/or low level occupations (Jackson, 1997; Rajabali, et al., 2008). Identification as female may be part of this marginal or lower social status, particularly where rigid hierarchies exist in terms of gender power. The place of persons born as biological females who might show male characteristics is less well documented and it is unclear how societies have considered these persons over time. In societies where sexuality has evolved around gender, the concepts of “gay,” “lesbian,” bisexual,” or “homosexual” are relatively new and not always divorced from concepts of gender (Jackson, 1997).

Western societies are characterized as having looked at sexuality in terms of sexual orientation or objects of desire. Even in these conceptions, though, the concepts of “gay,” “lesbian,” bisexual,” or “homosexual” are relatively new and usually attributed to the period since the mid-to-late19th century (D’Emilo & Freedman, 1998). While the different, historical ways of conceiving sexuality are well-documented, the evolution of these categories is not (see Jackson, 1997 and Parker, 1998 for important exceptions). Similarly, there are few examples of how sexual orientation has been adopted and assimilated by societies accustomed to considering only gender. This provides a counterpoint to the relatively recent consideration of transgender identity in

International research on sexuality largely has been initiated by Western researchers, rather than by indigenous investigators. This places obvious constraints on the resulting discourse.

Western societies, although the tendency to see gender non-conformity in the behavior of gays and lesbians has been around for a long time in the West (D’Emilo & Freedman, 1998). International research on sexuality largely has been initiated by Western researchers, rather than by indigenous investigators.
This places obvious constraints on the resulting discourse, given the need to consider depths of contextual factors such as culture, history, and social structure. Cook & Jackson (1999) have thoughtfully documented the problems of foreign researchers attempting to address these issues while also documenting the contingencies that make it difficult for Thai colleagues to initiate their own scholarship on LGBT issues, a pattern that seems common in many places. Jackson is unique in that he speaks and reads Thai and has assembled research in a number of different areas including psychiatric research on homosexuality, Thai Buddhism, and journalistic work that bears on homosexuality, as well as broader sources of historical data. This broad scholarship is rare for a single individual, and especially rare in research on sexuality in different societies and one reason that local ways of thinking may not be fully explored. One area where local scholarship seems to emerge is the consideration of homosexuality as a social or psychiatric problem, and typically treated with a pathologizing perspective (e.g., Jackson, 1999).

Indigenous involvement in LGBT issues is more apparent in the non-governmental organization (NGO) sector, although these often include ties to religiously or ethnically related populations in Western countries. Examples of the transnational NGOs include the NAZ Foundation which has local affiliates in India and elsewhere (<http://www.nfi.net/index.asp>) and the Islamic Helem organization which has an affiliate in Lebanon. The Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand (<http://www.fasiroong.org/> is an example of a fully indigenous NGO. In addition, smaller, less formally organized community based organizations (CBOs) have emerged in a growing number of countries. Support for NGO/CBO activity often has come from international donors as part of responses to their responses to HIV epidemics while other international support has been based on broad human rights concerns, which sometimes also have intersected with HIV prevention activity. The recent program on the Logo U.S. cable television channel, Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World provides examples of these dynamics (Williams, 2008). In the HIV prevention context, there are examples of NGO and CBO involvement with research projects, often as community collaborators, and sometimes taking active roles in data collection and dissemination of findings (e.g., Mansergh, et al., 2006). A concern with the collaborations with international donors is that they may impose particular perspectives by virtue of the work that they support and also may tend to take the focus away from understanding local conceptions and understandings of sexuality.

Perhaps because of the focus on HIV and greater infection rates among men, women’s sexual identity is often absent from international work. Organizations that have received significant support as part of HIV initiatives have tended to focus on gay males and, in some countries, transgenders. The development of organizations that focus on lesbians has been much less. Broad-based LGBT-type coalitions are less common than in the West and relations between gay and lesbian or transgender organizations more distant.

While the gender imbalance among LGBT organizations may reflect funding opportunities, particularly with respect to HIV/AIDS, there may be a variety of other factors at work. Disparities in power are common in much of the world and the greater development of organizations for gay men and the lack of broad-based LGBT coalitions may reflect gender differences in economic power. Nonetheless, other aspects of gender roles and relations also may be important to consider. In many countries, men and women inhabit different social spheres and this may occur even where there is a relatively high level of economic equality.

Engaging LGBT communities internationally requires that we consider how members of a society have viewed sexuality historically, and how that has evolved into the present.

- Relatively undiscovered is the potential tension between historical genders and new sexual identities. This has occurred in the United States where some gay and lesbian leaders have shown ambivalence about the inclusion of transgenders in antidiscrimination legislation. In non-Western countries, some tension has been noted as in the case of masculine identified gay men and transgenders (e.g., Jackson, 1997), but there has not been much documentation of how broad-based LGBT coalitions can develop in non-Western settings, particularly where they represent a bridging of old and new gender identities. This is an issue that community psychologists seeking to build collaborations will need to explore further.

In sum, engaging LGBT communities internationally requires that we consider how members of a society have viewed sexuality historically, and how that has evolved into the present. For instance, in some societies gender and sexuality are not distinct conceptualizations and in places where there is a distinction it is important to understand if there is a hierarchy and how it op-
erates (e.g., gender may trump sexuality or vice versa). In other cases, a social rite of passage may seem to a Westerner as sexual behavior when it is not (e.g., ritualized homosexual behavior; Schweder & Herdt, 1990). Ironically, some ethnographers have argued that employment of “psychological” skills, such as depth interviewing, can aid in understanding the contexts in which gender and sexuality identities have developed (Herdt & Stoller, 1990). Clearly, there is a need to build on what we know as psychologists, while also addressing ourselves to matters of historical, social, political and economic context. We need to be sensitive to how international movements have contributed to local ideas and initiatives and consider what kind of role is most constructive and most likely to be welcomed. The absence of linkages among gay, lesbian, and transgendered people and organizations, as well as the lack of ties to broader social movements need to be considered in terms of how those conditions have shaped local thinking and action and the contexts that they create for emerging identities and organizations.

References

Living Community Psychology
Edited & Written by Gloria Levin
GloriaLevin@verizon.net

“How much do you know (REALLY know) about the life, current and past, of your community psychology colleagues? Despite having known Susan Wolfe for many years, I only understood the extraordinary efforts she had made to arrive at her current place in life when I interviewed her at length. She warned me, upon volunteering to be featured in this column: “People will be very surprised to learn some things about me that go against the image I’ve always projected.” That sounded intriguing.”

Susan starts the tale of her life odyssey in her hometown of Flint, Michigan. “In high school, I was not considered college material. Coming from a blue collar, Polish background, she notes that “our people are never seen as being bright or competent.” After high school graduation, her mother paid her fees to attend beauty school, and she received a license as a beautician. But upon becoming pregnant, “my parents kicked me out of the house, and my boyfriend stuck me in an apartment, giving me no money, to the point that I was actually hungry.” Her boyfriend had a drinking problem and, two months before their scheduled wedding, the engagement was ended.

Susan then went to work as a clerk typist under a public employment training program and lived in a trailer with her baby and another boyfriend whom she soon married, under pressure from her parents. Soon after, at the age of twenty, she became pregnant for a second time. She had been pressured by him and his parents to have a second child, one that would be “his own child.” But her husband represented another bad choice in men. He turned out to be violent and abusive, even “crazy.” They separated and filed for divorce. Her father-in-law was well connected

Featuring:
Susan Wolfe, PhD
Program Analyst
Office of Evaluation and Inspections
Office of the Inspector General
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Dallas, Texas
Email: smwolfe913@hotmail.com
politically, so when she called Child Protective Services after a violent episode while they were separated, the CPS social worker (a friend of their family) sided with the husband. After the divorce, years of legal squabbling ensued, in which her former in-laws tried to have her declared an unfit mother in order to gain custody of her second child. She received no alimony or child support; her ex-husband was being supported by his parents, so he showed no income that the courts could attach for child support.

At this point, she was still living in a trailer, was the sole support for her two children and earned only $10,000 a year, working full time at a bank. She decided to attend college; she now can acknowledge that her major goal was to find a husband, which she characterizes as “the socialization and mindset of the blue-collar girl.” She assumed that college would offer better hunting grounds for quality men, better quality than those she had been meeting. She also realized that education could lead to more power and thus, to more control of her life. She applied for entrance to the University of Michigan at Flint, having successfully negotiated with her employer to underwrite her college tuition while she continued working for the bank.

Susan subsequently married again, but her second husband was a low-paid bookkeeper. Their combined income (even with her working part time) was $15,000. She juggled a number of low-paying jobs, in a valiant and proud effort to stay in school. By that time, her father had died, and her mother sold them her house at a good price. Susan continued to be very busy—in college, working, being very active in her children’s lives and still enduring the emotionally and financially draining legal proceedings with her former in laws who were suing for custody of her son, a process which dragged on for seven grim years.

Susan never had considered herself “smart,” she assumed she was in college because of “luck” rather than by innate talent. However, to her surprise, she proceeded to earn A’s and B’s. She loved earning recognition for her intellect, being especially proud to have received an A+ in a research course. Two professors, Harriett Wall (experimental psychology) and Ron Silverman (clinical/community psychology), became her mentors and encouraged her to continue her studies in graduate school. Susan was interested in combining research (she has a natural talent for statistics) and systems change (“I wanted to work on a systems level to confront the social problems of many women like me”).

A fellow student, Kay Taylor, encouraged her to consider Michigan State University’s ecological psychology graduate program although she would have to commute between Flint and East Lansing, an hour commute each way. Her husband approved the plan but only if she continued to contribute her “share” of income to the household. Susan received a BS in 1985 and was accepted to MSU for the fall of 1986. Fortunately, during her first year of graduate school, she was able to stay focused on schoolwork, not having to contend with legal proceedings. The reason for this respite was that her ex-father-in-law was in jail for raping an eight year old girl. “Otherwise, they would have kept me for my whole LIFE,” she says.

“Money has always been an issue for me in trying to support two children and getting an education,” she says. Responsibility for supporting her children always fell on her shoulders. In order to pay for the first year of graduate school at MSU, Susan held a teaching assistantship and “maxed out” on loans to pay for her tuition and books. Her second year was made easier by another mentor, Professor Lou Tornatzky: “He gave me confidence, career advice and employment through his position at the Industrial Technology Institute in Michigan.” She received her MA degree (ecological psychology) in 1988 but, around the time she obtained ABD status (having completed her PhD comprehensive exams in 1990), her husband was transferred to Texas, and she had to move her family from Michigan to Dallas and look for work.

Susan became Assistant Director of Research at Dallas County Community College, meanwhile attempting to move forward with her dissertation. At this time, she was divorced from her second husband, so she was no longer restricted to Texas. As a result of an encounter with Dr. Paul Toro at an SCRA biennial conference, she moved to SUNY/Buffalo to work on a large NIMH research grant Paul had just obtained on homelessness and poverty. Within six months, in 1992, Paul left Buffalo for a position at Wayne State University in Detroit, so Susan was again uprooted. But she wasn’t happy in Detroit, her mother had died, and she was generally experiencing hard times. Meanwhile, having reconciled with and remarried her second husband, she returned, in mid-1993, to Dallas, taking a position as Director of Research at the Dallas Child Guidance Clinic.

During this time, one after the other of her proposed dissertation topics was rejected by her MSU advisor as unacceptable, for not being sufficiently experimental. Feeling unsupported by MSU (“I was crushed, given the clear impression that MSU had given up on me, unwilling even to give me advice I needed”), she explored options for completing her PhD elsewhere. Fortunately, Dr. Duane Buhrmester at the University of Texas at Dallas welcomed her as an advanced graduate student but, more importantly, guaranteed that she would finish her PhD. This guarantee was made feasible when the university waived many of its standard PhD requirements, accepting the work she had completed at MSU. She was a graduate assistant (1995-98) working on a study of adolescent family and peer relationships, but her real income flow was from a research and evaluation consulting business she had established (1989-98). Susan was awarded a PhD in December, 1999 from the University of Texas with a major in Human Development and Communication Sciences, eleven (hard) years after obtaining her master’s degree from MSU.

The path that Susan has taken in her life is testament to her apt warning to us: “Remember—even the battered woman in a trailer has potential.”

Graduate school and the dissertation eventually took its toll on Susan’s marriage, and she and her husband divorced. The final blow came when Susan started researching potential post-doc op-
portunities, and her husband informed her that he was not willing to move if “that’s all the money you’ll make.” Having contributed more than her fair share to the family’s upkeep while striving to maintain the appropriate corporate wife/suburban mom image, Susan left the marriage with substantial debt and only her share of equity from the house. Fortunately, her sons were grown then—Jason had recently married his childhood sweetheart, and Kristopher was old enough to work. (Update: Jason, age 32, is a “great father,” with two small children and loves his job as a police officer in Irving, TX. Kristopher has had a rougher path in school and through his early 20s. A late bloomer at 29, he is starting college again and works in Dallas for a mortgage company on its computer help desk.)

Finding herself without health insurance and unable to move away to pursue a post-doctoral experience, she began working at Parkland Hospital in Dallas while she finished her PhD. She remained there for 5 years. Although the positions she held at Parkland involved program evaluation and then research, her boss inauspiciously warned her: “Your PhD means nothing here.” Her first Parkland position was to manage an adolescent prenatal education project, but it soon was discontinued.

She was then made responsible for managing the hospital’s rape crisis center but became frustrated in her attempts to reform ineffective practices. For example, at that time a call to the rape crisis hotline was answered by a recorded machine and then transferred to a main hospital line, where the caller could be on hold for 15 minutes, only to end up speaking to a nurse generalist. After triage, the caller might be given an appointment for a future appointment (rather than being seen immediately by a trained rape crisis team, as is the standard practice elsewhere).

Susan’s ideas for creating a new service model (and for seeking grants to underwrite the costs of the new model) were ignored by the institutional rigidity of a hospital bureaucracy. Their rationale? “We don’t want to deal with grants.” She managed other programs at Parkland for prenatal and postnatal care for high-risk women and their children, becoming principal investigator of an experimental study that compared two models of home visiting and parenting support with a control group.

Disillusioned that she was unable to impact the hospital system to improve the quality of services, late in 2002 she accepted a program analyst position in the Dallas-based, regional Office of the Inspector General (OIG), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Susan explains that every federal agency has an OIG; in addition to evaluations (her main area), OIG’s other roles include inspections, audits, and legal support. (Unlike the U.S. Government Accountability Office which is part of the U.S. legislative branch and can conduct investigations across all federal agencies, OIG’s oversight is limited to programs supported by or under the jurisdiction of its own agency.) Each regional OIG tends to specialize in different programs. For example, the Atlanta OIG focuses on responsibilities of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) which is also headquartered in Atlanta. DHHS’s Philadelphia OIG is strong on drug pricing. The responsibilities of the Dallas DHHS/OIG include nursing home oversight and adverse medical events.

At the Dallas OIG for almost 6 years now, the bulk of her work there has been in evaluating systems that enforce federal nursing home regulations. Her job entails developing studies, from initial design to presenting the finished reports, on a topic of public interest. Her written reports convey findings and propose practical policy recommendations in a manner that is not only understandable to senior government officials and the general public, but also implementable as practical recommendations. The OIG professional staff meet annually in a work planning process to determine which studies they will conduct for the coming year. Frequently, they undertake studies in response to congressional requests for information.

She served as a program analyst on a study to examine the imposition of civil money penalties on nursing homes cited for deficiencies. This was followed by her leading a related study that looked at the collection of monetary penalties from recalcitrant nursing homes. The resultant reports were well received by DHHS’s Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Susan has been gratified that CMS has addressed all of the study recommendations.

She led another study involving the Food and Drug Administration’s National Drug Code Directory; her team’s report is the basis of many system-wide reforms that are underway. Following the national disaster of battering hurricanes (including Katrina) in the Gulf States and the almost total failure of emergency systems to protect the elderly, she co-led a study team on nursing home emergency preparedness and response. She is completing, as a team leader, the final report of a study that examined systems for quality of care in nursing home corporations, looking at accountability requirements imposed and compliance (integrity) agreements. Her next assignment is to participate on a team that is studying adverse medical events. “The experience I’ve gained has been wonderful,” Susan enthuses, “and I encourage community psychologists to work in the federal government because of the impact you can have and the exposure to how things really work.”

However, one downside of working for the government is its general nonsupport of its employees’ activities in professional associations. Susan joined SCRA as a student member when she started MSU’s ecological psychology graduate program. She attends biennial conferences regularly and participates in biennial activities. She once served as the Southeast Regional Representative and co-chaired the community health interest group. However, frustratingly, her government employers do not see the value in these activities, nor did her employers at Parkland Hospital. “Unlike academia where you are encouraged
and rewarded for leadership and active participation in professional groups, the government does not.” This is a drawback of working in the “real world.” It is doubly hard to stay connected with SCRA when your employer does not support these activities. She singles out *The Community Psychologist* as a major way she keeps in touch with the field. Susan has always found SCRA to be a welcoming home and is proud that SCRA not only accepts but values diversity. “When I arrive at a biennial conference, I feel that I’m at home.”

Soon after beginning her OIG job and after being single for several years, Susan took on a new mission: romance!! She had many fix-up’s and first dates but found the internet to be more efficient, especially *Match.com* which she calls a “man mall.” Said Susan: “I shopped a lot, knowing what I was looking for in a partner—intelligence, good values, interesting.” There she met Charles Hipkins who works in the computer industry, has grown children and seemed more normal than most. Quiet, even introverted, Charles turned out to be a perfect fit for Susan’s need to protect her long-sought independence, “going and coming when I please, including playing tennis four times a week.” Susan acknowledges that years ago, when she was making bad choices in men, she would have been turned off by someone of Charles’s quiet nature, but now mature, she can truly value him for his dependability, kindness, diversity of interests and offbeat sense of humor.

When asked what she thinks will be her major contribution to her profession, Susan said: “I have a lot more to accomplish and want to have more impact on people.” She can foresee working again on issues surrounding adolescent women’s health and sexuality, with a commitment to promoting physical fitness and a sense of ownership of one’s body. She has completed coursework to be certified as a personal trainer—a novel way to improve adolescent girls’ misperceptions of their bodies. She is dubious that she’ll stay in a government career until retirement because she misses the diversity of opportunities for change available through consulting and academia. But community psychology will continue to underlie her future professional work, as it has in the past, providing her a sound systems-centered, preventive, and social change-oriented intellectual framework.

The path that Susan has taken in her life is testament to her apt warning to us: “Remember—even the battered woman in a trailer has potential.”

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**Regional Update**

Edited by Bernadette Sánchez

bsanchez@depaul.edu

As the summer comes to an end, a number of regional coordinators (RCs) have completed their three-year terms in August 2008: Emily Ozer in the U.S.–West Region, Sherry Hamby in the U.S.–Southeast Region, and Debra M. Jozefowicz–Simbeni in the U.S.–Midwest Region. Peter Drake completed his term as a student regional coordinator (SRCs) in the Midwest. I would like to thank all of these individuals for their dedication and hard work in promoting SCRA and for organizing activities and events in their regions.

In the meantime, we have new RCs and SRCs who will begin their term in August 2008! We welcome Mariolga Reyes, in the Rocky Mountain/Southwest Region, who moved there from Puerto Rico recently. We also welcome Maria Chun and Regina Langhout in the West Region. Maria is in Hawai’i, and Regina is in California. Finally, we welcome Robert Gutierrez and Nicole Roesner in Chicago who are new SRCs in the Midwest. Please read the updates in each of the above regions to learn more about these individuals. Each of them is doing important work in community psychology!

We are always looking for new RCs and SRCs. The following regions in the U.S. need RCs: Midwest, Rocky Mountain/Southwest, and the Southeast. Further, we would love to have a RC in Latin America to inform us about news and events related to community psychology in that part of the world. Finally, David Fryer has been our RC in Europe/Middle East/Africa (yes, it’s a large region!) for much longer than his three-year term so if anyone in that area would like to join him or take over, please do not hesitate to contact me!

**Asia**

Regional Coordinator

Toshi Sasao: tsasao@sd6.so-net.ne.jp

Community psychology continues to attract many students and professionals in Asia as social and mental health issues call for more community-oriented interventions and approaches with appropriate evaluation strategies. In June, we had the privilege of hearing Dr. Abe Wandersman, of the University of South Carolina, speak at the annual conference of the Japanese Society of Community Psychology, in Nagoya, one of the major metropolitan cities in southwestern Japan. Over fifty participants came to Abe’s talk entitled *Bridging Research and Practice to Achieve Outcomes: Community Psychology, Community Science, and Empowerment Evaluation*. At the conference, many flocked to see him afterwards for further questions and possible collaborations in the future. In addition to this talk, Abe was invited to several more presentations and workshops in Tokyo and Osaka. With his family members, Abe made sightseeing trips to Kyoto and Hakone for two weeks. This visit has given many folks a chance to get to know Abe and his work in both personal and professional ways. In late March, Dr. Tod Sloan of Lewis and Clark College
was also in Japan, giving lectures and workshops on poverty and discrimination in the U.S. and Asia to a diverse group of people in peace psychology, community psychology, sociology, political science, international relations, etc. Tod’s critical psychology approach was received with enthusiasm among many of the Japanese participants. These are some of the major events sponsored by local professional organizations and universities related to community psychology. Those of us in Asia feel much more networking among psychologists may be desired and needed, but the distance within the region often does not allow for closer collaboration, although Korean psychologists have been collaborating with their Japanese counterparts through the Japan-Korea Seminar in Community Psychology since 2003. A small-scale regional conference on community psychology is being planned especially among Japanese, Korean, and Chinese psychologists within several months. Interested parties should contact Toshi Sasao at <tsasao@sd6.so-net.ne.jp>.

Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific
Regional Coordinator
Katie Thomas: katie.thomas@curtin.edu.au

The principles of community psychology continue to flourish in the Australian context where community building is increasingly valued by government, and those who are interested in reducing social inequity and in implementing social interventions cost-effectively. SCRA Australia has resolved to try to increase the profile of those with community expertise by two strategies. The first is to profile the expertise of members across Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific, and the second is to attempt to actively foster as many synergistic and collaborative partnerships as possible by increasing networking across the region.

In line with this decision, Australian Psychological Society and SCRA members are seeking ways to increase the cooperative partnerships among community practitioners in the region and invite all interested readers to have their name and profile added to a listing of those whose primary expertise and interest is in community building. Interested practitioners, academics and students who would like to make links with others throughout the New Zealand, South Pacific, and Australian region are invited to send their name and details of interest, along with any ideas they have for increasing collaborative capacity throughout the region, to the regional coordinator. Members are asked to give their permission in their message so that their email and other contact details can then be circulated to other collaborative community practitioners as part of the listing. Current project collaboration possibilities along with invitations for future collaborative research will also be welcomed.

The next SCRA meeting in October will be an open meeting to discuss further the advancement of cooperative community practice in the region. The general title for the meeting will be Collaborative and Cooperative Motives for Community Psychology: How Can They be Achieved? The meeting will be held during the week of September 20th at
the Song Tam Vietnamese restaurant in South Fremantle, and all SCRA members and interested members of the public are welcome to attend. For final details and date confirmation please contact Katie Thomas at <katie.thomas@curtin.edu.au> (08) 9330 5077.

Europe/Middle East/Africa
Regional Coordinator
David Fryer: d.m.fryer@stir.ac.uk

The major recent community psychological event in Europe was the 2nd International Conference on Community Psychology: Building Participative, Empowering and Diverse Communities—Visioning Community Psychology in a Worldwide Perspective which was held in Lisbon, Portugal on June 4th-6th, 2008. While there have been a number of conferences with international attendance organized in Australia/New Zealand (the Trans-Tasman biennials), in the U.S. (SCRA biennials) and in Europe (European Community Psychology Association—previously called the European Network of Community Psychology), this conference could claim to have more international organizing and scientific committees than most. The organizing committee was composed of members from: Australia (2 members); Canada; Chile; Japan; Portugal (2 members including the chair); Puerto Rico; South Africa; Spain; UK; and the U.S. (2 members). The scientific committee was composed of members from: Australia (chair); Brazil; Chile; Columbia; Germany; Italy; New Zealand; Puerto Rico; South Africa; Spain; the U.S. and Venezuela. The practical arrangements for the conference were handled by an all-Portuguese executive committee of sixteen members ably coordinated by Maria Vargas–Moniz.

The Lisbon conference program itself included over 350 presentations and over 130 posters whose abstracts referred to contributors from at least 30 countries including: Australia; Brazil; Canada; Chile; Columbia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Indonesia; Iran; Israel; Italy; Japan; Mexico; Mozambique; New Zealand; Norway; Palestine; Poland; Portugal; Puerto Rico; Mexico; Slovakia; South Africa; Spain; Sweden; Turkey; UK; the U.S. and Venezuela.

An interesting dynamic within the conference was the contrast between the dominant discourse that community psychology is becoming “established” and “international” and that this is a “good thing,” and a counter or subjugated discourse that community psychology is becoming de-radicalized, intellectually colonized and that this is a bad thing. Those emphasizing the latter drew attention to six of the seven pre-conference “Institutes” being run by United Statesians (and the seventh by a Puerto Rican; Puerto Rico being of course an unincorporated, organized territory of the U.S.); the only keynote address being given by a United Statesian; three out of the eight “thematic keynotes” being given by United Statesians (others were from: Australia; Germany; Italy; UK; and Venezuela) and a fifth of presentations being by United Statesians despite the U.S. being one of more than 30 countries represented at the conference.

The European Community Psychology Association (ECPA) held two consecutive General Assemblies during the 2nd International Conference on Community Psychology. It was announced that a JISCmail discussion list for the European Community Psychology Association has been set up. Please contact the moderator David Fryer (ECPA President-Elect) if you wish to join. ECPA also mandated the president-elect to make further exploratory enquiries regarding the setting up of a European journal of community psychology. The ECPA is also setting up interest groups in Suicide (coordinator: Nicholas Carr) and Community Critical Psychology (coordinator: David Fryer). The next ECPA conference is to be held in France in 2009. To find out more about community psychology in France please visit: <http://www.psychologie-communaute.fr/cmsmadgestable/>. The 2009 UK Community Psychology Conference is being held in Edinburgh on September 18th-19th, 2008. Highlights are likely to be an invited presentation by Ian Parker of Manchester Metropolitan University, England comparing and contrasting critical psychology and community psychology. A subsequent discussion will be held on community psychology’s relationship with the psychology establishment and an input by members of the Seroxat Users’ Group, activists who have taken on the pharmaceutical industry (Seroxat is the UK trade name for the SSRI, Paroxetine, whose U.S. trade name is Paxil). For more information about the Seroxat Users’ Group please visit: <http://www.seroxatusersgroup.org.uk/index.htm>. And for more information about the UK Community Psychology Conference 2009 please visit: <http://www.pacarras.net/CP2008.html>.

U.S. Midwest Region
Regional Coordinators
Debra M. Hernandez Jozefowicz–Simbeni:
debi-s@wayne.edu
JoAnn Sobec:
ab1350@wayne.edu
Nicole Porter:
nporter@depaul.edu

Student Coordinators
Todd Shagott:
tpshagott@wichita.edu
Peter Drake:
pdrake@depaul.edu
Liz Shelleby:
estelleb@depaul.edu

Incoming Student Regional Coordinators
Robert Gutierrez:
riger7@depaul.edu
Nicole Roesner:
nroesner@depaul.edu

The Midwest Chapter of SCRA has had a few exciting events over the past few months. Back in May at the Midwest Psychological Association’s Annual Meeting, there were many excellent posters, roundtable discussions, and symposia presented by Division 27 members. A presentation of particular interest was a roundtable discussion in which Chicago’s 32nd Ward Alderman Scott Waguespack attended and shared his ideas on collaborating with SCRA members. Also of note was the well attended Division 27 public policy social hour after the last day of the conference, for which we are greatly indebted to the division and regional network committee for providing funding. Friends from all over the Midwest were brought together to discuss SCRA’s involvement in public policy debates and many interesting ideas were shared.

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Coming up on October 10th and 11th, the graduate students from Michigan State University will host the 21st Annual Midwest ECO Conference in Battle Creek, Michigan. The conference theme is The Value and Values of Community Psychology and will feature a keynote panel of community psychologists discussing the values of CP that they bring into their everyday work. There will also be several excellent workshops, roundtable discussions, symposia, and poster sessions to attend. If you have any questions about the conference, email the planning committee at <MidwestECO2008@gmail.com>.

Finally, we would like to introduce our new Midwest regional student coordinators, Nicole Roesner & Robert Gutierrez. Nicole is a research assistant currently working at DePaul University’s Center for Community Research under Drs. Leonard Jason and Nicole Porter. She is the coordinator of the Buddy Program, a not-for-profit program which pairs students with individuals in the community suffering from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Multiple Chemical Sensitivities, and Fibromyalgia. Right now she is collecting evaluation data to determine the program’s efficacy as an illness management intervention. Nicole is also applying to doctoral programs in clinical psychology this year and hopes to work with ethnic minority youth and people with disabilities. Robert Gutierrez is a second year student in the community psychology doctoral program at DePaul University. He is currently an intern at Chicago Public School’s Department of Program Evaluation. He is very interested in how people define and shape community in their lives and what role that plays in their own sense of identity. Finally, Robert is working on his master’s thesis which will investigate the dynamics of multiple senses of community amongst Latino/a immigrants to the United States.

**U.S. Northeast Region**

Regional Coordinators
Chiara Sabina: c.sabina@unh.edu
Seema Shah: s_shah@brown.edu
LaKeasha Garner: lg2418@columbia.edu
Sudha Wadhwani: wadhwanis@mail.montclair.edu

Northeast regional coordinators, Chiara Sabina, Seema Shah, Sudha Wadhwani, and LaKeasha Garner, coordinated the SCRA Northeast Regional Conference at the Eastern Psychological Association, which was held on Friday, March 14th at the Park Plaza Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts. All four coordinators will continue in the following year. It has not yet been determined if we will be recruiting a first year coordinator or student position at this time.

The 2008 regional SCRA conference was a stimulating and motivating event, including a range of symposia, paper presentations, and posters related to applied research in school settings, learning and service in clubhouse settings, and self-reflection toward community action. Throughout the day, we had eighteen presenters and over sixty attendees. The invited keynote speaker was M. Brinton Lykes, an associate professor at Boston College, whose research areas include exploration of the interstices of indigenous cultural beliefs and practices and those of Western psychology and creating community-based responses to the effects of war and state-sponsored violence. Dr. Lykes’s inspirational keynote, entitled *Activist Scholarship, Human Rights, and Social Justice: Possible Contributions for a Global, Community-based Psychology* featured lessons learned from community-based interventions around the world. In addition, Dr. Lykes challenged audience members to think about how to merge scholarship and activism in their own work.

The conference provided a stimulating opportunity for community psychologists, professionals, researchers, and students within the northeast region to connect and share their commitment to impacting social change. Attached are select photographs of the event. The Northeast regional coordinators are looking forward to another exciting year ahead! Information regarding the EPA Meeting, the Northeast SCRA Program, and abstract submission procedure for the next conference in March 2009 will be available in mid-September on the SCRA website. For more information, please visit <www.scra27.org>.
We are also excited to be hosting the SCRA 2009 National Biennial Conference at Montclair State University in June 2009 in Montclair, New Jersey. We are proud as Northeast regional coordinators to be hosting the national conference in our region!

U.S. Rocky Mountain/Southwest Region
Incoming Regional Coordinator
Mariolga Reyes: mreyescruz@gmail.com

Mariolga Reyes is the new regional coordinator in the Rocky Mountain/Southwest, U.S.! She obtained her PhD from the University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign in 2005 and returned to her native Puerto Rico to work as Research Associate at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, University of Puerto Rico at Cayey, a position funded by an NIH grant. At the institute, she worked as community consultant and researcher examining education equity and education organizing, collaborated in a study of racism in elementary schools, taught field research methods for community health assessment and published her dissertation. She also taught an introductory course on the foundations of knowledge in the social sciences at the Río Piedras campus. Additionally, she was part of the organizing committee for the Puerto Rico Social Forum, affiliated to The Social Forum of the Americas and the World Social Forum. These are democratic spaces where people active in diverse social movements meet to reflect and act on social justice issues. After three years in Puerto Rico, Mariolga has now moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, with her partner. She looks forward to meeting other community psychologists in the region, and to organizing activities to strengthen our work.

U.S. West Region
Regional Coordinators
Emily J. Ozer: eozzer@berkeley.edu
Eric Stewart: jestewart@uw.edu
Incoming 1st-year Regional Coordinators
Maria Chun: mariachu@hawaii.edu
Regina Langhout: langhout@ucsc.edu
Student Coordinator
Marielka Schotland: mss286@nyu.edu

We welcome two new regional coordinators, Maria Chun & Regina Langhout, in the West Region! Maria B. J. Chun is the Associate Chair of Administration and Finance for the University of Hawaii’s (UH) Department of Surgery. She has been a public servant for her entire career and has worked exclusively in state government positions. For her current position, Maria reports directly to the department chair. Her duties include the oversight of all administrative and fiscal matters within the department, including grants administration. She currently works on cultural competency initiatives within her department, with a particular focus on surgical resident preparedness to provide cross-cultural care, which is based on work done nationally. Maria is also collaborating with the UH medical school’s Office of Medical Education and other medical school departments, such as Family Medicine and Community Health, Native Hawaiian Health, and the Health Sciences Library on the development of a cultural competency resource guide. Prior to this, she worked as a performance auditor/program evaluator for the Hawaii State Auditor’s Office for ten years. She also worked as the director of a regulatory reform project for the Office of the Lieutenant Governor and served as a legislative budget analyst for two sessions.

Regina Langhout is a social-community psychologist and assistant professor at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She received her PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign in 2001. Gina’s research examines how systems, or settings, can best facilitate optimal development for people in those settings. Most recently, she has turned her attention to conscientizacin and sustainable social change in elementary schools and neighborhoods. Her research team runs an after-school program where ten-year-olds learn how to conduct action research to create systemic change in their school. Her research team also assists a group of adults who are focusing on building a stronger sense of community across several neighborhoods. She teaches classes related to social-community psychology, ethnographic action research, community-based interventions, and participatory action research. Additionally, she is co-editing (with Elizabeth Thomas) a special issue for the American Journal of Community Psychology entitled “Children as protagonists: Participatory action research in collaboration with children.” In her free time, she likes to hike, bike, read fiction, and cook.

We also have many exciting news from Hawai’i! Kati Corlew, Melodi Wynne, and Gina Cardazon, graduate students at the Community and Cultural Concentration in the University of Hawaii’s Department of Psychology <http://www.psychology.hawaii.edu/pages/graduate_programs/community.html> have been off-island over the summer as a part of the Quentin Burdick Rural Health Practicum. They spent six weeks working as part of an interdisciplinary team in a rural setting. Kati Corlew was on Hawaii Island, Melodi Wynne was on Molokai, and Gina Cardazon was on Kauai. Each of their teams had different community-based projects and programs that they worked with, culminating in a presentation to the community about their work during the summer.

David Jackson just graduated from the Community and Cultural Concentration program in the University of Hawai`i’s Department of Psychology. He has worked with a Hawaii-based research and consulting company for the past five years and is now doing independent research, particularly program evaluation. He also helped co-found a research and marketing company and will be instructing at University of Hawaii at Manoa beginning fall semester 2008.

Susana Helm had a three-part talk show series on public access television in Hawai’i that dealt with youth violence prevention in communities: (1) teen dating violence prevention, (2) sexual assault and sexual violence prevention, (3) and youth violence issues and community solutions. Guests included national staff from the Centers for Disease Control, and local representatives from Domestic Violence Action Center’s Teen Alert Program, Sex Abuse Treatment Center, Asian/Pacific Islander Youth Violence Prevention Center, as well as youth from a local public high school. 🌟
Native Hawaiian Youth and Substance Misuse Prevention Science

Native Hawaiian youth have been shown to have high rates of substance use and misuse, with significant adverse effects (Mokuau, 2002; Wong, Klinge, & Price, 2004). Further, aside from one documented program (Kim, Withy, Jackson, & Sekiguichi, 2007), there have been no peer-reviewed prevention programs that have been developed specifically for Hawaiian youth and that have demonstrated effectiveness in curbing drug use. Our experience has been that communities in Hawai‘i have struggled with identifying effective drug prevention programs that are contextually relevant for their youth and community and are supported by the schools and local organizations that are charged with implementing them.

Promoting Social Competence and Resilience among Native Hawaiian Youth (PSCR) is a pre-prevention study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. PSCR examines the social and environmental contexts of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug offers made to middle school aged Native Hawaiian youth in rural Hawai‘i. The overall study incorporates a blended methodology over a five-year period, and is an adaptation of a similar study focused on drug use and American Indian youth (see Okamoto et al., 2006 for an overview of the methodology). As of this writing, we are in year two of the study and have solidified our partnership with several schools and communities. This article will describe the nature of our collaboration and its potential to reshape the prevailing model of cultural adaptations of evidence-based practices with rural Native Hawaiian communities.

Rural Communities, Native Hawaiian Youth, and A School-Community-University Partnership

In early discussions about project implementation, we agreed that the first step should be to invite community partners to join us. As community psychologists know, rural areas often are underserved in terms of health services and tend to be overlooked due to logistical challenges experienced by the university-based researcher. Despite these challenges, rural Hawai‘i became a priority for this project. Middle schools in rural locations in Hawai‘i have a higher percentage of Native Hawaiian students, as compared to more suburbanized or urbanized areas of Hawai‘i (Accountability Resource Center Hawaii, 2004). By using an ecological model, our intent is to develop comprehensive and authentic strategies for drug use resistance that are both place-based (rural) and culture-based (Native Hawaiian).

PSCR is part of two important communities. Our academic community includes the research team from Hawai‘i Pacific University and the University of Hawai‘i. Our academic community strives to promote excellence in scholarship, which includes training graduates, undergraduates, junior researchers, and community researchers. We are also members of the drug prevention community in Hawai‘i. While our role as prevention scientists may differ from community practitioners or educators, we ultimately share the same goal of eliminating drug-related health and educational disparities and the differential burden born by rural and Native Hawaiian communities. The relationship between substance misuse, health, and educational achievement is unmistakable. Preventing substance use in collaboration with public middle schools in rural Hawai‘i is fundamental to Native Hawaiian health because the Native Hawaiian student population, with few exceptions, accounts for 35% or more of each school’s total student population (Accountability Resource Center Hawai‘i, 2004).

Given the emphasis on place-based contextual relevance, our research team agreed not only to focus on rural locales but to concentrate the work in a specific geographic location. The Hawai‘i County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office invited the principal investigator to work with their geographic community on the Big Island. This invitation originated from the community’s frustration in utilizing various ineffective programs with little or no lasting effects, or that had little relevance to the culture and values of the youth and families in Hawai‘i and the Pacific. The invitation also stemmed from our prior successful community research collaborations. The partnership between the universities and the Big Island community was solidified through mutual respect between the researchers and community, and a common goal of strengthening the Big Island communities by preventing youth drug use. Finally, this project was consistent with the County of Hawai‘i’s recent comprehensive plan to reduce the levels of juvenile delinquency of their youth. The plan is “a data driven, research based, outcomes focused approach that coordinates prevention efforts with the juvenile justice system’s response to criminal behavior” (Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, 2007).

After the initial contact with the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, the research team was introduced to lead administrators in the public school system, who expressed interest in reducing drug related problems in their districts. After reviewing project information, several schools joined the research partnership. The schools were interested in learning more about the environmental demands for drug use for Hawaiian youth in their communities and were eager about the long term potential to develop, implement, and evaluate a drug prevention program tailored for rural Hawaiian youth in their region.

Research Methodology

To date, five rural middle schools have participated in this phase of the research. A series (N = 14) of small group interviews...
with 47 Native Hawaiian middle school students in sixth through eighth grade were conducted with separate groups for girls (N = 26) and boys (N = 21). All students self-identified as Native Hawaiian, in addition to Pacific, Asian American, Euro-American, and American Indian ethnicultural groups. Interviews were held at school, and ranged from forty minutes to just over an hour. Each interview was audio recorded, transcribed verbatim, and reviewed for accuracy. Students described situations in which drugs had been offered to them or to other middle school students they knew, shared their views on the extent of the drug problem in their school or community, and discussed what could be done about it. Students also talked about the ways in which cultural values, practices, and beliefs help middle school youth resist alcohol, marijuana, cigarettes, and other drugs.

Contextually Relevant Prevention Science: An Imperative for Rural Indigenous Communities

A prevailing paradigm in prevention science favors large scale generalizability of findings and dissemination of evidence-based practices. Contrary to this widespread approach to prevention science, our research partnership has developed out of the community’s need for regional and cultural specificity. The decision to focus our efforts by grounding our study within a specific place and culture was based on the mutually consistent value system of the academic and prevention communities participating in the study.

A burgeoning movement in the United States toward adapting evidence based practices exists. This means that communities who request prevention (or treatment) funding increasingly must select from a set menu of programs and practices. This appears well intended: communities will know that the program works because science has provided rigorous evidence. However, do we know “who” these programs actually work with?

Rehuher, Hiramatsu, & Helm (unpublished data, 2007) have argued that nationally endorsed programs still require critical analysis of the evidence and applications before an informed selection is possible. Further, the foundations of many evidence based practices exclude the worldviews of Hawaiian (and indigenous) youth, rendering them fundamentally flawed when applied in these communities. And, while some researchers have suggested that evidence based practices can be designed flexibly to enable cultural adaptations, these adapted programs are often unable to move beyond superficial cultural references (e.g., replacing the word “family” with “ohana”) to incorporate deeper, culturally relevant experiences (e.g., the unique effects of discrimination, colonization, and health disparities). Ultimately, the result is that rural Native Hawaiian communities are left with few to no choices.

In sum, the movement toward evidence based practices and generalizability has consequences for non-dominant ethnocultural groups and communities, including Native Hawaiians in rural Hawai`i. Programs founded on these principles were not designed with them or for them and are not based in their historical, cultural, linguistic, or environmental sources of strength. Some have even argued that these standards for “good science” can be perceived as collusion toward maintaining dominant social structures (in fact, some community partners have referred to the prevailing paradigm as scientific colonialism). This statement is not meant to disparage those who are doing science in this vein. Instead it is an acknowledgement that such science may hamper emancipatory community healing, and that more thought needs to be given to the standards of prevention science with rural indigenous and Hawaiian communities.

Based on our experience with this study and our collective years of community development work, we question whether the movement toward large scale generalizability of prevention programs is consistent with both the development of effective prevention programs for rural Hawaiian youth. This movement also seems contrary to the important and broader issue of reparative social justice within rural communities in Hawai`i. Therefore, contextually relevant prevention science is an imperative for rural, indigenous communities such as in the case with our research partnership. It is our hope that, based on this research partnership, we can develop a drug prevention program rooted in the realities and worldviews of rural Hawaiian youth on the Big Island as its “core.” Ultimately, we feel this will create not only an effective prevention program, but one that is sustainable based on community approval and ownership.

Author’s note: Correspondence should be directed to <HelmS@dop.hawaii.edu>, 1441 Kapiolani Blvd, Suite 1803, Honolulu, HI 96814, This study was supported by funding from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Drug Abuse (K01 DA019884). Conflict of interest statement: The authors are not aware of any conflict of interests represented by this work or their contributions to it.

References


School Intervention
Edited by Paul Flaspohler & Susana Helm

Successful school-based and school-linked interventions require successful navigation of cross-disciplinary relationships. Schools employ professional representatives from a broad array of related but independent disciplines. In addition to educators and school administrators, school counselors, psychologists (school, clinical, and others), social workers, paraprofessionals (e.g., classroom aids), law enforcement officers, nurses, and physicians all work within school buildings and provide services that are integral to the prevention of problems and promotion of health and well-being. Understanding the perspectives of other disciplines should facilitate collaboration with other school-serving professionals. The following article is offered to promote understanding of other perspectives on change in schools. Dawn Anderson–Butcher of the College of Social Work at the Ohio State University provides a (ecological-systems) social work perspective on the development of partnerships among schools, families, and communities. The article highlights and provides examples of critical skills and functions in collaborative planning, service integration, and capacity building that both parallel and complement the perspectives and values of community psychology.

School-Family-Community Coordination Functions: The Missing Piece in Partnership Development and Maintenance

~Dawn Anderson–Butcher,
Ohio State University

School and district leaders must develop relationships with key leaders from the community, including government officials, funders, parents/guardians, business partners, community-based providers, and others, in support of enhanced outcomes for students (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Bryan, 2005; Dryfoos, 1994; Lawson & Briar–Lawson, 1997; Taylor & Adelman, 2000). Partnerships of critical importance are ones that address non-academic barriers to learning, as well as maximize academic learning and youth development opportunities in the out-of-school time (Anderson–Butcher, Lawson, Bean, Flaspohler, Boone, & Kwiatkowski, 2008). Opportunities are maximized especially when these partnerships are aligned and integrated with the traditional school improvement efforts already in existence in schools and districts.

Examples of School-Family-Community Partnerships

Several of these types of school-family-community partnerships are underway across the nation. Bryan & Holcomb–McCoy (2004), for example, identified nine common partnership programs present within schools, including mentoring programs; tutoring programs; parent centers; family/community members as teachers’ aides; parent and community volunteer programs; home visitation programs; parent education programs; school-business partnerships; and parents and community members involved in site-based management teams.

More expansive partnerships go beyond one program and/or initiative. For instance, school-linked and school-based services, many of which prioritize school mental health, address non-academic barriers to learning by focusing on the coordination or collocation of health and social services in schools (Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Weist, 1997). Some have resulted in the creation of “centers” (i.e., family or parent centers, school-based health centers, etc) established at or near schools that adopt wraparound, one-stop shopping, and systems of care approaches (Taylor & Adelman, 2000; Blank, Melaville, & Shah, 2003).

Others are more focused on expanding academic learning and youth development opportunities. For example, 21st Century Community Learning Centers support out-of-school time academic enrichment activities, youth development programming, and family literacy and support (Anderson–Butcher, 2004). P-16 approaches provide learning supports at key transition points across the educational pipeline. Specific strategies target students, especially those at risk of falling behind, as they move from pre-kindergarten to the K-12 educational system, and from the K-12 educational system to postsecondary education options (Lawson & Anderson–Butcher, 2006).

Still more expansive community school, full-service, and expanded school improvement approaches open the school doors in the out-of-school hours, providing a vast array of programs and services such as child care, youth development, counseling, education and support activities, health care services, and case management (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Comer, Haynes, Joyner, & Ben–Avie, 1996; Dryfoos, 1994; McMahon, Ward, Pruett, Davidson, & Griffith, 2000).

Benefits of School-Family-Community Partnerships

Many benefits result from various types of school-family-community partnerships. Key student outcomes include increased academic achievement, improved student attendance, and decreased social, emotional, and behavioral issues (e.g., Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Comer et al., 1996; Epstein, 1995; Greenberg, Domitrovich, Graczyk & Zins, 2005; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Wilson, Gottfredson, & Najaka, 2001). Service delivery outcomes also have been described such as decreased duplication of services; improved access to services; enhanced communication among providers; and enhanced family-centered practices (Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Epstein, 1995; Ginsburg, 2008; Taylor & Adelman, 2000; Tourse & Sulick, 1999). Stakeholders involved in partnerships also note increased feelings of support and connectedness, job satisfaction and personal wellbeing, improved school climate, and enhanced understanding of students’ issues and needs (e.g., Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Epstein, 1995; Lim & Adelman, 1997; Tourse & Sulick, 1999). Others have found that partnerships result in multiple process and product innovations that are indicative of macro systems-level changes that promote maximal outcomes, efficiency, and overall cost-effectiveness (Anderson–Butcher et al., in review; Lawson & Briar–Lawson, 1997). Still others describe broader societal benefits such as increased social capital, enhanced value and priority placed on schools and schooling, and improved neighborhoods (Shirley, 1997).
It is becoming increasingly clear that school-family-community partnerships that expand school improvement priorities enable schools to gain influence over students’ out-of-school time and address non-academic barriers to learning. Given the potential, educators and other school leaders continue to call for further partnership expansion (e.g., Anderson–Butcher, Stetler, & Midle, 2006). Similarly, leaders across disciplines are emphasizing partnership and system infrastructure development in addition to, not at the expense of, direct service delivery (Anderson–Butcher, 2004; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Atkinson & Juntunen, 1994; Bryan & Holcomb–McCoy, 2004; Bryan, 2005; Lim & Adelman, 1997).

The Un- and/or Under-Tapped Agenda

Although there has been an increased prioritization of school-family-community partnerships nationally, school and district leaders have only just begun to leverage their potential in support of student learning, healthy development and overall school success. Student support personnel report varying degrees of involvement in school-family-community partnerships, and their involvement varies significantly by type of partnership employed (i.e., mentoring programs versus home visiting) and level of schooling (i.e., elementary versus secondary; Bryan & Holcomb–McCoy, 2004).

In practice, there often are limited levels of communication, coordination, and collaboration among partnering entities (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006; Newsome, Anderson–Butcher, Hall, & Huffer, 2008; Taylor & Adelman, 2000; Keys, Bemak, Carpenter, & King–Sears, 1998). Programs and services provided via partnerships still operate in isolation as they focus on discrete problems and specialized interventions to address them (Davies, 1995; Taylor & Adelman, 2000; Weist, 1997). Where partnerships do exist, few connections are made with school staff and internal school resources and strategies (Adelman & Taylor, 2000; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Taylor & Adelman, 2000). Even educational policies that require school-family-community involvement are implemented with little fidelity and minimal attention to true engagement among key stakeholders (Davies, 1995; Epstein & Sanders, 2000).

In essence, school-family-community partnerships have focused efforts primarily on the delivery of “add-on” programs and services. In many cases, however, more and better programs and services alone are not necessarily needed. Priorities might be better served by focusing efforts, as well, on coordination and leadership functions that allow for better utilization of resources, further integrated service delivery, and more developed and connected system-level infrastructures. In the past, however, little attention, including resource allocation, has been placed upon these connective mechanisms and the coordination tasks they require (Adelman & Taylor, 2000; Epstein & Sanders, 2000; Lawson & Briar–Lawson, 1997).

Three Primary School-Family-Community Coordination Functions

Three central coordination functions are essential to maximizing school-family-community partnership potential and resultant outcomes (Anderson–Butcher, Keane, Lawson, & Wade–Mdivanian, 2008). The first involves the facilitation of a collaborative planning, implementation, and evaluation process that mobilizes school and community resources in support of students and their families. The second requires the actual coordination and integration of the various programs, services and strategies within the school community. The third includes building overall system capacities across the system via leadership, relationship-building, consultation, and professional development activities. Each is more fully described in the following. Table 1. (p. 30) also provides an outline of specific activities within each function area.

Functions within the Collaborative Planning Process

Successful expanded school improvement and school mental health approaches rely on the ability of leaders to maximize both school-based and community-based resources for learning and healthy development (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Epstein & Hollifield, 1996; Lim & Adelman, 1997; Rosenblum, DiCecco, Taylor, & Adelman, 1995; Taylor & Adelman, 2000). Connective mechanisms that allow for this to happen are staples within many partnership initiatives. As such, one important coordination function involves the facilitation of a collaborative strategic planning, consensus-building, and shared decision-making process that mobilizes school and community learning supports based on the needs of students, families, and the community.

The key here is to conduct these resource development functions within the already existent school improvement planning efforts underway in the school and district (e.g., Anderson–Butcher, Lawson, et al., 2008). As such, there should be interface between the school leadership teams within a building that focus on traditional academic needs and priorities and the evolving partnership planning teams (i.e., also called school resource coordination and community action teams; Bryan, 2005; Epstein, 1995; Adelman & Taylor, 1997). Although encouraged, this often is not the case (Anderson–Butcher, Iachini, & Wade–Mdivanian, 2006).

Many times the activities and strategies within this particular function can be organized according to milestones or developmental process-related markers along the way (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008). Several key steps are essential in this process, and begin with facilitating readiness (e.g., Flaspohler, Anderson–Butcher, Bean, Burke, & Paternite, 2006). Once buy-in is established, school-family-community coordination functions involve the development of a focused plan grounded in a comprehensive gap analysis process; the implementation of the plan and its strategies and infrastructure requirements; and the monitoring of the plan and its implementation through continuous improvement and evaluative mechanisms.

Functions Related to Service Coordination and Integration

School-family-community coordination functions are also essential at the service delivery level where programs, services, interventions, and instruction are put in place based on individualized student strengths and needs. This involves the systematic coordination of the actual school-based and operated and community-based and operated programs and services that are delivered to individual students and their families (Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Adelman & Taylor, 1997; Atkinson & Juntunen, 1994). Ideally, these strategies are connected back to learning in classrooms.
Table 1: School family community partnership coordination functions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collaborative Planning Process</th>
<th>Build and maintain family and community engagement in school improvement processes</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Lead school community needs and resources assessment, gap analysis, and consensus-building (i.e., strategic planning) process that is embedded in the school improvement planning efforts already existent within the school community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop and lead the implementation of a data driven plan in collaboration with school administration, staff, families, and community organizations to address identified school-family-community needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mobilize, integrate, “mesh,” and maximize school- and community-based resources in support of the provision of evidence-based learning supports that address priority needs (includes mobilizing prevention, early intervention, and treatment supports across the continuum of services)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess and evaluate processes and outcomes at multiple levels in support of ongoing continuous improvement processes and strategies that support student learning and healthy development</td>
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<tr>
<th>Service Coordination and Integration</th>
<th>Provide leadership for the overall learning support system in a school community that focuses on maximizing school-based and school-linked resources and services essential for supporting student learning</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Assess and monitor individual student academic and non-academic needs in partnership with key stakeholders (i.e., teachers, parents, etc.), particularly for those students who are falling behind academically or in need of additional supports</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate school building efforts to support effective and efficient student referrals, especially those for displaying initial risk factors and/or early learning needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coordinate and monitor prevention and intervention supports and services provided to students as part of the broader school community learning support system (i.e., student support teams, wraparound teams, crisis teams, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<th>System Level Capacity-Building</th>
<th>Educate and promote the roles, responsibilities and functions of school-family-community coordination to parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community partners</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate connections through ongoing communication between students, parent/guardians, teachers, administrators, service providers, and other community partners to facilitate locally responsive solutions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide leadership in building and maintaining alliances and partnerships with public and private entities (i.e., government systems, non-profit agencies, funders) to establish a continuum of services at or linked to the school</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide effective consultation and professional development to parents/guardians, families, educators, administrators and other community stakeholders in relation to the provision of learning supports and the need for school-family-community coordination and partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Foster and lead infrastructure building and sustainability efforts through leadership and advocacy related to the development of key policies, procedures, protocols, and practices that support school-family-community partnerships and complex system change</td>
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One of the best ways to think about this component involves the experience of students across the continuum of services and learning supports within a school community. All students benefit from high quality classroom instruction, school-wide positive behavior supports, academic enrichment activities, and comprehensive youth development opportunities in and out of school. Individual students who are not achieving academically, as well as those who are gifted and/or talented, however, must be identified early, assessed for underlying risk factors and accelerated learning needs, and provided with intervention and/or accelerated instruction. Evidence based strategies, both academic and non-academic in nature, are put in place to address student learning and development needs.

More specifically, this service coordination and integration function involves fostering communication among the various individuals working with students and their families. A number of teaming structures come into play in relation to these coordination and integration functions (e.g., Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006). For instance, educators often work together collaboratively in teacher and student assistance teams to address academic learning needs and priorities. Educators along with supportive service personnel often sit together on intervention assistance teams, attendance, and/or wraparound teams. Still other teams focus on interagency linkages among the school and its community providers, involving more intensive case coordination for students with multiple needs and co-occurring problem behaviors. Regardless, attention must be paid to examining how students move from one level of support (and/or team) to another and how transitional supports are put in place across the service continuum and educational pipeline. Key stakeholders, such as teachers, school counselors, school-based mental health providers, and parents/guardians, work together, integrating services and supports, reducing duplication, and providing coordinated wraparound supports for students and families.

Functions Related to Capacity-Building

The third school-family-community coordination function includes building overall capacities across the system via leadership, advocacy, policy-making, relationship-building, and consultation/professional development (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Atkinson & Juntunen, 1994; Connors–Tadros, 1996; Lim & Adelman, 1997; Mawhinney, 1994; Taylor & Adelman, 2000). Key activities fo-
cus on working collaboratively with students, parents/guardians, teachers, student support personnel, and other school community stakeholders in support of overall system-level and infrastructure enhancements.

Attention to this function is particularly important, especially given that partnership development and maintenance requires new types of leadership styles and organizational structures (of which professionals often receive little preparation for; e.g., Bryan & Holcomb–McCoy, 2005; Weston, Anderson–Butcher, & Burke, 2008). More specifically, collaborative leadership structures distribute power, authority, and responsibility across groups and people by fostering shared ownership, resolving conflicts, facilitating relationships, and stimulating effective action. They also require new management and governance structures involving team approaches, rather than single person approaches. Team members collaborate and their organizations develop firm partnerships in support of new ways of doing business (Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Lawson, 2004). Activities within the partnership, in addition, must be “pieced out” and delegated through the assignment of “lead responsibility” to key people or organizations (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006). In some cases, capacity-building roles are best completed by intermediary organizations and/or people (e.g., Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006).

As such, coordination functions must prioritize the development of a process for defining the roles and responsibilities of, as well as connections among, individuals, teaming structures, programs, and strategies present within the school community. Consultation and professional development may need to develop capacities among key stakeholders and within teams to foster coherence and alignment. Attention must also be placed on sustaining commitment from and trust among participants, especially as efforts move toward true collaboration characterized by shared ownership, accountability, resources, and outcomes (e.g., Lawson, 2004; Lawson & Sailor, 2000; Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004). These strategies are especially important as efforts for scale-up and replication at various system levels move forward.

Concluding Thoughts

Ultimately, to improve results, school and district leaders must expand their conventional school improvement processes to gain influence and control over students’ out-of-school time and conditions for learning. School and district leaders must maximize academic learning and youth development opportunities during the out-of-school time (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008). They also must address and prevent non-academic barriers to learning and healthy development (Adelman & Taylor, 2000; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008). New partnerships with community organizations and new working relationships with parents/guardians, private sector leaders, neighborhood representatives, and community practitioners are required. All require bridging, and linking structures and strategies.

As such, school-family-community partnerships will be maximized as attention is placed upon the three central coordination functions identified in this paper, ones that often have not necessarily been prioritized systemically in the past. The literature proposes that these functions and activities may be completed or led by one person within the school community, sometimes called the organizational facilitator, the change agent, liaison, or school-family-community coordinator (Anderson–Butcher & Ashton, 2004; Bryan, 2005; Lim & Adelman, 1997; Rosenblum, DeCecco, Taylor, & Adelman, 1995). They may indeed best be completed by a team of individuals within the school community, as most likely these broad functions and activities cannot be accomplished by one person alone (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008; Keys et al., 1998; Sugai & Homer, 2006; Taylor & Adelman, 2000).

A few examples from policy pilots in Ohio are noteworthy. Within Cincinnati Public School’s district-wide Community Learning Center Initiative, individual schools have some combination of professionals fulfilling school-family-community coordination functions (e.g., Kamine, 2007a; 2007b). Dependent upon local need and funding, schools may have a full-time resource coordinator who focuses on day-to-day partnership functions and linkages, but also have an identified tutoring coordinator connecting out-of-school time supplemental services to classrooms, a health coordinator within a school-based health center, as well as a college access coordinator working to support transitions to postsecondary options (please note these individuals also provide direct service activities). All coordination functions are aligned integrally to the local school improvement plan (i.e., the “One Plan”), and driven by building-level decision-making processes of the Local School Decision Making Councils (LSDMCs). Services and resources provided at local buildings and coordinated (and in some cases provided) by these various professionals are “brokered” and “vetted” through a city-wide Cross-Boundary Leadership Team comprised of leaders of various collaboratives or support networks focused on specific programming areas (i.e., afterschool, tutoring, mental health, health, etc). This leadership team also “owns” the system-level capacity building functions that drive the broader educational reform agenda across the entire district.

In other school communities, the school-family-community partnership functions may be owned primarily by one person (as is often the case in rural communities where financial resources are more limited). For instance, Northmor School District in Morrow County, Ohio, has funded a district-wide school social worker to facilitate the connections between school-based and owned resources and community ones. Together with a district administrator, she helps facilitate building-specific, district-wide, and county-wide planning efforts in order to maximize resources across the various systems in best support of youth and family needs. Her role also involves leading a district-wide Study Team for At-Risk Students (STARS) team that provides case management, mental health, and wraparound services to students and their families identified by building-level intervention assistance teams as in need of additional community-operated support and services. Over time, the leadership of this school social worker has led to system-wide infrastructure changes, as evidenced by the redeployment of county-funded service providers to the schools, the development of new programs and services, the creation of new funding streams via the blending and braiding of dollars, and the development of a county-wide community-of-practice comprised of school-based mental health providers (e.g., Anderson–Butcher et al., in review).
Regardless of the organizing framework and local context, specific attention must be placed on the facilitation of collaborative strategic planning, consensus-building, and shared decision-making processes that mobilize school and community learning supports based on the needs of students, families and community. Priorities also must address the coordination and integration of the various programs, services, and strategies that are provided to individual students and their families. And focus must be placed on building the overall system’s capacity through the development of leadership and management structures that clearly define roles and responsibilities. Professional development, advocacy, and consultation activities are also critical to ensuring overall school community, system-wide improvements.

Given their importance, related policies, funding and resources (for instance, staffing) must be provided to support these school-family-community coordination functions (Davies, 1995; Taylor & Adelman, 2000). The payoffs are clear. Schools and districts with strong internal and external partnerships have higher quality programs and services (e.g., Sanders & Epstein, 2000). Others are better equipped to provide individualized, early intervention learning supports for students who are falling behind (Anderson–Butcher et al., 2008). Better outcomes occur and ultimately more students and families may be served through partnership programs and services as resources and infrastructures are maximized when attention is placed on the connective mechanisms and coordination functions outlined here (Adelman & Taylor, 2000; Anderson–Butcher et al., 2006).

Author’s note: Correspondence should be directed to Dawn Anderson–Butcher, Associate Professor, College of Social Work, Ohio State University, 340-B Stillman Hall, 1947 College Road, Columbus, OH 43210. Phone: (614) 292-8596 or email: <anderson-butcher.1@osu.edu>.

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Future Research Directions in Self-Help/Mutual Support

Randomized controlled trials are currently considered the gold standard of evaluation research. They provide high internal validity that enables causal inferences with minimal influence from confounding variables. However, experimental designs are often criticized because they occur under tightly controlled circumstances that do not reflect the complexities of practice in field settings. This dissimilarity between research and practice settings threatens the external validity of randomized controlled trials. It also serves as a major contributor to the gap between science and practice.

Despite the advantages of random assignment, such studies are difficult to execute effectively in practice settings. This challenge is particularly salient in the study of self-help groups. This is because self-help groups are highly dependent upon self-selection. As citizen driven initiatives designed to overcome personal challenges, researchers and professionals cannot control self-help groups. Without control over the intervention or who becomes involved in it, random assignment becomes impossible.

Thus raises a significant challenge impeding future growth in the use of self-help/mutual support groups. Without randomized controlled trials proving that self-help works, it is difficult to convince outsiders that self-help is safe, effective, and worthy of public support. Despite this lack of support from outsiders, self-help groups have continued to thrive because of strong support from insiders who use the groups. Wuthnow (1994) estimates that there are around 500,000 self-help groups in the United States and 8 to 10 million participants.

With such popularity, one may conclude that outsider support is not necessary. It may be that people who need the groups will create them and people who want the groups will attend them. Self-help groups may persist happily ever after without outsider intervention. In fact, some may fear that outsider interference can only lead to problems.

However, a more careful consideration of self-help group popularity makes the question of whether self-help groups are actually helpful that much more important. All actions have the potential to provide both benefit and harm. Even the most well intentioned individuals can miscalculate the consequences of their actions and cause accidental harm. Similarly, if self-help groups provide important benefits with little or no cost, it is imperative that such knowledge be used to promote the use of self-help. Regardless of whether evaluations find self-help groups to be helpful, harmful, or inconsequential, it is important that any potential participant have the opportunity to consider evaluation findings before making the decision to invest energy in a self-help group. Similarly, evaluation findings can inform outsider decisions to encourage or discourage self-help group participation.

Despite the autonomy of self-help groups, outsiders can still have a major impact on attendance. For example, a professional who encourages or discourages client use of self-help can drastically sway the decision making of potential participants about whether to attend. If self-help is cost-effective, public funding can justifiably be used to promote group use through social marketing campaigns, the provision of professional technical assistance to groups, and the organization of self-help group databases. Similarly, if self-help groups are found to be harmful, public pressure and outsider intervention can drastically reduce the use of such groups.

It is important to note that evaluations of self-help groups will never condone or condemn self-help as a whole. Several randomized controlled trials have already proven some forms of self-help to be effective for some populations (e.g. Bright, Baker, & Neimeyer, 1999; Chien, Thompson, & Norman, in press). At the same time, news reports and case studies of specific self-help groups provide evidence that self-help groups have the potential to be harmful. The abusive behavior of the Synanon group led by Charles Dederich stands as an excellent example of this potential.

Randomized controlled trials can be useful in distinguishing between self-help group conditions that promote success and those that promote failure. By carefully tracking all the conditions under which groups operate, evaluation results can provide evidence supporting the use of different operational techniques. Over time, critical elements can be identified by comparing the different conditions of different trials.

Currently, several randomized controlled trials support the use of 12-step groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) (e.g. Moos, Finney, Ouimette, & Suchinsky, 1999; Project MATCH Research Group, 1997, 1998; Timko, DeBenedetti, & Billow, 2006). Such evaluations provide strong evidence that self-help/mutual support can work. Clearly, future evaluations are needed to examine the efficacy of other self-help models. Evaluation comparisons can provide insight into such important questions as whether self-help groups need to have a guiding philosophy to be effective, such as the 12-step approach. Perhaps all that is necessary is coming to group meetings and discussing specific challenges with others who are in a similar situation. Some groups maintain more of a social/recreational orientation without emphasizing the use of a structured, problem sharing time. Can such an approach work? Does a social/recreational orientation only help certain subgroups such as the severely socially isolated? Comparisons across trials and the execution of trials designed to make such comparisons can make tremendous contributions to the literature.
Designing Effective Trials

Now that the importance and difficulty of randomized controlled trials in the self-help context has been reviewed, this section will focus on strategies for successful execution of self-help evaluations. Random assignment to treatment and control conditions is clearly one of the biggest challenges facing researchers conducting self-help evaluations. In my opinion, the best way to address this challenge is to focus on developing powerful engagement interventions. This is because researchers can control who receives an intensive engagement intervention and who does not. If researchers can control the use of an effective engagement intervention, intent-to-treat analyses can provide accurate estimates of group efficacy. Under such circumstances, researcher control over group functioning and attendance becomes unnecessary.

A simple referral is too weak of an engagement intervention because people often do not comply with the recommendation. However, previous research has found the use of a sponsor outreach intervention to be an effective strategy for increasing the likelihood that the referral will lead to attendance (Powell, Hill, Warner, Yeaton, & Silk, 2000; Sisson & Mallams, 1981). Such a strategy has numerous advantages over referral only. First, it provides potential participants with an opportunity to interact with someone they would actually see at group meetings. This can help reduce anxiety about the group being an unwelcome place. Furthermore, if the sponsor comes across as friendly and sociable, the potential participant may be interested in making friends and meeting other potential friends in the group.

The use of a sponsor might be enhanced by matching sponsors to potential participants on demographic criteria. Previous research by Medvene (1990) and Humphreys & Woods (1994) suggests that groups may function best when they are relatively homogenous. Although groups always encourage all who need the group to attend, social support may function best when interacting with similar others. Such homogeneity is common within voluntary social groupings. For example, school cafeterias and churches are typically highly segregated.

Another strategy for enhancing engagement may be to supplement any in-person or phone contacts from professionals and group members with mailings and emails. Mailing informative materials about the group to potential participants can increase familiarity with the group and provide supporting arguments for engagement that supplement what is provided during conversations. Maintaining a regular mail/email newsletter can help keep group activities on the radar screen of potential participants and members who are not heavily invested in the group. Checking up on members who have recently stopped attending may also help keep people engaged.

Evaluations that use these engagement techniques can serve as both excellent outcome evaluations and tests of the effectiveness of different outreach tactics. Previous research by Meissen, Gleason, & Embree (1991) suggests that the most prominent needs of self-help groups center on member involvement, attendance, and recruitment. As such, studies that provide insight into which engagement techniques work provide information of great practical value to self-help groups.

I have focused on the value of randomized controlled trials for self-help research because I feel they have been heavily underutilized within the field. This is no doubt due in part to the challenge of randomization in self-help settings. However, avoiding the challenge is a disservice to the field. contacted. Furthermore, people willing to participate in longitudinal data collection efforts may differ in important ways from those who refuse. These concerns can be partially addressed by drawing study participants from a population that can be contacted at a later point in time regardless of whether they are contacted for participation at baseline. During follow-up data collection, researchers can contact previously unsampled individuals from the population to see if they would be willing to participate in anonymous (rather than confidential) data collection. Such a data collection could provide minimal bias in estimates of how common self-help group participation is without any sort of intervention. Furthermore, outcome data from this anonymous group could serve as an excellent comparison to data from groups randomly assigned to intensive engagement or no contact.

Random assignment could also occur at the group level, where professionals are randomly assigned to provide technical assistance and recruitment support to self-help groups. Previous research suggests that groups connected to professionals are more sustainable (Wituk, Shepherd, Warren, & Meissen, 2002). However, research specifying how professionals should interact with self-help groups is scant. Should they just provide referrals? Would a more intensive role as full time group member requester be effective? Can professionals effectively work to create and maintain groups without controlling group meetings or compromising group effectiveness? Should professionals try to start groups and slowly remove themselves from regular operation?
Should they jump in when crises arise? Should they provide conflict mediation when major arguments arise? Should they provide technical assistance? If so, what advice should they be giving? What roles should professionals avoid? These topics have been discussed in the literature to some extent but there is little in the way of hard evidence suggesting a correct answer.

Random assignment of professionals to groups could test the effectiveness of different support protocols for professionals to follow. Such an evaluation strategy can be used to not only test whether professionals can be helpful but how they can be helpful. If evaluations demonstrate that certain roles can be effective, then the creation of funding streams that support professionals in these roles would be justified.

Non-Experimental Research Strategies

Although randomized controlled trials have a large amount of untapped potential in developing our understanding of self-help, there is still plenty of progress that can be made without randomization. For example, longitudinal observational field studies can also study the trajectories of different people who come into contact with the group. Findings can provide insight into patterns of engagement and disengagement. If enough groups are included in these studies, then they will be able to examine how variance in group characteristics impacts participation and individual outcomes. Such research can provide insight into the development of guidelines for ideal group characteristics that promote participation, group sustainability, and individual benefit.

Qualitative research also has the potential to make important contributions to our understanding of self-help. For example, in-depth interviews and focus groups can provide important insight into the creation of useful self-help group philosophies and effective outreach materials. Interviews with self-help leaders and professionals who support self-help groups can help build understanding of how professionals can best interact with self-help groups. Given the lack of theoretical guidance in approaching these topics, they are ripe for development through qualitative techniques.

The research ideas presented here are only some of the many possibilities, especially with regard to the potential of observational and qualitative research. I have focused on the value of randomized controlled trials for self-help research because I feel they have been heavily underutilized within the field. This is no doubt due in part to the challenge of randomization in self-help settings. However, avoiding the challenge is a disservice to the field. I hope this article has provided some promising strategies to overcome the formidable barrier of randomization without compromising the independent nature of self-help settings. These strategies are mere ideas at this point in time however. Only future research can separate the good ideas from the bad ones.

References


A Trend toward Public Policy in Community Psychology

The development of the study of public policy as a self-conscious discipline can be considered nascent at best. Some would argue that policy research has only emerged as an independent field of study within the last two decades (Pielke, 2006). As a result we can expect that our intervention techniques might need more development. This is an exciting place to be, as we now have the opportunity to shape interdisciplinary public policy inquiry.

As a small division, SCRA members may often under-estimate their influence. However, within the American Psychological Association (APA), Division 27 is seen as one of the vanguards of public policy research and action. According to Heather Wall, the APA Government Relations Office Science Directorate, our division members are known on Capitol Hill as psychology’s most active policy researchers. As an organization at the forefront of public policy research, we have the opportunity to develop policy techniques that will influence the future of both psychology and other disciplines as well. This may raise the issue of our policy techniques to the level of high local community importance. If we are shaping related subdisciplines of psychology, our policy work may become a more global issue than encompassed by Division 27. While psychology’s involvement in public policy has increased dramatically in recent years, this movement is paralleled by a growing involvement among SCRA members in policy-related debates, consulting roles, and traditional legislative and judicial capacities. There is also a growing interest in public policy as a lever for second-order social change among graduate students and early career researchers. However, many student members feel ill-equipped to take on valuable roles in moving policy and are uncertain about how to proceed in policy-related work.

Future Directions

As the new chair of SCRA’s Public Policy Committee, I am thrilled to report our committee’s recent activities and future directions toward furthering public policy in SCRA. However, before giving our update, I would first like to thank Steve Pokorny for his hard work in this office over the past year. Steve has supported my efforts to create a policy link on the new SCRA website, provided important updates about our policy activity, and has advised in the development of our emerging policy committee and interest group.

Although the mission statement has been previously mentioned in this column (Howe, 2004; Pokorny, 2008), it is worthwhile to discuss future goals in conjunction with our recent committee development. Three primary objectives of the Public Policy Committee came out of discussions at the biennial and our recent interest group meetings at APA:

1. **Training.** Create opportunities for training for graduate students and community psychologists to gain policy experiences and familiarize themselves with policy processes.
2. **Collaboration.** Encourage communication between community psychologists and policy-makers and political insiders, and develop collaborative relationships with other community groups to work on policy research.
3. **Resources.** Develop a knowledge base of community policy contributions to policy debates at local, state and federal levels.

These goals have been designed to support both short-term advances (substantive small-wins), as well as long-term goals (supporting resources for future committee building). Thanks in part to the efforts of those who originally drafted the logic model with Steve Howe, as well as current advisors such as Maurice Elias (2008 SCRA President) and Lenny Jason (2007 Policy Award recipient), the committee has been and will continue to be guided by this structure in order to further community psychology’s policy influence.

New Developments

Many recent events have shaped the current course of the policy committee. First, an increasing number of policy-themed presentations have appeared at several regional and national conferences over the past two years. This development has furthered the progress of the committee’s first objective as numerous workshops, symposia, and roundtable discussions have signaled an expanded policy awareness by many community psychologists and provided a training forum for those in attendance.

At the APA conference in Boston this August, policy-interested members met on several formal and informal occasions to discuss the Public Policy Committee’s purpose and future implementation of community objectives to further SCRA’s policy involvement. Several interest group members suggested that communication between those interested in policy and SCRA leadership has been infrequent and unstructured. Providing mechanisms for community building of an active interest group and working committee has been identified as a high member priority. Consequently, these meetings served to design an active committee that is more inclusive of policy-interested members, and to invite multiple committee affiliates to take part in workings of the committee process. These core members will initiate mechanisms of communication and community building for interested parties, creating avenues of access to current policy committee members, further involvement in interest group activities, external resources, and internal SCRA expertise.

Committee Positions and Goals

It is my hope to nurture a diverse and engaged policy community. This effort would include varied community participation, multiple unique and empowered members with diverse skills and perspectives, and interdisciplinary and inclusive input from local, national, and international representatives. As advised by the policy interest group, discussions with EC members, and in mentoring of previous chairs and EC members, I’ve initiated a com-
committee structure. With a diverse input and strong ties to multiple and diverse settings, our future directions may be guided by both skill in practice and the feedback of community needs. As outlined below, our new committee appointees are named and their efforts and responsibilities are discussed in relation to the committee’s current direction. However, we hope to amend and adjust these directions as called for by the desired direction of the growing policy community.

As current chair, I’ve been recommending and assigning several task-defined positions. These were based on suggestions made during policy meetings at conferences over the last two years. These roles and responsibilities were clarified and reaffirmed in policy meetings in Boston and correspond to prior directions set at biennial meetings in New Mexico and California. In the following sections, I outline the developing committee membership.

Committee Co-Chair: A co-chair position has been created. Past committee chair, Steven Howe, has graciously agreed to serve as co-chair during my term, providing invaluable advice, long-term expertise, and practical direction to our committee endeavors. This will serve to ensure that all community member voices are heard, and networking activities and committee objectives are skillfully addressed.

Chair-Elect (TCP Column Editor). The current chair-elect will serve as TCP column editor. My involvement as chair-elect during Steve Pokorny’s tenure greatly facilitated the transition between chairs. The chair-elect will act as a committee member, and will also be responsible for editing the TCP public policy column. This was a task that was originally assigned to the acting chair. Through discussions with previous committee chairpersons and committee advisors, it was concluded that an effective chairship involves time and labor-intensive tasks, and that editorial assistance would be beneficial. Judah Viola has graciously accepted the role of chair-elect for the interim and will be assuming editorial responsibilities for this column and assisting the chair in meeting assigned deadlines. The creation of a role for the chair-elect will assure that the committee’s efforts are supported by incoming leadership, and that committee sustainability does not needlessly suffer during transition periods.

Student Policy Representative. In July of 2008, at the recommendation of the chair-elect under Steve Pokorny’s tenure, the committee created a student policy representative position. This position is now held by student representative Aaron Boulton. Boulton works as a policy chair-assistant to organize membership and committee efforts. As a general public policy coordinator and manager, Boulton facilitates policy committee coordination and communication at all levels of SCRA organization, and facilitates external collaborations. His work includes organizing at the policy committee level, assisting committee activities with SCRA’s Executive Committee, coordinating international SCRA representation, facilitating national APA associates, and managing regional Division 27 policy memberships.

Policy Committee Liaison. Following the wise advice of the prior SCRA president, Anne Bogat, we have appointed a policy committee liaison. Blair Coleman will serve as the committee’s primary APA contact and networking representative. Coleman facilitates community building among like-minded APA members, helps to provide collaborative training opportunities, and communicates with the science relations office and other APA representatives to coordinate networking events. Coleman also helps in organizing interest group members, providing mechanisms for input to the policy committee, and acting in guiding the committee toward the needs voiced by those SCRA members with an interest in public policy.

Conference Policy Program Coordinator: As a result of the trend toward public policy in SCRA and the related emergence of multiple policy presentations at professional meetings, we have decided to create a position that will coordinate and advocate for a policy-program track for presentations at regional and biennial meetings. The purpose of this is to improve policy community-building by fostering inter-university communication. While this may also help avoid overlapping policy presentations and the division of interest group membership, this may additionally provide important interdisciplinary networking opportunities, and the prospect of a continued thread of dialog among active policy presenters, policy committee members, and individuals with a policy interest or orientation. As opposed to choosing between several presentations related to a specific clique, university or orientation, if successful, this method may afford individuals with a policy interest the chance for a comprehensive overview of policy perspectives. Additionally this will allow multiple perspectives on public policy training and techniques, invaluable networking prospects, and may facilitate multi-regional and international collaborations. Erin Droege has previous experience with program coordination at the local level as an Eco Committee member, and has kindly accepted the appointment as the public policy program coordinator. We are excited to see how this program develops.

Curriculum Coordinator: Over the last two years one consistent public policy complaint has been voiced by graduate students and degree members alike. This is the lack of adequate training as a major barrier to member involvement in public policy action. While it is very true, as Steve Howe suggests, that students are unaware of how well-trained they are to take on policy work, the perception of lack of preparedness is a problem that influences many early practitioner and graduating student career choices. Not being explicitly trained in public policy during their course work, Division 27 members and community psychology graduates feel ill-prepared to embark on policy-related research, undertake professional policy consulting, or advise in policy implementation and enforcement.

When discussing public policy, many graduates and PhD-level community psychologists have told me “That is not what we do.” Unfortunately, even if community psychology programs value explicit policy training, and are willing to amend curricula to include core public policy courses, few faculty members feel comfortable teaching this subject matter. They report not having access to effective training materials or representative course syllabi. As a young discipline, this is not surprising. Consequently, the policy committee has appointed a curriculum coordinator.
In an effort to achieve member awareness of policy applications and new developments in public policy research, the committee is seeking to organize a special policy issue of the American Journal of Community Psychology (AJCP). This issue will serve to encourage authors to conceptualize their research in terms of policy impact and demonstrate to the readership how many traditional research programs can function as tools in the policy-making world. The editor of this issue will work with the AJCP editorial board to collect and edit submissions and bring the issue to fruition. Brian Wilcox has been nominated to this position for the current chair’s term, and we are awaiting his response to this invitation.

As recommended by the policy committee, we have suggested that a change be made to the submission process to AJCP, to include a “Policy Impact” section in prospective journal submissions. This addition to AJCP journal articles could be a key factor in communicating policy implications to students and long-term practitioners, while acting as training material in real-life research circumstances. This could also help community psychologists realize the importance of the policy and mechanisms for their own research.

Policy Research Coordinator. Serving a similar role to the curriculum coordinator, the research coordinators will be responsible for compiling a variety of public policy research samples to be made available to interest group members and policy meeting conference attendees. This material will also be posted on the policy webpage. Policy papers will span a variety of the five main types of policy research including: Traditional Judicial and Legislative Policy Research (e.g. amicus briefs, whitesheets), Implementation Consulting Research (e.g. corporate implementation and evaluation reports), Applied Regulatory Research (e.g. policy targeted academic research), Advocacy (e.g. press releases/press-packs, op-ed pieces), and Eco-Empowerment (e.g. community fliers, letter writing campaign material).

At the last biennial, Jon Miles and Judah Viola expressed an interest in making these materials available to SCRA members. They have been holding monthly conference calls, and have been invited to assist in following their long-standing commitment to compiling these materials for our membership. They will put out a call for submissions on the SCRA Listserve and select templates for the webpage.

These member efforts will allow new members that are interested in becoming involved in the policy arena to have access to exemplary professional SCRA policy work. These documents not constitute a position endorsement by the EC or SCRA community, but may aide members in the development of the ability to speak the appropriate policy language for the given policy task. Examples are exceptional resources for learning the ropes of public policy. As a result there are several types of documents with which one may want to become familiar (i.e. amicus briefs, whitesheets, policy consulting reports, targeted academic research, etc.). These documents will be sound samples of professional policy products and will have a community psychology orientation and will be undertaken by practiced policy workers who are also skilled Division 27 members. These samples may prove helpful to those interested in pursuing a line of policy work grounded in community psychology values and ecological principles.

Interest Group Liaison. This position will help direct community-building and act as a policy interest group point-person. The liaison will also maintain an email list of SCRA members interested in policy for use in future communications. This email list will allow the committee to pass along policy-specific communications to policy interest group members (e.g. action alerts, job opportunities, theoretical discussion) without burdening the Division 27 Listserv. This position will also help in organizing interest group members, providing mechanisms for input to the policy committee, and guiding the committee toward the needs voiced by the SCRA community members with an interest in public policy. Blair Coleman, our policy committee liaison, will also collaborate with the committee’s interest group liaison and assist in community building activities.

Webpage Coordinator. The SCRA webpage is a crucial element in the policy committee’s current efforts and long-term goals. The policy link, initiated by Nicole Porter and facilitated by the efforts of Scot Evans, has been formalized by Anne Bogat’s extensive labors in updating the SCRA website. Our newly clean and efficient web presence has been developed to include a prominent public policy presence. This affords us the inclusion of depth and breadth of various types of SCRA-related policy information. This page will act as a resource for training materials and other policy resources to which Division 27 members will have direct access.

The three main pages will include: “Training Material” (including multiple community psychology and policy-related syllabi and teaching materials), and “Collaboration” (links to congressional fellowships, and resources (i.e. policy papers including whitesheets, amicus briefs, and other policy report templates). Following Scot Evans efforts with PsyAct, he will also assist in developing an action alert link, to which community members may post relevant actionable materials as they become available, such as including policy and action notices, related internet links, general policy alerts, social engagement emails, and notices submitted by to SCRA by APA, SRCD and other policy-oriented organizations.

Public Policy Award Representative. The first Public Policy Award was presented at the 2007 biennial in Pasadena to Dr. Leonard Jason for his contributions to changing health policy for individuals with ME/CFS. This biennial award is recogni-
tion by the policy committee of an SCRA member for their significant and current contributions to public policy. Facilitating the submission, evaluation, and award process will be the award representative’s main responsibilities. They will work in conjunction with the current SCRA student policy representative, Aaron Boulton. Boulton will also act as the award process coordinator. The policy award representative will solicit, accept, and collate nominations. This position will also organize materials for award judges, coordinate nomination materials and voting among policy committee members, and facilitate awarding the commemorative plaque at presentation time during the 2009 biennial. This representative will also help nominate and facilitate the transition to the next public policy award representative.

**Executive Committee Liaison.** The final committee member will serve as the Executive Committee liaison. Many current committee members have expressed the opinion that yearly turnover for committee chairs contributes to the lack of progress for policy committees. The EC liaison will be in charge of reviewing tenure issues as well as attending EC meetings to advocate for a policy related solutions.

It is important to note that these positions may not recur as tasks are completed (the special issue, for example) and new objectives may develop that require additional committee members. In addition to these task-focused committee positions, several SCRA members with an expert knowledge of policy work will serve as advisors to the committee. We are very grateful for the time commitment and extensive roles played by our already overburdened member and non-member advisors.

- Anne Bogat: Committee building and EC communication
- Maurice Elias: Committee advising
- Lenny Jason: Effective goal implementation
- Steve Pokorny: Chair-ship advising
- Tom Wolff: Interest group development
- Heather Wall: APA resource advising

This new format is certainly a tall order and will take a sustained and diligent effort by all parties involved. However, all of the goals outlined here deserve critical attention as SCRA becomes increasingly self-aware of its ability (and duty) to shape policy that reflects our values as community psychologists.

**References**


### Student Issues

Edited and Written by Christopher Zambakari & Fernando Estrada

#### New Incoming Student Representative!

After serving as national student representative for the past two years, we are saying goodbye to a great colleague, friend, and NSR, Marco Hidalgo. He spent his time and efforts advocating for students by voicing their concerns within the division, assisting our regional student coordinators, and providing guidance and assistance to students across the division. He leaves a great legacy behind him. We will truly miss him.

It is also our pleasure and honor to pass the baton and welcome Fernando Estrada, our newly elected student representative. Fernando Estrada is a first-year, first-generation doctoral student in the counseling psychology program at Arizona State University. The start of Fernando’s two-year term coincided with this year’s APA Convention in Boston and will run until 2010. We look forward to working together to promote and represent students’ interests. For emails and all communication directed to Fernando Estrada, he can be reached at: <fernando.estrada@asu.edu>.

#### Seeking More Student Regional Coordinators!

If you are interested in becoming more active in organizing student activities related to community research and action within your region, perhaps you should consider service as a student regional coordinator (SRC), or student international regional coordinator (SIRC). For each region there are up to two graduate student coordinators, and one undergraduate coordinator. Graduate student coordinators serve two years, while undergraduates serve at least one year.

We are currently seeking students to complete a two-year, appointed term as SRCs within the Northeast, Midwest (seeking undergraduate SRC), Rocky Mountain/Southwest and Western (seeking undergraduate SRC) regions of the U.S. We are also seeking to fill SIRC positions in our various international regions including Canada (seeking undergraduate SIRC), Latin American (SIRC), Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific, Europe/Middle East/Africa, and Asia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Regional Coordinator</th>
<th>Institutional Affiliation</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>Lindsey McGowen (Graduate)</td>
<td>North Carolina State University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lindseycm@hotmail.com">lindseycm@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Angela Cooke (Undergraduate)</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:cookeangela@hotmail.com">cookeangela@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>Todd Shagott (Graduate)</td>
<td>Wichita State University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tpshagott@wichita.edu">tpshagott@wichita.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peter Drake (Graduate)</td>
<td>DePaul University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pdrake@depaul.edu">pdrake@depaul.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liz Shelleby (Undergraduate)</td>
<td>DePaul University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:eshelleb@depaul.edu">eshelleb@depaul.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Marieka Schotland (Graduate)</td>
<td>UC–Berkeley</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Mss286@nyu.edu">Mss286@nyu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Rachel Fayter (Graduate)</td>
<td>Wilfred Laurier University</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rfayer@bluebottle.com">rfayer@bluebottle.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

لاقات دبلوماسية من مدرسة علوم المعلوماتية، وستيرتون، وآداب النظم المعلوماتية، ويلفرد، وآداب المعرفة، ويلفرد.
SRC and SIRC positions are appointed by the regional network coordinator—Dr. Bernadette Sánchez of DePaul University—an executive committee member who is responsible for several tasks related to engaging Division 27 members across the many national and international regions of SCRA. If you are an innovative collaborator and interested in hearing more about these wonderful leadership (and CV-building) opportunities contact Bernadette <bsanchez@depaul.edu> or Chris <christophoro2002@gmail.com>.

If you are interested in getting connected with other students within any of these regions, a good place to start is by contacting your regional coordinators (see adjacent table).

Sign on to the SCRA Student Listserv!

The SCRA Student Listserv is a forum to increase discussion and collaboration among students interested in community research and action. It is also a great place to get information relevant to students, such as upcoming funding opportunities and job announcements.

To subscribe to the Listserv, send the following message to <listserv@lists.apa.org>: SUBSCRIBE S-SCRA-L@lists.apa.org <first name> <last name>.

Messages can be posted to the Listserv at: <S-SCRA-L@lists.apa.org>. If you have any questions or need help signing on to the Listserv, please contact the Listserv manager, Omar, at <oguessous@comcast.net>.

Sign up for Other SCRA Listservs!

There is more to SCRA online activity than the Student Listserv. In fact, you can sign up for a variety of Listservs hosted by Division 27 through the Listserv page on the division website <http://scra27.org/elistservs.html>. Aside from the Student Listserv, this page features instructions on how to sign up for three additional Listservs:

- **The General Listserv**: Enables SCRA members to engage in stimulating discussions, and provides information on job postings, grant opportunities, and SCRA events.
- **The Women’s Listserv**: Enables SCRA members to access the best sources of information regarding women’s issues in community research and action. It is also the main source of communication about issues relating to the SCRA Committee on Women.
- **The Disability Interest Group Listserv**: This, the newest of the SCRA Listservs, consists of a vibrant community of scholars active or interested in community research and action related to disability issues.

2008 Midwest Eco Conference—21st Annual Regional Meeting sponsored by Michigan State University

**October 10th-11th**  
**Kendall Center**  
**50 West Jackson Street**  
**Battle Creek, MI 49017**

The Midwest Eco Conference is an annual event organized by and designed for community psychology graduate students. We invite students, faculty, and other community psychology enthusiasts to join us for a weekend of invigorating conversations and terrific networking in a relaxed and welcoming environment. The conference is a great place to share your work and receive supportive feedback, whether your work is in the early stages of development or a finished project.

The theme of this year’s conference is the Values and Value of Community Psychology. It was the values of community psychology that first defined and set our field apart over 40 years ago. Today, in an age of intensifying social issues and burgeoning social interventions, our values continue to guide our field as we work toward social change. For more information please contact <MidwestECO2008@gmail.com>.

2008 Southeastern Ecological Community Psychology Conference sponsored by North Carolina State University with the support of the University of North Carolina–Asheville

**October 3rd-5th**  
**Highsmith University Union**  
**215 Highsmith Union, CPO # 1200**  
**One University Heights**  
**Asheville, NC 28804-8501**  
**Phone: (828) 232-5000**

This year’s theme is Rediscovering ECO. The process of rediscovery provides us the opportunity to celebrate who we are and who we should be as community psychology faculty, students, and practitioners. Topics covered will include (1) Examining ecological and contextual influences on social problems and their solutions, (2) Practice, research, and learning: adopting critical values and traits, (3) Redefining the ecological community, (4) The emergence of new communities (virtual communities), and (5) What does “rediscovering ECO” mean for research and practice?

For more information please contact Seb Prohn by email at <smprohn@ncsu.edu>, Jennifer Schneider by telephone at (919) 513-0898 or visit us on the web at <http://www4.ncsu.edu/~jsschnei/proposals.html>.

The 3rd Annual Northwest ECO/Community Psychology Conference sponsored by Portland State University, University of Washington Bothell, and The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)

**Friday, October 17th**  
**Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus**  
**Portland, Oregon**

The 3rd Northwest ECO/Community Psychology Conference will provide a forum for the diverse and interdisciplinary work of students, teachers, scholars, and practitioners engaged in community research and action throughout the northwest region. The goal for the meeting is to support the development and sharing of community-based work in all stages of development, including work in progress and completed projects.

The theme of our meeting this year is Theory into Practice, emphasizing the necessary cycle between theory, research, and...
Women’s Issues
Edited by Michèle Schlehofer

Community Psychology and the Issue of Gender Symmetry/Asymmetry in Intimate Partner Violence

~Caroline A. Lippy, Josephine V. Serrata, & Julia L. Perilla, Georgia State University

Since its inception in the 1960s, the domestic violence movement placed gender at the center of its efforts. Utilizing a gender-based framework, the movement conceptualized intimate partner violence (IPV) as a result of power inequalities that stem from patriarchal social structures that provide men with more power than women. While its specific components are continually debated, IPV is broadly defined as “a pattern of intimidation, coercive control, and oppression” within intimate relationships (Dasgupta, 2002, p. 1367). The gender-based framework posits that men are more likely to perpetrate IPV due to the increased power afforded them by the patriarchy in society. Individuals in the domestic violence movement were invested in the continuation and maintenance of this view of power, gender, and violence. For decades, this framework dominated the field and went largely unchallenged.

The publication of Steinmetz’s (1977-1978) article on “battered husbands” challenged this framework by being the first to suggest women also perpetrate violence in intimate relationships. For the immediate decade following Steinmetz’s publication, the topic of female perpetrators went largely unnoticed by the field. It was not until the mid to late 1990s that more researchers began studying women’s use of violence, prompting great debate that continues today about how this newly discovered phenomenon should impact the dominant gender-based theories of the field. In this article, we summarize the context and implications of the arguments on gender symmetry, and we suggest how the values of community psychology provide a framework to mediate this destructive dispute.

The Asymmetry Framework

Individuals ascribing to the asymmetry framework support the mainstream, “second-wave” feminist idea that patriarchy and sexism remain at the root of IPV. Dominated by white, middle-class women, the “second wave” feminist movement primarily attempted to establish equality with regards to gender, often ignoring or downplaying the inequalities that existed on the basis of race, ethnicity or class (hooks, 2000). By describing women as a separate category from men, feminists could highlight the oppressive effects of patriarchy on women, shining further light on the social inequalities experienced by women in society.

Emphasizing the oppression experienced by all women on the basis of gender universalized the categories of men and women, establishing strict and distinct gender binaries. In doing so, characteristics of each gender were broadly applied to all individuals who fell within the categories. Masculine and feminine at-
tributes were depicted as separate, distinct, and applicable on the basis of one’s assigned sex. This meant that the perpetration of violence became equated with masculinity and victimization with femininity. Before the discussions of women’s use of violence, heterogeneity within gender categories received little attention in the field of intimate partner violence: men’s violence against women was the only one empirically investigated.

This strict gender dichotomy also lent itself to the distinctly separate categories of victim and perpetrator. If masculinity is distinct from femininity, and if the relationship between gender and IPV is stable, then those who perpetrate violence will remain separate from those who experience it. Women’s use of violence was one of the first inquiries into potential overlap between the categories of victim and perpetrator. Since women are largely considered the victims of IPV, women’s use of violence situates them as both victims and perpetrators. Proponents of asymmetry in IPV argue that many female perpetrators are initially victims or become violent partners in the context of “fighting back.” (Dasgupta, 2002; Perilla, Frndak, Lillard, & East, 2003). Moreover, the uncontestable fact that women greatly outnumber men as victims of domestic homicide (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995) lends additional credence to the arguments of the asymmetry camp.

The Symmetry Framework

Theorists who claim that men and women perpetrate equal levels of violence strongly disagree with the proposed links between patriarchy and violence (Dutton & Corvo, 2007). Often dubbed anti-feminist by those in the asymmetry camp, symmetry researchers challenge the idea that system-level variables like sexism affect the behavior of individuals differentially by gender (Dutton & Nicholls, 2005). Instead of a gender issue, they argue that IPV is a human issue since neither gender dominates the perpetration of violence, thus both genders experience violence equally.

Perpetration rates of IPV serve as the focal point and foundation of this perspective. By the sheer number of empirical studies (currently over 200; see Fiebert, 2004), one can glean the importance of finding equal perpetration rates of IPV across gender for establishing the legitimacy of the gender symmetry argument. Symmetry theorists argue that quantitative measures, such as the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS), which calculates the number of times an individual both experiences and uses different violent tactics when in a conflict with an intimate partner, suggest that men and women equally perpetuate violence (Archer, 2000, 2002; Straus & Ramírez, 2007).

However, a seemingly endless supply of research continues to illuminate the methodological shortcomings of CTS-like scales, highlighting, among other things, the inability of the CTS to contextualize the violent acts (Dasgupta, 2002; Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Kimmel, 2002). While the CTS can quantify acts of violence, it cannot explain the motivation, impact, severity, or reaction to the act, nor can it take into account larger socio-political contexts surrounding the relationship. Gender symmetry researchers insist that these contexts of violence are irrelevant and do not lead to asymmetrical perpetration of violence (Dutton, 1994; Dutton & Nicholls, 2005). By denying the potential impact of individual and social contexts on gendered behavior, gender symmetry researchers essentially equate gender with biology. Some researchers argue that doing so attempts to “neutralize [gender] as a category for understanding relationship violence” (Ristock, 2002, p. 7), allowing for the formulation of IPV in a gender vacuum.

Shared Theoretical Limitations

Despite the rancor of the debate, researchers on both sides share several theoretical limitations. While different elements weigh into each side’s construction of gender, ultimately researchers from both perspectives produce a view of gender as a strict, unchanging, binary system that remains closely tied to one’s anatomical sex. Asymmetry proponents make more efforts to differentiate between gender and sex in their language; however, like symmetry proponents, they still mostly measure gender with a one-item variable that distinguishes between male and female participants (Brush, 2005). This essentialist approach sees gender as an innate attribute of individuals (Holland & Howard, 2000), and it excludes transgender and intersexed individuals as well as individuals of fluid or transitional gender identities. The IPV discourse espoused by both sides of the debate provides little theoretical or discursive space for individuals who fall outside of the binary gender system.

Researchers at both ends of the debate also largely overlook the intersectionality of identity (Perilla et al., 2003). Adopting an intersectional framework means acknowledging how demographic categories exist in hierarchical and hegemonic systems of oppression and privilege (Crenshaw, Bergen, Edleson, & Renzetti, 2005). Both asymmetry and symmetry researchers provide little consideration of the intersectionality of gender with race/ethnicity, class, religion, age, sexuality, and other variables on the perpetration of IPV (Perilla et al., 2003).

Using the community psychology values of social justice, citizen participation, sense of community, and collaboration can help diffuse the debate by challenging the dominant paradigms that inhibit constructive dialogue.

Implications of the Debate

The bitterness of the debate precludes constructive dialogue about women’s use of violence, hurting the academic field by limiting opportunities for exploration of alternative frameworks. The aggressive rhetoric of many of the central proponents of gender symmetry often elicits defensive responses from gender asymmetry researchers, inhibiting their consideration of the potential contributions of gender symmetry arguments. For example, gender symmetry proponents use lesbian partner violence as evidence of women’s equal propensity for aggression.
The issue of violence in sexual minority relationships remains an important context in which to explore the roles of gender, power, and violence in relationships. However, gender asymmetry researchers have done little to alter their conceptual framework in analyzing this phenomenon. By essentially applying to sexual minorities the same model used for heterosexuals, they are missing an opportunity to recognize contexts unique to sexual minorities that could prompt alterations of the asymmetry framework and add much-needed clarity to the debate (Neilson, 2004; Ristock, 2002).

Additionally, the frame of the argument impacts the dialogue by restricting the methodologies available to researchers. With their aggressive emphasis on prevalence rates procured from quantitative studies, the gender symmetry researchers frame the debate around these data, leaving little room in the discussion for the inclusion of qualitative data. The omission of qualitative data results in the relative exclusion of the direct voices of the participants, which allows the debate to continue with limited insight from the participants themselves.

Although theoretical, the outcomes of this debate hold many real-world implications. For example, as research on women’s use of violence increases so do mutual and women-only arrests in domestic violence cases (Dasgupta, 2001). The gender distribution in court-mandated batterers’ programs has also seen marked changes since the start of the debate as women are increasingly sent to batterers’ programs. The issue of how to administer services appropriately to a population for which the programs were not developed (Buttell, 2002) is coupled with the challenge that women who use violence pose to the structure of the programs themselves. Batterer’s programs were not initially designed to be administered to perpetrators who may simultaneously be victims.

The political context greatly intensifies this debate as both sides prepare for the upcoming reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 2010. Arguments arise over the appropriate allocation of funds by VAWA; gender symmetry theorists use studies that find equal rates of perpetration across gender as evidence that VAWA is discriminatory (Baskerville, 2006). If partner violence is perpetrated equally by men and women, they argue, then women should not be the primary recipient of funds to support victims of IPV. The coupling of perpetration rates with the viability of VAWA creates an even more heated atmosphere in which social scientists must debate this issue.

Alternative Framework

With so much at stake politically, academically, and for the lives of women and men, resolution of this bitter debate is of paramount concern. Fortunately, some of the core values of community psychology can provide a useful framework for a more inclusive and broader understanding of IPV. Using the community psychology values of social justice, citizen participation, sense of community, and collaboration can help diffuse the debate by challenging the dominant paradigms that inhibit constructive dialogue.

Analyzing the dichotomous and exclusionary treatment of both gender and victim/perpetrator status through a social justice lens creates the opportunity to change these binary systems. Constructing gender as a fluid, complex variable in our research incorporates individuals whose gender or sex identity does not fall neatly into the binary system. By doing so, any programs or interventions based on this more inclusive research necessarily provides more opportunity for equitable treatment of all individuals. Furthermore, moving away from a distinct victim/perpetrator dichotomy improves our understanding of IPV by situating it within a broader context of violence. Removing the binding labels of “victim” and “perpetrator” from the debate creates the possibility that someone could both perpetrate and experience violence in a relationship (Ristock, 2002). Creating this discursive space opens the door for greater consideration of the relationship between IPV and other forms of violence like racism, classism, and heterosexism. A social justice framework can reveal the various hierarchies of power that simultaneously affect people (Ristock, 2002), which could ultimately encourage expansion of the current debate.

The community psychology value of citizen participation addresses the limited use of women and men’s voices in the debate. Community psychology encourages the framing of issues and solutions by participants themselves, enhancing our knowledge as practitioners and researchers by inviting individuals to describe their experiences in their own words (Perilla, Roche, and Collier, 2007). The voices of participants remain largely silenced in studies on women’s use of violence. By emphasizing the value of citizen participation, community psychology encourages researchers in the debate to utilize alternative methodologies, including qualitative and participatory action study designs.

Finally, community psychology emphasizes the importance of collaboration and sense of community, both of which are severely impaired by the current debate. The attack-response format of communication between the two camps curtails efforts at collaboration, leading instead to many researchers solely attempting to rebut the arguments of the opposing camp. Community psychology encourages the creation of partnerships, building on the strengths of both parties to develop a more comprehensive and nuanced approach to IPV. Doing so would strengthen the sense of community within the field. Perhaps the most distressing element of this debate for researchers is the damage to the collective unity of the field and movement. This sense of community can be regained by more closely aligning with some of the values espoused by community psychology. By emphasizing social justice, citizen participation, and collaboration, the community of IPV researchers and practitioners can begin to resolve the current debate, emerging from it stronger and more able to address the urgent issues of violence within families. ☝

Acknowledgements: We would like to acknowledge the following people and organizations for their input and support for this article: Douglas Ribeiro, Leon Silvers, Georgia Commission on Family Violence, and J. P. Collier.

References


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**The Community Student: Summer/Fall 2008**

Edited by Christopher Zambakari and Fernando Estrada

We put out a call for submissions to our Summer/Fall edition of TCS, and we were very pleased to receive such an excellent and diverse array of submissions from students across the U.S. Since we did not publish in the summer, we have space to publish two articles in this issue.

We congratulate this issue’s featured authors, Mary E. Gray, Amber Hayes, Katherine E. McDonald and Colleen Kidney from the Department of Psychology at Portland State University. They present the development, implementation, and student evaluation of The Community Psychology Board Game, created to encourage student interaction, cooperation, and the application of material learned during class lectures, discussions, and readings. The second article is authored by Laila Hochhausen & Huynh Nhu Le, from George Washington University, Department of Psychology and Deborah F. Perry, from Johns Hopkins University, Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health. The latter manuscript is the product of collaboration between university students, faculty, and a community care clinic. In seeking to understand service use among Latina immigrants, the group managed to contribute to improved access to services within the community mental health care system.

We hope that students will continue to be instrumental in community activities, partner with various agencies involved in providing quality services to members, and share with us the product of such fruitful collaboration.

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**Playing Your Way through Community Interventions: The Community Psychology Board Game**

~Mary E. Gray, Amber Hayes, Colleen Kidney, & Katherine E. McDonald, Portland State University

Professional psychologists created community psychology in large part to counteract the prevailing medical model that was the status quo for practicing psychologists (Rappaport, 1977). To meet the challenge of reconceptualizing how to understand and meet the needs of individuals and communities, a successful community psychologist must employ methods of investigation and intervention that operate outside of conventional thinking (Seidman, 1983). For example, as community psychologists look beyond traditional scientific research methods, we strive to incorporate methods of ecological inquiry and develop reciprocal relationships with research participants and settings (Trickett, Kelly, & Vincent, 1985). As we reflect on the exciting and challenging roles community psychologists encounter, it is equally important to develop innovative methods to engage students learning about community psychology in the discipline and spark their spirit for ecological inquiry.
Challenges arise, however, when attempting to instill this community spirit within the confines of a college classroom. A successful community psychology classroom moves beyond the traditional, hierarchical instructor-student dynamic and emphasizes different methods of thinking and learning. One way classrooms can develop thought, inquiry, and community interaction is through the use of games.

Students reported that the board game helped them understand course readings and class discussions better, helped review vocabulary and helped them prepare for the final paper. Perhaps more importantly, students felt that participation provided them with an active learning experience with their peers.

Games help create an active learning environment for students. Situations where students actively engage and attempt to understand information can be vital to the learning experience (Thatcher, 1990). In contrast to traditional instruction, students must take control over their own educational experiences and work with their environment and classmates to utilize information (Thatcher, 1990). This type of activity moves beyond the “banking” model of education (Freire, 1970), allowing students to become active participants in their own learning experiences. In these instances, the instructor relinquishes control of the educational process and acts more as a facilitator during game play (Thatcher, 1990).

Games may help students develop adaptive, interpersonal skills by placing them in collaborative situations with people they do not typically engage (Specht & Sandlin, 1991). In social science classrooms, games can be as effective as traditional lectures, and sometimes more so, at conveying information. In addition, students who engage in games feel more confident in the material and ascribe more relevance to what they have learned (Randel, Morris, Wetzel, & Whitehill, 1992). When paired with classroom readings, the use of games may also help students retain material over time (Randel, et al., 1992). In a study of college accounting students, those who engaged in a role-playing game showed no significant decrease in recall of material over a six-week time period. In contrast, students who did not engage in game play remembered significantly less of what they had learned (Specht & Sandlin, 1991). Similar results were found in an undergraduate psychology course; students who played a board game following a lecture remembered slightly more material at a one-week delayed posttest than students who did not play the game (Klein & Freitag, 1991).

Here we describe the development, implementation, and student evaluation of The Community Psychology Board Game. We developed the game to encourage student interaction, cooperation, and application of material learned during class lectures, discussions, and readings. Students—both advanced undergraduates and graduate students—had the opportunity to contribute to the content of the game, as well as to participate in an evaluation after playing the game.

**The Community Psychology Board Game**

*The Community Psychology Board Game* is an interactive community psychology teaching tool and a means to facilitate discussion and understanding of community psychology vocabulary, concepts and history. The board game was inspired by *Program Evaluation: The Board Game*, an interactive learning tool used to improve players program evaluation knowledge (Febey & Coyne, 2007). The first three authors, who were graduate students enrolled in the advanced undergraduate-graduate level split course in community psychology, designed the structure of the game and developed questions and materials. Dr. McDonald, the course instructor, served as a consultant to the process.

The game includes a game board (see Figure 1), a set of “Test Your Knowledge Cards,” game directions, five place markers, and one die. The game board follows the journey through community psychology research with milestones of the process represented by spaces in the game such as “Determine Ecological Levels of Analysis” and “Organize Community and Social Change.” The winner of the game must finish first by moving through the spaces representing a properly executed research project from beginning to end, while correctly answering questions about the field along the way. Players begin at the square on the board called “Identify a Phenomenon to Study” with a “Test Your Knowledge” question. The player to the left of the player who begins the game reads the question to that player. If they answer correctly, they move the number of questions as indicated on the card. If they answer incorrectly, they do not advance on the board. At the end of a player’s turn, she reads the top card to the player to her right. As each player’s marker moves along 45 possible spaces, she follows the printed instructions in the landed-on game square. The game is intended for two to five players and takes approximately one hour to play. The game board and “Test Your Knowledge Cards” can be downloaded from Dr. McDonald’s website at: <http://www.psy.pdx.edu/faculty/mcdonald/index.php>.

Dr. McDonald offered extra credit to students enrolled in the class to submit possible “Test Your Knowledge” questions for the game. We combined, edited, and revised the submitted questions and supplemented them with more of our own. The questions were created with reference to course reading materials and a community psychology text (Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2001). “Test Your Knowledge” questions included topics about general community psychology concepts, terms, theories, theorists, methodologies and historical facts (see Table 1., p. 48). The questions were also intended to generate discussion and debate among the players. The questions were categorized into three distinct levels of difficulty, which when answered correctly, were rewarded with three corresponding levels of board game advancement (move 1 space, 2 spaces, or 3 spaces forward).
Implementation and Evaluation of the Board Game

The Community Psychology Board Game was pilot tested in a graduate/advanced undergraduate-level seminar in community psychology at Portland State University. A total of thirty-one students (six graduate students and twenty-five advanced-level undergraduate students) played the game. The game was played during the last day of class in fall 2007, before the final paper was due.

We explained the directions for playing the games and students broke up into groups of five or six and began to play. After each group had finished the board game, students were provided with an opportunity to provide feedback in a survey on their experiences with the board game. We reviewed the purpose of the survey with students and presented them a consent document with more information. Students participated in the survey anonymously by indicating their agreement to allow their data to be used for research purposes on the survey, or to decide to permit us to use their data for course evaluation purposes only. All students (n = 31) indicated that their survey responses could be used for research purposes. Students completed a nine-item questionnaire intended to evaluate how the game impacted their understanding of community psychology. The survey included the same items that Febey and Coyne (2007) used to evaluate their program evaluation game, adapted to refer to community psychology outcomes. Specifically, students were asked whether or not the game helped them conceptualize the steps of conducting an intervention, offered them a review of vocabulary, helped them to learn concepts in community psychology, facilitated discussion among players, helped them prepare for the final paper, helped them to understand course readings and assignments, and was engaging. Response options ranged on a scale of 1-5 where 1 indicated strongly disagree and 5 indicated strongly agree.

All students who played the game participated in the survey. In general, responses on the value of the board game were very
Table 1. Test your knowledge example questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of difficulty</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Name 3 of the Caplan’s 6 models with regard to prevention in community psychology.</td>
<td>Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, Universal, Selective, and Indicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Within the ecological levels of analysis, neighborhoods are located in: a. Microsystems</td>
<td>a. Microsystems b. macrosystems c. localities d. organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>According to Alinsky (1971), Rules for Radicals, which power tactic does not belong in the mix?</td>
<td>a. Power is not only what you have but what the enemy thinks you have b. Keep the pressure on c. Be prepared to persist with your tactic, no matter how long it takes d. Make the enemy live up to their own book of rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In community psychology, empowerment consists of some problematic realities to consider. Of the following, which does not belong as an obstacle of empowerment?</td>
<td>a. Competition among the empowered b. Masculine concepts of mastery, power, and control c. Individualistic societal norms d. Values rooted in feminism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>According to Bronfenbrenner, what are the ecological levels of analysis?</td>
<td>Individual, Microsystems, Organizations, Localities, and Macrosystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>According to Trickett, “adaptation and coping are the dominant means of growth and change” for individuals. How would this theory be impacted by marginalization?</td>
<td>By denying groups resources, groups are also denied the means of developing adequate coping skills or adapting to their environments at the same rate as non-marginalized groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions and Implications

Survey response findings suggest that The Community Psychology Board Game may be an effective learning tool, helping students process, understand, and review class concepts. Students reported that the board game helped them understand course readings and class discussions better, helped review vocabulary and helped them prepare for the final paper. Perhaps more importantly, students felt that participation provided them with an active learning experience with their peers. The game helped facilitate student-generated discussions and allowed classmates to interact and use each other as resources, without relying on the guidance of an instructor. While potentially challenging, this situation encouraged students to explore their own strengths, utilize the strengths found in their environment and work outside the traditional classroom hierarchies and boundaries.

In interpreting these findings, it is worth noting that convenience sampling methodology of students enrolled in this particular course was implemented and therefore survey results may not be generalizable to other populations. Additionally, student responses may have been affected by the amount of experience in the field and engagement in class readings or whether the individual had completed the final paper prior to participating. However, the overwhelmingly positive responses to the game indicate a successful classroom activity that promotes interactive learning with a novel classroom tool.

Future research on the impact of board games and other interactive learning tools may provide educators more tested options to facilitate learning and discussion in the classroom. Specifically, future research will lead to a better understanding of whether interactive learning tools such as The Community Psychology Board Game facilitate student discussion and help them better understand community psychology related concepts, theories, and materials. For the time being, we hope instructors of community psychology may make use of and appreciate this new interactive and engaging classroom learning tool. ☞

References


From the Inside Out: Understanding Limited Mental Health Service Use among Latina Immigrants

~Laila Hochhausen, George Washington University, Deborah F. Perry, Johns Hopkins University, & Huynh Nhu Le, George Washington University

Maria is a 29-year old Salvadoran woman who arrived to the U.S. six months ago. She is living with her cousin, his wife, and their three children in a one bedroom apartment. She is pregnant with her fifth child and plans to continue working in her industrial cleaning job until he is born. María was forced to leave her first four children in El Salvador with their father who was abusing her emotionally and physically. In the two-week journey from her town in El Salvador to the U.S., she had no food and was raped by the man who was paid to help her cross the border. Once in the U.S., she discovered she was pregnant with his child. Fortunately for María, her cousin’s wife brought her to a community clinic where she could receive prenatal care as well as counseling. María was hesitant at first, but met with one of the support workers who was kind and made her feel that things would turn out well for her.

Stories such as this are not uncommon in the lives of many Latina immigrants in the U.S. These stories are seldom told and even less often recognized as the reality of a large group of people. Confronting the effects of the traumatic events experienced by so many of these women is a challenge to medical and mental health providers alike. To design effective services and support for these highly stressed populations, researchers need to partner with community-based providers that immigrant groups are more likely to trust and seek out for help (Minkler, 2005). In addition to the difficulties that researchers and clinicians may encounter in working with low-income populations, immigrant women also may be less likely to seek care due to concerns about their legal status, limited knowledge of English, and the cultural stigma of mental health problems (Ruiz, 2002). Community-based participatory research (CBPR) has begun to address some of the gaps in research and services by actively engaging community organizations that serve those groups. CBPR is based on a commitment to a core set of principles encouraging cooperation with community members and including a focus on equal division of labor and resources and sustainability of programs (Israel et al., 2005; Israeli, Schulz, Parker, & Becker, 1998; Israeli, Schulz, Parke, Becker, Allen, & Guzman, 2005). This paper reports on the lessons learned from a collaboration between a student-led team of university-based researchers and a community-based comprehensive health center serving a large, diverse group of immigrant families in Washington, DC.

Partnership Building

As university researchers interested in prevention research, we initially approached the leadership at the Mary’s Center for Maternal and Child Care to determine their interest in partnering on a longitudinal study on preventing postpartum depression. The Mary’s Center is a comprehensive community care clinic in Washington, DC that serves primarily low-income Latino immigrants. Through this collaboration, we gained first-hand knowledge of the mental health stressors experienced by recent Latina immigrants such as lack of social support, residential mobility, domestic violence, and others (Le, Lara, & Perry, 2007). The presence of these and other stressors may explain the high prevalence of depression and anxiety among these women (Alderete, Vega, Kolody, & Aguilar–Gaxiola, 1999; Heilemann, Frutos, Lee, & Kury, 2004; Katragadda & Tidwell, 1998). As part of the funded project, women who were currently depressed were identified but were not eligible for our prevention trial—these women were referred for on-site mental health treatment services. This led to the first author’s interest in discovering the extent to which these women were receiving mental health services.

As the story of María has taught us, a growing number of Latina immigrants are arriving in the U.S. carrying with them experiences of trauma on top of current difficulties. As we seek to develop effective, culturally relevant interventions for preventing and treating mental health disorders in these high risk groups, researchers must partner with trusted community-based organizations to learn about barriers to care.
A key principle of CBPR is that the design of the research be agreed upon by both the researcher and the community partners, and that it be in the interest of both parties. Although the idea for the current study was initiated by our research team, our community partners immediately saw how this work could directly benefit their organization. The Mary’s Center had recently hired a director of mental health services, and she was interested in evaluating the services being provided to her clients and further understanding patterns of treatment attendance she had observed through her work at the clinic. The Mental Health Services (MHS) program (begun in 2004) is a small division within the larger clinic, consisting of fewer than ten providers who differ in their level of education, language abilities (i.e., English and Spanish), and the type of clients and problems they treat. Individuals who are referred to MHS may receive any and all of the possible services (i.e., therapy, psychiatry, case management) simultaneously or consecutively (for a diagram of the referral process, see Figure 1.).

Working Together

Having embraced the common goal of improving mental health treatment for Latina clients, the researchers and community partners were both able to bring unique and vital components to the study. As researchers, we brought a way to define and organize the factors associated with service use to help elucidate the complex web of influences on access to treatment. The Andersen Behavioral Model has been applied to health services research but has been seldom applied to Latinas’ mental health in a community context. The model includes multiple levels of analysis: environmental and individual predispositions. Because low-income Latinas primarily seek treatment in community health centers and clinics (Díaz, Prigerson, Desai, & Rosenheck, 2001), understanding their patterns of use within the community context increases the likelihood of improving rates of use and length of retention in treatment. Additionally, as researchers, we brought tools for gathering data relevant to evaluating both the services sought and provided, as well as individual characteristics of the clients, specifically, having the resources to review and evaluate the outcomes of their medical charts.

The director of the MHS and vice president for programs at the clinic also made valuable contributions to the study. First, they brought their intimate knowledge of the inner workings of the complex, dynamic community-based center that had a proven track record in serving growing numbers of immigrant families. This included insights from the director of MHS into the processes of referral for treatment services, the modalities and range of services provided, and real-time information as changes were made to intake procedures, data management, etc. In addition, the community partners provided a database reflecting all of the clients who had been referred for MHS since the beginning of the program in 2004. This database included demographic, referral, and discharge information. This highly sensitive information combined with their willingness to access additional data through medical chart abstraction allowed us to gain a window into the world of the Latina immigrants.

Method

We undertook a medical chart review of all of the clients who had been referred to and discharged from MHS between 2004 and 2006 (N = 532). The information was extracted by the lead author (LH) and entered into an electronic file via laptop computer. All procedures were approved by the George Washington University Institutional Review Board. Variables selected for abstraction were relevant to our community partners and the Anderson Behavioral Model. Retrospective medical chart reviews are common in epidemiological and medical research and considered a “gold standard,” but have seldom been applied to psychological research (Preen, Holman, Lawrence, Baynham, & Semmends, 2004). Given the unprecedented access to client records we were afforded, this data collection methodology allowed us to examine the multiple factors that influence Latinas’ health-seeking behavior. The majority of the data were extracted from records of mental health intake evaluations. These evaluations took place in an interview format, and were later summarized in written format and included in a client’s medical chart. Other sources of data were patient intake forms and service notes (i.e., progress notes).

Preliminary Findings

The mental health evaluations included valuable data for understanding the predisposing, enabling and need characteristics (i.e, population characteristics) of individual clients: questions about their history, presenting problem, family/living situation, stressors, and strengths. Extracting the data from these evaluation summaries required the first author to read extensive histories of violence, trauma, mental illness, and ongoing struggles of clients, such
as that of Maria, whose story was told at the beginning of this paper. The extent of the data available in evaluation summaries and progress notes of the clients on women’s histories and life stories was extremely informative, but also took an unexpected emotional toll on the primary researcher who collected the data. Reading so many accounts of the horrors experienced by some of the women and the extent of their psychological difficulties was time- and energy-intensive. It required frequent breaks, debriefing with colleagues, and a focus on self-care.

This labor-intensive process yielded valuable information for the Mary’s Center and the research team. We gained knowledge about the demographics of the women referred for mental health services, their level of need, and service utilization. Of the 532 names in the MHS database, 263 charts were located. Many women were from Central America (El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua), came to the U.S. in their mid-twenties, lived in the U.S. for 7.57 years, and had fairly limited formal education. In addition, many of the women who were referred to MHS (78%) had suffered some kind of violence (e.g., childhood abuse, rape, immigration-related trauma, war-related trauma), 20% were experiencing ongoing domestic violence, 80% had a history of depression, and 44% reported suicidal ideation or an attempt (see Table 1.). Of the 184 clients with mental health service information present, only 67 (36.4%) clients used these services. Of those, 21 attended only therapy, 31 attended only psychiatric consultation, and 15 attended both therapy and psychiatric consultation.

Implications for Future Work

As a fundamental component of CBPR, ongoing evaluation and feedback between the community partners and researchers have been central to this study. The rates of service use among Latina immigrants at the Mary’s Center (36.4%) are higher than the rates found in some other research (Alegría et al., 2007). This finding highlights what we learned from our community partners about the many steps taken at the Mary’s Center to encourage participation in treatment. The involvement of support workers as advocates for clients, medical professionals as an important referral source, and therapists is just one way that women are aided in navigating the process of a mental health referral and treatment. Integration of mental health across the spectrum of services offered at the Mary’s Center—including home visiting, prenatal care services, pediatric care—may further the success of the current programming and encourage more women to participate in treatment once they have been referred. Our continued research involvement at the Mary’s Center will seek to expand this study, perhaps to investigate women’s continued engagement in services over time or their mental health status following service use. Thanks to the collaboration of the staff at the Mary’s Center, we were able to interpret our findings within the context of the community. Without that context, the findings would not be applicable to program evaluation and development. Our findings also offer implications for expanding our research. Future work might include a comparison of the Mary’s Center with other sites, as well as an expanded methodology including individual interviews with both staff and clients.

As the story of Maria has taught us, a growing number of Latina immigrants are arriving in the U.S. carrying with them experiences of trauma on top of current difficulties. As we seek to develop effective, culturally relevant interventions for preventing and treating mental health disorders in these high-risk groups, researchers must partner with trusted community-based organizations to learn about barriers to care. As researchers, we must bring to the table our best theoretical knowledge and most rigorous methods, and we must value equally the experiences that community providers bring to knowing how best to implement solutions. Working together, we can begin to close the gap between the need for mental health services and utilization of quality services for high-risk immigrant groups.

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References


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Mental health characteristics of the sample (N=76-215).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History of violence?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety present?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal history of depression?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current DV?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever suicide ideation or attempt?</td>
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The Community Psychologist          Vol. 41  No. 3/4  51
The Community Practitioner
Edited by David A. Julian

This issue of “The Community Practitioner” features three articles that are thought provoking and add to our understanding of community psychology practice. Francisco, Greer, Brunson & Hazel report the results of a recent survey of more than 300 SCRA Listserv members. The authors summarize survey responses to a variety of questions designed to elicit information about how community psychologists view their work in the context of community psychology practice. In the second article in this issue, Betzen, Dziadkowiec, Elias–Rodas & Jolley describe the community practice experience from the viewpoint of students working in a university-based center. Finally, Ratcliffe provides a model “resume” and tips for community psychologists seeking employment in applied settings.

Some argue that community psychology practice can be concisely defined and involves the application of a specific set of skills. Francisco et al., Betzen, et al. and Ratcliffe provide a good deal of information that may assist the field in reaching consensus about what constitutes community psychology practice and how training programs might best prepare students interested in applied careers. I would like to invite others to summarize their perspectives. “The Community Practitioner” publishes short articles (six to eight double spaced pages). The deadlines for the winter and spring issues are November 30, 2008 and February 29, 2009, respectively. Please submit articles to Dave Julian at julian.3@osu.edu.

Results of the Society for Community Research and Action Community Practice Survey
~Vincent Francisco & Greer Cook, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Liessete Brunson, University of Quebec at Montreal, & Kelly Hazel, Metropolitan State University

Community practice has been a long standing interest for the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA). Recent resurgence in interest around this question is reflected in the work of the Community Practice Work Group, strong participation at the Community Practice Summit at the recent SCRA biennial, and widespread contributions to and enthusiastic readership of the community practice column in The Community Psychologist. These forums have generated a series of reflections around questions such as: What is community practice in the field of community psychology? Who identifies as or should be considered community practitioners? Where do practitioners work? What kinds of work do they do and what skills do they need and use? What kind of training


have they received and would they find helpful? What is the ideal relationship between academic work and practice? And how can SCRA better support community practice and community practitioners?

These issues are fundamental to the field of community psychology for several reasons. There has been a growing concern that our field is facing a crisis, reflected in the low level of visibility of community psychology as a field, in growing difficulties recruiting students to graduate training programs, in the disappearance of several academic programs in community psychology, and a perceived declining membership (or participation) in SCRA. These trends give rise to the concern that fewer people are interested in community psychology and its approach to understanding and enhancing people’s well-being. In some ways, these trends may simply reflect a need to “market” our field better. More generally, these trends raise questions about different models of graduate education, those based on an apprenticeship model versus competency-based models of training. Yet even more fundamentally, these trends should provoke us to ask, What difference do we make and can we make as a field? How can we better support and magnify that impact? Viewed in this light, trends of declining enrollment and membership go beyond questions of organizational or program survival to questions about the fundamental nature and importance of the field of community psychology. Many would argue that an important aspect of our “value add” is the field’s concern for community practice and active involvement in community change.

These questions prompted a survey about community practice with SCRA members conducted in the fall of 2006. This article presents a portion of the results of the survey; additional results have been made available in a report to the SCRA Executive Committee, and a summary of results will be submitted for publication in the American Journal of Community Psychology. In this article, we focus on results related to SCRA’s role in supporting community practice. How does SCRA currently relate to and support members who engage in community practice? What do practicing members want and get out of the organization and out of their participation in the organization? What do people think of SCRA and its role in supporting community practice? What services, training, and/or activities could SCRA offer to better support practice and practitioners or to otherwise help people with their community practice work?

In this survey, we did not attempt to define community practice or to define who is “really” a community practitioner. Discussions around this topic and proposed definitions have been offered by Julian, Hernández, & Hodges (2006) and by Julian (2006). Instead, we asked respondents whether they self-identified as community practitioners and how much time they spent in community practice. In this sense, the vast majority of our respondents saw themselves as community practitioners. We note, however, that only a third of respondents spent 50% or more of their work time directly engaged in community practice and that the responses of this group compared to the rest of the respondents looked quite different.

Methods

As the Community Practice Work Group developed over the past several years, it became clear that we needed to get additional information from the current and past SCRA membership about issues related to practice, practitioners, and SCRA. With the help of the executive committee, members of the working group, participants on the SCRA email reflector, and others, we surveyed current, past, and prospective members. Several months of work yielded a six-page internet survey covering issues of defining community psychology practice and practitioners, training and competencies of practitioners, level of support and connection to SCRA more broadly, and background information about the respondents. Questions were a broad mix of quantitative and qualitative response possibilities. The internet survey was available for approximately 4.5 months with three separate prompts on the SCRA email reflector and emails to current and past members during that time. This effort yielded 310 completed surveys from 2,576 potential respondents (approximately 13% response rate). There were less than 100 “bounced” emails.

The lead author obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from his home institution. The email invitations to potential respondents included information about IRB approval and contact information. The survey was completed anonymously. No attempt was made to connect completed surveys to email addresses or respondents. Response summaries further protected participants since all qualitative data were aggregated.

Results

Once the survey was closed, the authors reviewed all the summarized responses. Two summaries follow. The first is a general analysis of all the responses. Following that is an analysis of responses based on the amount of time respondents spent in practice. It became clear that collapsing respondents into two categories (from five original categories) would yield the clearest breakout between respondents indicating more time (>50%) or less time (<50%) in community psychology practice.
Closer examination of the responses indicated that there was a clear delineation between university-based researchers/practitioners and those respondents who were community-based researchers/practitioners. There was roughly an equal distribution of respondents indicating that they were predominantly employed in government or non-profit based settings in each category of the breakout (>50% or <50% in community psychology practice). However, there was an overwhelming number of university-based respondents (about 74% of all respondents) in the “<50% time in practice” category.

**General Analysis**

In reviewing the data, we were able to make several general statements about the respondents and their responses. Most respondents considered themselves both community psychologists and community practitioners. About 28% of respondents were still students although most of the respondents who were done with school had attained doctoral degrees (60%). Most of the respondents worked in university settings but other settings included government, community, and corporate.

Only 35% of the respondents spent more than 50% of their time in practice. Just over half felt that they learned their practice in graduate school. Most respondents (75%) were members of SCRA although many respondents (82%) also voiced that they felt little or moderate connection to SCRA. Of this later group of respondents, 58% indicated “not sure” when describing what SCRA either does for them or could do for them related to training, ongoing support, or advocacy.

**Percent Time in Practice Analysis**

There were several questions where “percent time spent in practice” revealed development opportunities for SCRA and community practice. To facilitate this analysis, we collapsed the original five response categories into two categories so that we could compare those respondents indicating more than 50% of their time spent in practice with those indicating less than 50% of their time in practice. Several questions in the survey related to affiliation with the broader field of community psychology practice and identification as a community psychologist.

It was apparent that among those with more time spent in practice, respondents more strongly identified as community psychologists. These individuals were also more likely to identify themselves to others as community psychologists. Finally, as respondents indicated more time in practice, they were more likely to identify themselves as community psychology practitioners or applied community psychologists.

In general, respondents in both categories reported learning most of their skills at a university (Q11, see Appendix) but results were split with over a third of all respondents learning many of their competencies outside of their university experience. This could mean that there is an opportunity to update competencies for university training or that there is a great opportunity for postgraduate education or both.

Those respondents indicating a lower percent of time spent in community psychology practice were more likely to be members of SCRA (Q13, see Appendix). Many of the respondents indicating they were not currently members also indicated that they had been members in the past. Further, while many of the practitioners indicated they were SCRA members, most of them (about 80%) indicated feeling less connected to SCRA or that they were not getting much benefit from membership. It was clear that the more time spent in practice, the less valued by SCRA respondents felt and the less they felt that SCRA valued their role in community psychology practice.

**Discussion**

Our experience with the survey, with SCRA as a society, and with individual members is that people want to remain connected and help build community psychology as a field. We are struggling to both meet the needs of an academic and scientific audience that values practice, and a practitioner audience that values training and science as promoted by the academy. These needs are not mutually exclusive and plenty of evidence exists from the survey to support both points of view.

Anecdotal evidence outside of the survey leads us to believe that there is an invisible constituency for community practice that includes many people not currently members of SCRA. This might include all those graduates of undergraduate and graduate community psychology programs who don’t become members of SCRA. It might also include people trained in programs that include a community emphasis (e.g., public health, education, urban planning). It remains to be seen how we can work together to contact, mobilize, and support these potentially large groups of people.

Those who work more than 50% time in practice typically work in settings such as foundations, public health, private practice, evaluation organizations, and government service. Needs for learning, capacity building, teaching others, and sharing wisdom in a social context are as important to practitioners as to academics who do not strongly identify as practitioners. These results seem to indicate that SCRA could improve its support of community practitioners.

**Limitations**

There are several things that limit our analysis of the findings and our ability to generalize to a broader population. First, there was little access to those who are (or were) not currently members of SCRA. We should work with the Council on Graduate Education in Community Psychology to see if we can open this survey to their alumni (undergrad, master, and doctoral) to address this issue. Given the overwhelming response from persons with doctoral degrees, we are probably not getting adequate information from masters level practitioners. Second, the respondents were self selected. Given the relatively low response rate, it is clear that we missed a lot of folks. We just don’t know what we don’t know at this point.

**Next Steps**

Further summaries of this survey will explore additional themes. For example:

- How do people define community practice?
- What skills are used?
- For what skills should graduate training programs offer training?
• What skills should we offer to graduate students and to SCRA members interested in increasing their ability to work with community members and community groups?
• How do we best offer that training?

Possible follow-up research includes:

• Interviews with those who spend 50% or more of their time in community practice—What support could SCRA offer?
• How can SCRA be more relevant?
• What do other organizations do that practitioners find particularly helpful?

Defining community practice and training competencies invoke issues related to standardizing the field, certification, etc. These have been and will likely continue to be vigorous debates within our profession. Certification, licensing, and formalized training programs that offer specific competencies likely create easier access to resources such as legitimacy, visibility, and opportunities to claim and restrict job niches. Competency-based models explicitly enumerate the skills and knowledge base that students can expect to acquire by investing a number of years in graduate school and what types of work they will be prepared for at the end of their course of study.

However, professionalizing a field that has at its core an interest in social criticism and social change is viewed by some as inherently self-contradictory while others argue we can best serve our constituencies by working at the margins. In the context of ongoing transformation of graduate education (apprentice model vs. competency-based curricula) and demands for accountability, can we be more explicit about what different skills we offer without imposing credentialing systems? One thing is clear. Now that we have started to explore these issues, we have a lot more work to do. 

Appendix:
Survey responses analyzed by less or more than 50% of time spent in practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1. Do you think of yourself as a community psychologist?</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>&lt;50% time in practice</th>
<th>&gt;50% time in practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q2. When you describe what you do to others, do you identify yourself as a community psychologist?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 5 represents very strong ties and 1 represents weak or no ties, how would you describe your connection to the profession of community psychology?</td>
<td>Weak ties</td>
<td>Strong ties</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. Do you think of yourself as a community psychology practitioner or applied community psychologist?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8: Primary Affiliation</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>Government agency</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11: In general, would you say you learned the skills you use in your community psychology practice work in your graduate training program?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q13: Are you a current member of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q15: If you are not a current SCRA member, have you ever been a member in the past?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q17: On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents weak or no ties and 5 represents very strong ties, how would you describe your connection to the Society for Community Research and Action?</td>
<td>Weak ties</td>
<td>Strong ties</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19a: SCRA values me as a member.</td>
<td>Lower value</td>
<td>Higher value</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19b: My role as a practitioner is valued by SCRA.</td>
<td>Lower value</td>
<td>Higher value</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19c: SCRA values community psychology practice.</td>
<td>Lower value</td>
<td>Higher value</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19d: SCRA provides services valuable to community psychology practitioners.</td>
<td>Lower value</td>
<td>Higher value</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19e: SCRA provides services valuable to the academic community.</td>
<td>Lower value</td>
<td>Higher value</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19f: The Community Psychologist provides information that supports community psychology practice.</td>
<td>Less information</td>
<td>More information</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19g: The American Journal of Community Psychology provides information that supports community psychology practice.</td>
<td>Less information</td>
<td>More information</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q19h: The SCRA Biennial Conference provides information that supports community psychology practice.</td>
<td>Less information</td>
<td>More information</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q20: Which of the following degrees have you completed?</td>
<td>Undergraduate degree</td>
<td>Masters degree</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PhD degree</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>43</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>109</td>
<td>52</td>
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Acknowledgements: The authors wish to thank current and past members of the SCRA Executive Committee, current and past members of the Community Practice Work Group led by Tom Wolff, and the respondents to the survey for their indulgence in completing a complicated survey.

References

Graduate Student Life at the Center for Community Support & Research at Wichita State University
~Diane Betzen, Oliwier Dziadkowiec, Dina Elias–Rodas, & Sarah Jolley, Wichita State University

The Center for Community Support & Research (CCSR), part of the community psychology doctoral program at Wichita State University, has the mission to strengthen Kansas through education, leadership development, facilitation, and research. This mission encapsulates the work of the CCSR and is also applicable to the involvement of graduate students at the CCSR. In their time at the CCSR, graduate students are provided with opportunities in each of the four areas noted above: education, leadership development, facilitation, and research. The experiences of graduate students at the CCSR are facilitated by three primary organizational components: the place (the actual physical location and building), the people (the diverse staff and community partners), and the practice (the community research and activity taking place on a daily basis).

The Place
While the CCSR is part of Wichita State University, it is not located on the university’s main campus. The CCSR is housed in a three-story building in the heart of downtown Wichita, approximately 15 minutes from campus. This location provides easier access (and better parking) for the community partners who frequent the CCSR. Away from what can be perceived as the “ivory tower” of academia, the CCSR’s downtown facility provides a welcoming environment to all who come through the doors.

Once inside the building, one will notice that graduate student offices are not all in the same part of the building or even located on the same floor. Graduate student offices are interspersed throughout the building next to various other staff members’ offices. This allows graduate students to immediately feel like an integral part of the organization, not just members of research teams.

The People
Part of the experience one gains from the community psychology graduate education at Wichita State University includes the knowledge accumulated just by being around others who are practicing community psychology and who are immersed in the field. Graduate students at the CCSR are surrounded by a staff of over 50, people from different disciplines and all walks of life who bring their unique skills to each situation they face. Team members are not only composed of researchers who have strong backgrounds in community-based research methods but also those who are skilled in facilitation and collaboration and others who bring years of organizational development experience to their work. Because of the CCSR’s strong social ties and experience working with the local business sector, government, and nonprofits, the CCSR is able to partner with people and organizations statewide.

The CCSR employs plenty of community psychologists but also employs staff with advanced degrees in sociology, education, public administration, and social work as well as staff with the same “lived experience” as some of the members of community groups with whom the CCSR works. With these different types of backgrounds come different and valuable perspectives that drive the work at the CCSR. Graduate students are valued for their input as much as any other staff member.

The diversity of the CCSR reaches further than academic backgrounds; the CCSR is one of the most culturally diverse units at Wichita State University and encompasses a growing international influence. Those from other cultures add a unique perspective to the programs and operations at the CCSR. Without their careful thought and input, the CCSR wouldn’t be able to serve some community partners nearly as well because the background knowledge that these valuable people provide would be noticeably absent. The organizational culture at the CCSR promotes an openness to sharing thoughts as well as listening to what others have to say. In many ways, graduate students are considered leaders in learning how to be culturally sensitive and aware in their communities.

The diversity at the CCSR also is reflected in the four-generation workplace; there are no gaps here. The youngest staff person is less than twenty years old while the eldest is retirement-worthy. These different cohorts are valuable as well when it comes to targeting specific age groups in the community and for the mix of experience and contemporary knowledge. For example, one CCSR staff member had to get an exception to university policy to add text-messaging to her cell phone because that was the best way to communicate with the youth involved in Youth United for Positive Action (YUPA), an entirely youth-led organization co-located on the first floor of the CCSR.

In addition to housing a youth-led organization, the statewide Consumer Advisory Council is co-located at the CCSR. The community psychology graduate students have colleagues on staff with lived experience with mental illness which adds to the diversity and competence at the CCSR. These consumer staff and students provide an irreplaceable understanding necessary to work with consumer-run organizations and other related community projects.

By putting all of these diverse perspectives together, students are able to gain from the experiences that are shared with them. They are also able to complete projects they would likely not have been able to complete independently and to provide input that impacts decisions that are made every day. Because of these shared experiences and collaborative efforts, the experienc-
es graduate students walk away with are invaluable and provide more knowledge than any textbook ever could.

The Practice

One of the most beneficial (and fun!) aspects of being a graduate student at the CCSR is the rich learning experience associated with engaging in the practice of community psychology. Graduate students at the CCSR have the opportunity to work in community and organizational settings that provide real-world experience throughout their graduate careers. As mentioned previously, students at the CCSR are not treated as data collecting and processing machines but as young professionals on equal grounds with the full-time staff.

The CCSR uses self-directed work teams, led by a team facilitator and comprised of various staff and students who are knowledgeable and/or interested in the topics related to a particular project. This work group structure brings out the best in everyone on the team, allowing people to use their strengths while also learning from others. It should also be mentioned that graduate students most often join a team only if they express interest in working on a given project. When a student first starts working at the CCSR, he or she is welcome to visit various team meetings and decide which ones he or she would like to join.

Once a student joins a team, he or she is gradually given more and more responsibilities. As students gain more experience, they begin to take the lead on projects and are responsible for keeping track of team discussions, keeping other team members informed about their responsibilities, and moving the project forward. This allows a student to grow as a leader in a real-world group setting. What makes the CCSR so “student-accessible” is the fact that work team meetings are scheduled around students’ schedules which is not only a statement of the CCSR’s dedication to doctoral training but also ensures that graduate students are full team members and not just assistants.

For example, the Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership (WYEP) is one project in which graduate students are involved. The WYEP is a three-year, federally-funded initiative that includes ten partnering faith-based and community organizations that address youth violence and gang activity in one district in the city of Wichita. Some of the goals of this project include building the organizational capacity of the partnering organizations and promoting youth empowerment. For this reason, adults and youth in the organizations are equally involved. Graduate students have the opportunity to interact with community partners as technical assistance providers, community organizers, workshop facilitators, and researchers.

In addition to being involved in long-term projects like WYEP, graduate students also work with community partners and organizations on smaller, short-term projects. For instance, one graduate student worked with a community organization on the development of a needs assessment. This student and the research coordinator at the CCSR met with the director of the organization to discuss the research needs/goals and then developed a proposal for conducting a needs assessment. After the proposal was approved, the student and research coordinator discussed the details of what should be done and examined the specific research methods to be used (i.e., surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews). The CCSR and the organization jointly developed a timeline and outlined ways for both organizations to work together to collect the necessary data. The graduate student then took the lead on analyzing the data and developing the final report that was submitted to the community organization at the end of the partnership period.

Each CCSR project provides a valuable learning experience. Graduate students are able to work with a variety of community partners and other CCSR staff members to learn valuable people and practice skills. Such experiences may make the transition to their careers much easier. The CCSR is structured in a way that students as well as staff support each other. Team members are encouraged to consult others about a project even if they aren’t directly involved. Being involved in such activities early in one’s graduate career helps not only in terms of practicing what is learned in class but also in making decisions about what one might want to learn more about through class electives. For instance, if a student is involved in work in the nonprofit sector, she can take classes that will help her become more knowledgeable in this area and grow as a professional.

Students are also encouraged to write about their own work as well as collaborate with their fellow students to write academic journal articles, developing academic and practice skills at the same time. Although work at the CCSR is based on well-structured work groups and carefully planned projects, graduate students are not constantly supervised or micromanaged. A saying at the CCSR is, “Teams manage projects. People manage themselves.” Such freedom may make the transition to new environments much smoother and provides an opportunity for a very diverse work team to do high-quality work. Students are expected to work, learn, and grow at the CCSR as well as help shape the organization through their unique skill sets and scholastic backgrounds.

Consistent with the idea that “people manage themselves,” CCSR has a “flat” organizational structure. This means there is minimal hierarchy with only a few layers of management and a “matrix” management style. While a student might be primarily responsible to an advisor or a coordinator, he or she is also responsible to various team facilitators and team members with whom he or she is working. The flat organizational structure and matrix management style prevent students from feeling “over managed,” facilitates a productive information-sharing atmosphere, allows students to learn how to deal with the responsibilities of a “real-world” job, and provides multiple sources of support.

Finally, all of the staff, including the students, manage their own work time. The students are expected to complete their work by agreed upon deadlines and assist other staff on other activities but anyone can go to lunch at their own convenience or take a break and not have to worry about someone timing them. The fact that staff manage their own work time encourages students to grow into professionals who are responsible and self-reliant rather than needing constant supervision. It also creates a more relaxed work atmosphere that allows people to work hard.

Conclusions

The place, the people, and the practice of the CCSR have proven to provide a positive experience for many of the community psychology graduate students at Wichita State University. Regardless of the students’ post-graduation plans, the CCSR provides real-world community research and practice opportunities on which to begin building one’s career in community psychology.
Finding Work as a New Community Psychologist

~Al Ratcliffe

The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) Community Practice Work Group attempted to write a job description and resume for a community psychologist seeking employment in an applied setting. However, it seemed that there were too many possible permutations to include in one position description. Therefore, we have decided to approach the task from a different direction: What to look for in position descriptions and settings when you are searching for work as a community psychologist and how you might proceed in looking for a suitable job.

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It is important that you define clearly what you know how to do. Then you can look for settings and positions that use your particular skills. We want to encourage you to look for positions that use the skills you have acquired and practiced, not just for positions that are explicitly advertised as for a community psychologist. If you are seeking an academic position in a psychology department, the position description probably will use such a label. However, we suspect that explicit use of that label will be rare in communities. The profession isn’t that widely known to potential employers.

Obviously, what you know how to do will depend on what you studied and on your actual experience in learning community psychology. Ray Scott (in review) has written a very useful paper entitled “Becoming Accountable: Toward the Substantiation of Foundational and Core Competencies in the Training of Community Psychologists for Practice.” Dr. Scott identifies twelve community psychology competencies. They are listed below, some with minor changes in wording. Look at your own training and experience to determine which ones fit you. When reviewing want ads, look for duties that match your own competencies:

• Advocacy: Knowing political skills needed to communicate with mayors, council members, and legislators (also their key staff people) to lobby effectively for change.

• Assessment and Evaluation: Able to work within strength-based models, collect data, and provide feedback. Able to conduct resource and program evaluations. Able to analyze community and/or organizational problems in areas such as poverty, health, housing, economic development, etc.

• Capacity Building: Knowledge of organizational development. Able to promote sustainability, self-sufficiency, and empowerment. Able to secure grants, engage in financial management, and planning. Able to teach organizational development skills.

• Collaboration/Consultation: Able to engage in consultation and inter-professional collaboration with communities, to develop and maintain community and organizational partnerships. Able to demonstrate leadership/management skills such as conflict resolution, problem solving, etc.

• Communication: Able to use public relations, teaching, and presentation skills to communicate effectively with community groups, organizations, and the media. Able to teach those skills to others.

• Computer Literacy and Report Writing: Able to use the computer as a communication tool and write reports at a professional level of competency.

• Cultural Diversity: Knowledge of the culture(s) of the individuals with whom you will be working and willingness to learn from them. Able to help develop interventions grounded in those cultures.

• Group Process: Knowledge of group facilitation skills. Able to understand and use large and small group processes.

• Intervention Skills: Able to identify and address ethical and legal issues as they arise. Able to apply scientific knowledge to practice. Able to develop and implement community and organizational interventions and prevention initiatives as appropriate. Able to engage in program and resource development, to work with displaced persons. Able to formulate outcomes and to translate policy into community and organizational plans and programs.

• Management and Supervision: Able to organize, direct, and control the services rendered to the client, community, or organization. Able to direct, teach, and hold accountable those persons whom the community psychologist supervises.

• Relationship Skills: Able to develop and maintain a constructive working alliance with clients, communities, and/or organizations.

• Research: Able to design, construct, and evaluate community, applied, action, and participatory research. Able to translate research results into useful recommendations.

There are several things listed below that you might do to facilitate your job search. All of these job search processes and others are found in the book What Color is Your Parachute by Richard Bolles. You might also look at <www.metrostate.edu/cps/psych/grad> where Kelly Hazel has a section called “Careers in Community Psychology.”

1. Look at your own training and experiences (paid and volunteer) to identify any other competencies that increase your own effectiveness as a community psychologist. Add them to the list above. Write a set of brief examples
describing how you have applied these competencies. Write these examples for yourself to help you describe successful experiences if you are asked during an interview.

2. **Collaborate** with other new community psychologists seeking employment. Job search is a lonely occupation and mutual support is a big help.

3. **Engage in informational interviewing** of representatives of local governmental, for-profit, non-profit, and indigenous neighborhood organizations that might need your skills (see list of organizations below). Learn how your skills can be adapted to meet their needs. Educate them about community psychology in the process. Teach them the differences between community psychology and clinical psychology because often they will think of “clinical” when they hear “psychology.” Talk with representatives of organizations such as those indicated below. After they understand what you know how to do, ask for leads to other organizations that might need your skill set. Also, ask about internship possibilities if you are still in graduate school.

- Community service provider organizations
- Advocacy organizations
- Governmental agencies at local, state, or national levels
- Grass-roots organizations
- Legislators, mayors, and/or city- or county-manager staffs
- Public health departments
- Community development organizations (public and private)
- Charitable foundations
- The United Way
- Craig’s List and other job-posting sites
- Community or neighborhood councils
- Law-enforcement organizations
- Public housing agencies
- City planning and zoning departments
- Architectural and planning firms

4. **Look for trends** in what you and fellow searchers learn from informational interviews and **write proposals to deliver needed results**.

5. **Share leads with and provide mutual support** to your fellow searchers until all have found employment.

6. Finally, **write your resume**. Feel free to adapt the model in the Appendix to your own job search.

We hope these suggestions are helpful and I would really appreciate hearing any reactions you care to share. Please respond by email to <ratclaw@ratcliffe.com>.

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**Appendix: Model community psychology resume.**

| Name: | Professional Competencies: I offer my training and experience in the following competencies: (Include only those that apply to you and list any others you have acquired due to your specific training and experience.) |
| Address: | Evaluation and Assessment | Cultural Diversity |
| Telephone: | Advocacy and Public Policy | Group Processes |
| Cell: | Community Capacity Building | Intervention Skills |
| Fax: | Collaboration/Consultation | Management and Supervision |
| Email: | Communication | Relationship Building |
| Profession: Community Psychologist | Computer Literacy/Report Writing | Research |
| Introduction: When most people hear “psychologist,” they think immediately of clinical psychologists. A community psychologist may work with people in distress or need but focuses primarily upon collaboration to strengthen systems, services, access, and outcomes for individuals and groups in the community. I seek a position that requires collaboration with professionals of other disciplines, citizen advocacy groups, and governance striving for community development and improvement. || Grant Writing | Community Consultation |
| Objective: To apply my skills in psychology, system development, and evaluation in the design, implementation, evaluation, and improvement of community resources and service systems. | Professional Licensing, Registration, and Certification: (If required by state law or if you have them.) |
| Education and Training: | Education and Training: | BA in . . . |
| | | MA in . . . |
| | | PhD in Psychology with specialization in Community Psychology |
| | | Postdoctoral training in . . . |
| | Specialized Workshops: | |
| Work Experience: | Accomplishments in Community Systems Improvement: (Write succinct description of your role and outcome, four sentences maximum per accomplishment. Phrase them so that key competencies are clear. Be very specific about your role and outcome. Leave description of process for face-to-face discussion with potential employer.) |
| Memberships and Community Service: | Professional References: (Consider listing as references people of diverse professional backgrounds in addition to psychologists. Show that you have diverse connections/experiences.) |
| Papers Presented and Publications: | | |
I have found myself drawn to the topic of systematically fostering citizen engagement in youth—especially high school and college-aged youth—while recognizing the developmental trajectory of engagement, as a vehicle for increasing social and community participation in government and civic decision making. This topic stands at the confluence of community psychology values, research, and action, the public easily understands it, it is an ideal forum for genuine collaboration, and it is timely.

A catalyst for this article and those that follow was the publication of *A Practical Guide to Service Learning: Strategies for Positive Social Development in Schools*, by Felicia Wilczenski and Susan Coomey (2007). These authors were able to amass a combination of theory, research, practice, and policy considerations that showed the maturity of service learning as a field and suggested the suitability of exploring the connections with community psychology. Indeed, it is the strength of the research base that has allowed Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) to create an accessible, empirically supported guidebook for those planning and implementing service learning.

**Service Learning and its Connection to Community Psychology**

Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) are among many who make a clear distinction between service and service learning. When youth engage in service learning, it involves more than arriving at a soup kitchen or park and serving food or cleaning up. It begins with **preparation** and learning about the particular problem area or context that the service experience will address, ideally linked to academic subject matter being studied. So preparation for a soup kitchen visit can involve learning about homelessness, poverty, or nutrition. Cleaning up a park can be linked to environmental conservation, geography, or community recreation.

After preparation comes **action**, and this action should respond to actual community needs, be age appropriate and well organized, achieve specific benefits for the setting and build specific skills in those carrying out the service, involve direct collaboration with the recipients of the service, and should be genuine and personally meaningful, generating emotional consequences that can build empathy and challenge preexisting ideas and values.

It is widely agreed that the next component, **reflection**, is the hallmark of high quality service learning. At a minimum, reflection is guided, can occur in a range of modalities, typically is shared, and involves recalling elements of the service experience, identifying emotions related to those experiences, relating those experiences to prior situations, beliefs, and learning, asking questions and coming up with solutions to problems, and considering the meaning of involvement for one’s current and future identity. The reflection process also provides an opportunity for feedback and skill building and skill development needed to be more effective at the tasks encompassed by the service activities.

Finally, service learning includes **demonstration and celebration**. Those engaged in service learning share with others who were not involved the nature of their experience and their social-emotional and academic learning. This allows them to deepen their learning through preparing for and enacting the sharing process, and it also affords a context in which the service work can be celebrated for its contribution to the wellbeing of the recipients and their context. To return to our examples, this might involve creating a set of charts related to nutrition and presenting them to parent and community groups or organizing an assembly and creating stations illustrating for schoolmates all of the various activities needed to preserve a park and why this is important.

For community psychologists, service learning allows for a convergence of many of the field’s strongest values and principles and can provide a promising direction for collaborative research and action. Specifically, service learning focuses on the needs of communities in specific contexts; it is concerned with individual wellness, building strengths, fostering collaboration, promoting social justice, empowering participation, enhancing
a sense of community, respecting diversity, and giving voice to the rarely heard and underserved. Service learning is inherently an action-research paradigm, as both those implementing service are constantly reflecting on their impact and effectiveness and those receiving the service are monitored to ensure that needs are being properly addressed. Thus, the core values of the field are well matched to the modality of service learning. Indeed, service learning operationalizes the values of community psychology in ways that few other pedagogical or intervention paradigms can claim. (This has already been reflected in a prior special issue of The Community Psychologist focused on the use of service learning and related pedagogical approaches in undergraduate community-oriented coursework.)

Service learning has the potential to be a second-order change paradigm, especially so in the context of low performing schools. Fredericks (2003) has articulated the connection of service learning to social competence promotion, character education, and educational leadership. Service learning allows communities, and especially educators, to look at their schools and their students and see both potential and possibilities. In doing so, educators are challenged to face the realities of their history and determine what needs to be done to move past that history and to mobilize the necessary support and resources to implement service learning. A service learning paradigm provides a perfect antidote for what most literature reviews suggest is a common factor in low performing schools and, more generally, a lack of civic participation among students upon graduation: a strong sense of detachment, disengagement, and drift that is felt by both students and faculty. As our P-12 system of education is the farm system for our colleges and universities, we cannot be surprised that genuine civic commitment among our college students and graduates is also at unfortunately low levels. This is true in the United States as well as internationally.

The Research, Practice, and Policy Base of the Service Learning-Community Psychology Connection

There is a strong research base to service learning, documenting its impact when implemented rigorously. Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) provide an excellent summary of findings consistently showing benefits to those carrying out the service in social-emotional competencies, civic commitment, academic outcomes, and career planning. Recipients also benefit from experiences guided by service learning in ways that are more extensive than those characterized as community service. An example is the work of Furco (2002), who compared high school students who engaged in service learning with peers who either performed community service or no service. The service learning group scored highest on all academic measures, with findings mediated by clarity of academic goals and support through focused reflection.

The National Center for Learning and Citizenship at the Education Commission for the States <www.ecs.org/ncle> is a repository for ongoing research in service learning as well as techniques to sustain a strong practice base in service learning. (Those working with youth will find the books of Barbara Lewis especially helpful, e.g. The Kid's Guide to Social Action, The Kid's Guide to Service Projects, and What Do You Stand For? as practical resources). The work of the center is also important for guiding policy in service learning. As Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) note, one state has service learning as a high school graduation requirement (Maryland), seven others link service to high school graduation requirements, and sixteen states include service learning as part of their education standards or recommendations for approaches to building academic success and student engagement. They also note that twenty-three states do not mention service learning in any policy statement. Internationally, a similar picture can be expected, with variations in the explicitness with which service learning is integrated into educational expectations and requirements, despite widespread concerns with students’ preparation for and commitment to the mechanisms of civic life.

Service Learning, Civic Engagement, and Community Research and Action: Three Examples

Thus, service learning is a strong vehicle for strengthening communities from a community psychology point of view because it is rooted in community needs and participation and strengths-building and, more generally, operationalizes community psychology values, research, and action in ways that foster collaboration. Particularly in the current zeitgeist promoting national service, I have collected, from many potential examples from community psychologists, three contributions—one empirical, one descriptive, and one taking the form of a book review and case study. Among the key criteria in selecting these contributions was their theoretical and/or empirical grounding, rigorous methodology, fidelity to service learning, connection of their work to the promotion of developing the commitment and capacity of youth for community participation, and their authors, all of whom can be considered rising stars and future leaders in community psychology and the fields of service learning and civic engagement.

Tara Gregory and colleagues (including a high school student who was both collaborator and co-author) recount an example of what happens as a result of persistence, when supportive community structures are set up to continuously advance and strengthen youth civic participation so that it becomes an expectation. The issue becomes “how” and “where,” not “if.” Connecting these efforts more systematically into existing institutions like schools would increase the participation base and future normalize civic engagement as part of youth socialization.

Liz Manning carried out an important empirical research study of the way in which various components of service learning act and interact to produce student outcomes. Her work helps show that service learning is supported by research, theory, and
In preparing this essay, we spent a lot of time thinking about what youth civic engagement means for us as individuals and as an organization. Our own definition of youth civic engagement hinges on our interpretation of each element of the phrase. To us, the “youth” piece reflects the focus of involving a group that is often under-represented in community planning, decisions, and action. “Civic” means that youth are involved in shaping their own communities, however they may define them. Our view of “engagement” is that youth are involved as equal architects of the civic good, with autonomy in choosing, developing, and implementing projects within their organizations, schools, and communities. In this essay, we’ll introduce ourselves and our backgrounds (briefly) as well as describe various initiatives that we have had the privilege of supporting through Wichita State University’s Center for Community Support and Research (CCSR). Most importantly, we outline the principles that guide our efforts in youth civic engagement and which we believe are central in honoring the crucial contribution youth make to their communities.

The authors of this essay represent a range of experiences, ages, and knowledge related to youth civic engagement. Several of us (Gregory and Thomas) are old enough to have worked to support youth civic engagement for more years than our youngest contributor has been alive. Betzen and Elias–Rodas are graduate students nearing the end of their doctoral programs who have been immersed in research and practice related to youth leadership/empowerment, participatory action research with youth, capacity-building for youth participation, and other issues related to youth civic engagement. Finally, Augustin is a high school student who has taken an active leadership role in several of the projects listed below, and who is also a prize-winning journalist for her school yearbook. So, this essay represents multiple perspectives and diverse experiences related to youth civic engagement.

As a way to frame this essay, we want to point out that Augustin’s involvement as equal partner in the authorship underscores several key philosophies for us personally and in our work through CCSR. These principles, which are specified below, center on concepts such as the importance of youth autonomy and recognition of their contributions, as well as a focus on the appropriate role of adults in supporting youth civic engagement. We use examples from various youth civic engagement projects in which we are involved as illustrations of these principles in action. Briefly, these projects are:

1. Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership (WYEP):

WYEP is a project funded by the Administration for Children...
and Families, in which CCSR staff members provide organizational capacity-building assistance to ten youth-serving non-profits that focus primarily on African American youth. A key accomplishment of this project was a youth-led neighborhood assessment using the Photovoice technique. Photovoice is a participatory method that pursues critical consciousness through creating images and sharing the meanings and stories derived from those images (Carlson, Engebretson & Chamberlain, 2006; Freire, 1993). During the Photovoice project, youth collaborated in assessing the community by taking photos to capture their responses to five open-ended questions about the community, including (1) how they defined the community, (2) the challenges faced by the community, (3) opportunities available for youth, (4) sources of support, and (5) changes needed in the community.

2. Youth United for Positive Action (YUPA): YUPA is a youth-led group focused on civic engagement/activism and promotion of collaboration among other youth-led groups in the state of Kansas. YUPA co-locates at CCSR.

3. Our Voices Community Assessment: Our Voices is a collaborative effort between Youth United for Positive Action (YUPA) and youth from WYEP organizations to conduct a community-wide assessment of “the state of youth in Wichita.” Youth from YUPA and WYEP organizations are currently in the planning stages of bringing together other youth who live in the community but are not part of the youth organizations previously mentioned. This initiative involves the youth participants in using arts-based methods (e.g., photography, painting or writing poetry) to document what it is like to be a young person in this community.

4. Kansas Afterschool Leadership Development Initiative (KALDI): Funded by the W. T. Grant Foundation and the Kansas Health Foundation, KALDI features training and on-site technical assistance designed to assist in the development of leadership skills of both youth and adults in afterschool programs. One of the primary goals of this project is to increase opportunities for youth to contribute to the enhancement of their afterschool programs.

5. Kansas Youth Empowerment Summit: The Youth Empowerment Summit was co-sponsored and co-facilitated by CCSR and YUPA. The purpose was to bring together community-based youth-led groups to share ideas and activities, and to discuss ways of advancing youth empowerment in Kansas.

Our Guiding Principles for Youth Civic Engagement

Principle #1: Contributions that young people make to our communities or organizations are every bit as valuable as those made by adults. Recent history is full of examples of the influence of youth as significant agents of social change. One need only think of the courage and efforts of youth to address issues such as segregation, the Vietnam war, voter apathy, and many other societal issues. But the more common view of youth is that until they go to college or get a “real” job, they aren’t genuine contributors to the common good on par with adults. Our view and experience is that even though youth often contribute differently than adults, the energy and new ideas they bring to the table are equal to the resources adults offer. We are frequently reminded of this when working with youth who have a better grasp of new technology or communication or marketing avenues. In particular, youth often recognize issues that affect them greatly but are not typically on the adult “radar.” The Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership (WYEP) is an example of the value for youth, adults, organizations, and the community in general when youth are civically engaged in an authentic and empowering manner.

WYEP seeks to build the capacity of ten partner organizations to address youth violence, gang activity, and/or child abuse and increase collaborative efforts within a specific geographic area of the community. As a first step in the initiative, partner organizations were required by our funder to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the identified community, in order to guide and direct the overall effort. The WYEP participants went a step further in making sure that youth from the community were active participants from planning to the dissemination of results. We assisted in training the youth on the Photovoice method of assessment, in which participants take photos in response to guiding questions about the community (e.g., what are the resources available to youth) and write explanatory stories about each photo. Ultimately, the photos and stories were included in a report that was disseminated to various community leaders and service providers. This report is already proving use-
volunteers rather than true partners in civic activities. A tremendous opportunity and resource is lost, and a disservice done, when youth are not included in the planning and decision-making. Locally, youth from one of the WYEP organizations (Hope Street Youth Development) have conducted extensive research on several issues (e.g., disproportionate suspension rates, use of tasers against students, and the absence of sexual orientation in the district’s non-discrimination policy), held community input forums, and presented the school board with their findings and recommendations. Although the youth have faced challenges in confronting the status quo, the result has been that inequities in policies and practices have been brought to the public’s attention and addressed in ways that are more respectful of the rights of all youth.

**Principle #3: Adults generally need preparation in order to engage youth in partnerships or to simply step out of the way to let youth lead.** In doing an informal scan of youth leadership/youth civic engagement opportunities in our area, it became clear that very few resources are available to help adults understand how to be equal partners with youth in civic engagement. The *Our Voices* community assessment provides an example of an effort to support youth civic engagement and the need to prepare other adults to do so as well. *Our Voices* which is led by youth from YUPA and WYEP organizations with support from CCSR, utilizes a variety of unique creative tools, including photography, storytelling, visual arts, and spoken word poetry as a way to reflect youths’ views of what it’s like to be a young person in their community. Currently, this project is in its planning stage as the youth collaborate to determine the details of implementation for themselves. The youth invited adults to be partners in this planning process and expected that they would understand that this is a work in progress. But it has been a struggle for the youth to alleviate the discomfort of the adults with the “messiness” inherent in such planning and to encourage the adults to trust that the youth will make good decisions, ask for help when needed, and exhibit responsible leadership as the project moves forward. In hindsight, a simple discussion regarding how the youth and adults could work together respectfully would have been helpful. But the project is now moving forward thanks to the patience of the youth and the willingness of the adults to act as partners, not supervisors.

Another of our projects, the Kansas Afterschool Leadership Development Initiative (KALDI), is an example of purposeful preparation and guidance of adults in creating youth-adult partnerships for civic engagement. KALDI is designed to create opportunities to engage youth in decision-making roles and to prepare staff to act as equal partners with youth to enhance their afterschool program. In KALDI, we assisted participating programs in developing “Leadership Teams” that included at least one adult staff person and up to ten youth. We worked with these teams to help them develop leadership and teamwork skills and to teach them a process to plan youth-led activities, to enhance youth-adult relationships, and/or youth participation across their whole afterschool program. In addition, we worked with the coordinators of each program to focus on ways to incorporate and support continuing youth participation at their sites. In our experiences with these programs, we observed that the adults often struggled with “letting go” of the control because they are used to planning and coordinating activities themselves, without the input or involvement of youth. However, findings from our assessment of KALDI indicated that programs that involved youth in shaping their own activities typically scored higher on a number of measures (e.g., positive youth-adult relationships, youth engagement, opportunities to reflect on activities) than those that didn’t participate in KALDI. Additionally, adults in the participating programs stated that they wished they had “let go” of the control much sooner because both the youth and the programs in general benefited. Both KALDI and *Our Voices* illustrate that if empowered and supported in working through the planning process, youth typically rise to the challenge. But adults need to be open to and trust the process . . . and be prepared for the impressive innovations and contributions of youth.

**Principle #4: Youth are leaders today, not just the “leaders of tomorrow.”** We’ve often heard (and maybe even said ourselves) that youth are “the leaders of tomorrow.” The assertion is always made with the best of intentions, expressing our confidence in the abilities of young people to grow to be leaders and to make the world a better place. Nevertheless, the statement implies that youth aren’t current contributors, nor do we expect them to be until they become adults. On the contrary, youth civic engagement is the perfect avenue for highlighting the fact that youth are leaders TODAY as well as tomorrow. Youth United for Positive Action (YUPA), is an outstanding example of empowered youth seeking to make a difference now.

The vision of YUPA is that youth are looked upon as a positive influence and can make THE difference in their communities. Their mission is to impact, guide, and unite their communities through positive action as young leaders. YUPA works to achieve these ends through (1) highlighting how youth are involved in their communities and the contributions they make, (2) assessing youth perceptions on relevant issues, (3) connecting youth civic engagement programs throughout the state, (4) responding to requests to provide input or facilitation when consistent with their mission, and (5) developing activities to support youth empowerment/youth civic engagement in Kansas. YUPA members are experienced in the areas of action planning, group facilitation, presentations/trainings, and mentoring of younger youth. Although YUPA is housed at the CCSR facility and receives technical assistance from Gregory, Betzen and
Elias–Rodas, the group operates as an independent, youth-led organization.

YUPA recently held a Youth Empowerment Summit to create a network of youth-led programs to increase collaboration and advance youth empowerment/youth civic engagement across the state. A particularly impressive outcome of the Youth Empowerment Summit has been that other youth leadership organizations around the state have incorporated a more youth-led focus into what had previously been adult-led leadership development activities for youth. Thus, through YUPA’s leadership, the Youth Empowerment Summit was a catalyst for both youth and adults around the state to start the process of engaging youth more fully in organizational and community decisions.

**Principle #5: Young people who are civically engaged should be considered “community leaders,” not just “youth leaders.”**

Similar to the previous principle is our belief that the distinction between youth and adult leaders is artificial, particularly when it comes to civic engagement. In many cases, youth are involved in addressing the same issues as adults and, as we’ve also discussed previously, their contributions are every bit as meaningful. So why call them something other than what they are: community leaders? This habit of distinguishing youth leaders from adult leaders or community leaders is similar to designating a person as a “female leader” or “minority leader.” Although there are often good reasons for this distinction, the unintended message can be that this person is a “lesser leader.” As we’ve highlighted under previous principles, the youth involved in WYEP, Our Voices, KALDI, YUPA, and the Youth Empowerment Summit are leading change that will impact their communities now and in the future. To us, this is the definition of a community leader at any age.

At the risk of contradicting this principle, we feel it’s appropriate for Augustin to provide the last word on what youth civic engagement means and feels like to a young person. The following comments from Augustin regarding her experiences as part of YUPA and as one of the primary planners and leaders of the Youth Empowerment Summit represent the outcome of the guiding principles we’ve illustrated above.

**Final Thoughts from a Civically Engaged Youth**

The first time I went to a YUPA event, I was in desperate need of community service hours for National Honor Society, and they were hosting an event that sounded more interesting than playing BINGO with seniors. While my first encounter wasn’t so much an interested one but a desperate one, I quickly took a liking to what this lively group was doing and joined. During the summer after I joined, CCSR staff helped the group develop its vision, mission and strategies. This is when I found out what the group was truly about. At first, I had solely joined for hours, but as we were forming the ideals and mission statement for YUPA, I came to realize that this group was bound for something bigger. Soon I was going not for hours, but because I wanted to help with a group that was youth-led and promoted positive actions in our area.

When YUPA took on the youth empowerment summit, many did not even know what youth empowerment was, myself included. But in the weeks of preparation for the summit, we quickly learned the concepts and ideals of youth empowerment. We knew we were going into a room as high school students, with other youth as well as adults (who were educated graduates and doctors of philosophy), to lead discussion and further the empowerment cause. We also knew we would be facilitating alongside CCSR staff members. During the last meeting before the summit, the YUPA members met with the CCSR adults to prepare. Gregory had earlier asked that we help prepare the CCSR staff to partner with YUPA members. So, a few members prepared a role-play of “How Not to Talk to Youth and How to Talk to Youth” (tips from this role-play will be made available through the SCRA Listserv and website, <www.scr27.org>). We essentially took previous encounters where we felt slighted for being youth and recreated the situation. But to keep from being accusatory we made it humorous on both sides. This really opened the doors between the two groups and gave us a good start to work together. When the day finally arrived I still, in a sense, did not fully comprehend the total concept of youth empowerment. As the day wore on, I finally understood that what we were doing was in itself an act of youth empowerment. Youth alongside the CCSR members were leading the summit equally, and every idea, whether it was from an adult or youth, was treated with the same respect. The ideals we were trying to help groups incorporate were being practiced at that very moment. It was eye opening for me to see that as a whole, all were respected despite age and education.

The Youth Empowerment Summit came and went and motivated me to work to further youth empowerment/youth civic engagement even more. Soon after the summit, I became an executive board member for YUPA, helping make decisions and leading this group. As part of my role as an executive member, I regularly called upon other service groups requesting to partner with them for youth civic engagement events. Some organizations were reluctant to have a youth-led group help out, so we would drag Gregory or Betzen along to placate them. When Gregory asked if I would like to help with an article, I immediately agreed and found myself meeting with esteemed community psychologists and organizers. I was treated as an equal even though I had yet to write a research article. And even when family events or school kept me away, they still respected my schedule and trusted me. My questions and input were openly accepted, they never pushed me to do anything that I could not handle, and they let me take on as much as I wanted. So, the principles and ideals we were writing about were put into action. I was not just another nameless youth, but rather a collaborator; they were not just adults, but partners. Gaining this understanding of youth civic engagement has helped me numerous times with YUPA and also in real world situations. I understand now that striving to be a young leader in an adult world can be easily attained through these simple principles and can benefit us all.

**References**


Civic Engagement in Adolescence: The Role of Service Learning

~Alice Elizabeth Manning, The Pennsylvania State University

Over the last two decades, the use of service learning, “a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities” (Fiske, 2001, p. 3), has become increasingly widespread (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2004). Given the substantial decline in youth voting and involvement in civic life (Levine & Lopez, 2002), one target of service learning programs has been youth civic development. Current research suggests that service learning can be an effective way to promote youth civic development (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003); yet, the content and characteristics of service activities vary widely and are likely to affect their capacity to alter civic outcomes (Metz & Youniss, 2005; Reinders & Youniss, 2006). Research linking participation in service learning programs to civic outcomes associated with various service experiences and on civic outcomes associated with different types of service (Metz & Youniss, 2003). For example, service in which students are directly involved with people in need or with a public policy issue (such as homelessness, poverty, etc.) seems particularly well suited to promoting civic outcomes. Service with these characteristics has been associated with increases on civic measures including future likelihood of voting, intended future unconventional civic participation (e.g., protesting or boycotting), and future intended service (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003; Reinders & Youniss, 2006).

This study is an attempt to address this research need. Specifically, the study examined how four components of service learning predicted variables representing three clusters of civic outcomes: citizen type, expectations for future civic participation, and perceived citizenship competence. Applying class information to the service experience, thinking and talking about the service experience with others in class, learning about possible causes of and solutions to the problems faced in the service experience, and talking about what the government could do to solve the problems faced in the service experience were tested as predictors of these outcomes.

The Potential Civic Benefits of Service Learning

There is a growing national concern over declining voter turnout and levels of civic engagement, particularly among youth (Levine & Lopez, 2002). Research suggests that involving youth in experiences, such as service learning, that facilitate community connectedness is important for increasing civic participation. For example, students who were not initially inclined to volunteer but were required to participate in school-based service showed gains in civic outcomes (Metz & Youniss, 2005). Furthermore, the benefits of adolescent service activities seem to persist into adulthood in the form of greater civic engagement, voting, trust in government, and involvement in voluntary associations fifteen years later (Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997). These findings, coupled together, suggest that service learning can have civic benefits for different types of students that can be sustained long after the experience ends.

Content, Reflection, and Outcomes

Because forms of service activities vary widely, research needs to differentiate among types of service (Metz & Youniss, 2005; Reinders & Youniss, 2006). The content and characteristics of the service activity itself are important because it affects how much will be learned as well as what will be learned (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003). For example, service in which students are directly involved with people in need or with a public policy issue (such as homelessness, poverty, etc.) seems particularly well suited to promoting civic outcomes. Service with these characteristics has been associated with increases on civic measures including future likelihood of voting, intended future unconventional civic participation (e.g., protesting or boycotting), and future intended service (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003; Reinders & Youniss, 2006).

A second aspect of service learning that is thought to influence outcomes is reflection. Although much of the research on reflection seems to be theoretical rather than empirical, the research available suggests that the amount and type of reflection have important influences on service learning outcomes (Eyler, 2002). Reflection may help students develop the cognitive abilities necessary to take on and solve complex social problems (Eyler, 2002) and has the potential to challenge a student’s overall perspectives of social justice (Brandenberger, 1998). Reflection is an integral component of service learning because it potentiates the way in which the service activity produces outcomes (Bringle, Phillips, & Hudson, 2004); cognitive and affective outcomes are largely derived through the reflection process. As few studies address the forms and types of reflection (Eyler, 2002), it is clear that future research needs to build upon these findings.

The Current Study

Because service learning is an increasingly common experience for adolescents and relatively little is known about how different service learning components can promote civic outcomes, this study focused on how students processed service learning experiences and on civic outcomes associated with various service learning practices. The primary aim of this study was to test the unique and multivariate relationship that four components of service learning programs had with youth civic outcomes. To ad-
dress this aim, two hypotheses were tested.

First, it was predicted that traditional or basic service learning components (applying class information to service learning activity and thinking and talking about the service experience in class) would predict civic outcomes above and beyond demographic and background variables. Second, it was hypothesized that service learning components that reflect a higher level of implementation and more complex cognitive processing (learning about causes of and solutions to social problems and talking about what the government can do to solve social problems) would predict civic outcomes above and beyond the more basic components of service learning. Because this characterization of service learning components as basic or complex is a conceptual distinction, the second hypothesis represents a more exploratory analysis.

Method
Participants
Participants were 276 Pennsylvanian students in 7th through 12th grades who indicated they had participated in school-based service learning. There were 166 girls and 110 boys with approximately 95 percent (261 students) identifying themselves as White. The average age of the sample was 16.57 years (SD = 1.03), and the average grade was 11.39.

Procedure
All procedures used in the study were approved by an Institutional Review Board. Data collection staff administered the 45 minute surveys during the fall of 2004.

Measures
Demographic and Background Variables: Students reported their gender, age, ethnicity, parents’ education, community service outside of school (yes/no), and level of parents’ civic engagement (see Flanagan, Svvertsen, & Stout, 2007 for more detail on civic measures).

Service Learning Components: In-class service learning experiences were indexed by students’ responses to four yes/no questions: Did you have an opportunity to think and talk about your service experience with other students in class? (think/talk); Did you apply information learned in class to your service project? (apply); Did you learn about possible causes of and solutions to social problems you were addressing in your service project? (causes/solutions); and Did you discuss what the government could do to solve the problem? (government).

Civic Outcomes: Eight civic outcomes were conceptually clustered into three groups—Citizen Types, Expectations for Future Civic Participation, and Perceived Citizenship Competence.

- Citizen types (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004): Personally Responsible Citizen, someone who acts responsibly by obeying laws and paying taxes, was calculated by averaging students’ responses to six items (e.g., I think it is important for people to follow rules and laws; α = .89). Participatory Citizen, an active community member who takes leadership roles in organizing activities and improvement efforts and knows how government agencies work, was the average of four items (e.g., By working with others in the community, I can help make things better; α = .78). Justice Oriented Citizen, someone who sees beyond the surface causes of social problems, addresses injustices, and is educated about social movements was calculated as the average of four items (e.g., I think it is important to challenge inequalities in society, α = .81).

- Expectations for future civic participation: Students’ expectations for engagement in electoral politics were assessed by averaging responses on three items (e.g., likelihood to vote on a regular basis; α = .74). Students’ expectations for engagement in unconventional politics were

![Table 1. Summary of hierarchical regression analyses for variables predicting citizen types.](image-url)
Table 2. Summary of hierarchical regression analyses for variables predicting expectations for future civic participation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Electoral Politics n = 233</th>
<th>Unconventional Politics n = 233</th>
<th>Community Issues n = 233</th>
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<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>ΔR²</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.10***</td>
<td>.17**</td>
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<td>Gender (Female)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (White)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>.14*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents' Civic Engage.</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service</td>
<td>.12*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think/Talk</td>
<td></td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.13*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causes/Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td></td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Model</td>
<td>R²=.15 adjusted</td>
<td>R²=.11 adjusted</td>
<td>R²=.07 adjusted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .01; ****p < .001

assessed by averaging responses on three items (e.g. likelihood to participate in a protest, march, or demonstration; α = .69). Students’ expectations for engagement in community issues were assessed by averaging responses on three items (e.g., likelihood to do volunteer work; α = .80).

- Perceived citizenship competence: Students’ competence for civic action was measured using nine items that measured their perceived ability to complete tasks that could be necessary in civic life (e.g., “create a plan to address a problem”; α = .90). Students’ role as critical consumers of political information was measured using three items (e.g., “It is like me to try to figure out what is really going on when I hear news about politics”; α = .88).

Results

All of the dependent variables were significantly and positively correlated with one another with Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from .18 to .60 and an average correlation of .42. This large range of values indicates that some outcomes were closely related whereas others were less related. At most, outcome variables shared 36 percent of their variance, leaving the majority of variance in outcome variables independent of other outcomes. Because the outcomes represent related but distinct facets of citizenship, significant correlations among the outcome variables are to be expected. Therefore, for the analyses described below, each of the eight outcomes was analyzed individually.

To test the relationships between service learning components and civic outcomes, hierarchical regression analyses with three steps were conducted for each of the eight outcome variables (see Tables 1. through 3.). Demographic and background variables were entered in the first step; applying class information to the service project and thinking and talking about service with other students in class were entered simultaneously in the second step; learning about causes of and solutions to problems faced in the service experience and talking about what government could do to solve the problem were added simultaneously in the third step.

The first hypothesis, that traditional or basic service learning components (applying class information to the service learning activity and thinking and talking about the service experience in class) would predict civic outcomes above and beyond demographic and background variables was tested in step 2 of the regression analyses. This hypothesis was partially supported. After accounting for demographic and background variables, the two variables, in combination, significantly predicted three outcomes: expectations for engagement in community issues, competence for civic action, and being a critical consumer of political information, and made a marginal contribution to personally responsible citizenship. Closer examination indicated that only thinking and talking about the service experience in class was a significant predictor of these outcomes. Further, thinking and talking about the service experience in class independently predicted a marginally significant amount of variance in two additional outcomes: expectations for engagement in electoral politics and expectation of engagement in unconventional politics.

The second hypothesis, that service learning components that reflected a higher level of implementation and more complex cognitive processing would predict above and beyond basic service learning components, was tested in step three of the analyses. Results indicate that this hypothesis was also partially supported. After accounting for demographic and background variables and the basic service learning variables, the two variables, in combination, significantly predicted all of the civic outcomes except justice oriented citizen. Closer examination of the analyses indicated that only talking about what the government could do to solve problems was a significant predictor of these outcomes. Talking about what the government could do to solve...
social problems was also independently predictive of the eighth civic outcome (justice oriented citizen) and accounted for two to four percent of the variance in civic outcomes.

To further explore the second hypothesis, the regression coefficients for the basic and complex service learning components were compared. Thinking and talking about the service experience with others in class (basic component) and discussing what the government could do to solve social problems (complex component) were marginal or significant predictors of six common civic outcomes. In each case, the more complex component (talking about what the government could do) had a significant effect in addition to the effect of the more basic component (thinking and talking about the service experience in class). Furthermore, in each case, the standardized regression coefficient (beta) for talking about what the government could do to solve the problem was larger than the coefficient for thinking and talking about the service experience, suggesting that the more complex component is a stronger predictor of these civic outcomes. These findings offer additional support for the second hypothesis.

Discussion

The results from this study reinforce work by other researchers (e.g., Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003; Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005) finding that not all service learning is equally effective. The overall pattern clearly suggests that to influence civic outcomes, service learning must actively engage students in reflection with others about their service experience and specifically about the role of government in social problem solving.

The finding that talking about the role of government in solving social problems was a significant predictor of all civic outcomes is particularly important and unique. For each outcome, talking about the role of government was a stronger predictor than simply thinking and talking about the service experience generally, suggesting that the explicit connection to government is important for influencing civic outcomes and is the most influential of the four service learning components considered here.

Furthermore, talking about what the government can do to solve social problems was the only significant predictor of being a justice oriented citizen. Justice oriented citizens critically analyze problems, look for root causes, and understand how democratic social movements work to effect change (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Talking about what the government can do to solve problems may stimulate the kind of complex thinking necessary to promote advanced citizenship, though this aspect of service learning was only reported by 19% of students.

Reflection activities, both about the service in general and about the government specifically, may have had a particularly important relationship with civic outcomes because they were operationalized as a public activity, done with others in class. Expressing one’s opinions in front of other people and engaging in a dialogue is an important part of developing and refining civic attitudes and opinions and is likely to have a greater effect on outcomes than personal or private reflection (e.g., writing about the service experience in a journal) in which there is no opportunity to be exposed to differing opinions (Eyler, 2002).

Consistent with prior research (e.g., Lopez & Kirby, 2005; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997; Almond & Verba, 1963), demographic and background variables were significant predictors of civic outcomes, but service learning variables explained additional, unique variance. Particularly important is that service learning components were significant predictors after accounting for students’ community service and parents’ civic engagement. Reflection seems to have benefits in addition to those accrued through simply engaging in service or transmission of parental values. Furthermore, research suggests that adolescents learn much of what they know about civic life from their parents (Almond & Verba, 1963), and this study suggests that service learning can promote civic engagement among youth who have parents who are not civic-minded.

Table 3. Summary of hierarchical regression analyses for variables predicting perceived citizenship competence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Competence for Civic Action n = 233</th>
<th>Critical Consumer of Political Information n = 193</th>
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<td>R² = .25, ΔR² = .20, β = .04***</td>
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<td>.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (White)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.23***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Education</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.24***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents’ Civic Engage.</td>
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<td>Community Service</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>R² = .15, ΔR² = .03*, β = .15*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Think/Talk</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>R² = .18, ΔR² = .03*, β = .25, .04**</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Causes/Solutions</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Model</td>
<td>R² = .18, adjusted R² = .14</td>
<td>R² = .25, adjusted R² = .20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .10; **p < .05; ***p < .001
that were of similar size to the coefficients for demographic and background variables. Further, talking about what government could do to solve social problems was a stronger predictor than parents’ civic engagement for six of the eight civic outcomes (with the exception of personally responsible and participatory citizenship). This component of service learning seems particularly potent in predicting civic outcomes, suggesting the need to explicitly link reflection activities to government and politics.

While this study brings to light new information relevant to service learning and youth civic development, there are some limitations to note. The study was ethnically homogenous and was not designed to address service learning as an independent variable, asking students about their service learning experiences in the last three years. This less than ideal design could help explain the relatively small amount of variance that the service learning components accounted for in civic outcomes. Despite these constraints, the service learning components remained significant predictors, supporting existing research that finds service learning can have a sustained impact on students (Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997).

The findings of this study have important implications for teacher and implementer preparation for service learning. The two reflective components, thinking and talking about the service experience in class and talking about what government could do to solve social problems, were the only components that were predictive of civic outcomes, lending empirical support to the importance of reflection often noted in the literature (Eyler, 2002). Because reflection is integral to the effectiveness of service learning, teachers and other service learning implementers need to be trained in how to implement successful reflection, including how to ensure that all student voices are heard and all opinions are respected (Billig, Root, & Jesse, 2005).

The finding that talking about the role of government in solving social problems was the most consistent and strongest predictor of civic outcomes is particularly noteworthy. Often teachers and other service learning implementers are reluctant or feel ill-prepared to deal with these complex and controversial issues (Hess, 2004). Indeed, only 19% of students indicated they talked about what the government could do to solve social problems during service learning. If we are to successfully inculcate an ethic of civic participation among young people, schools and classrooms are precisely where we need to be teaching and modeling how to engage in respectful and productive discussions of potentially divisive topics. Service learning offers a context in which to couch those discussions.

Author note: Alice Elizabeth Manning, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, The Pennsylvania State University. Correspondence and reprint requests should be directed to Alice Elizabeth Manning, 110 S. Henderson Building, University Park, PA 16802. Electronic mail may be sent to <aem264@psu.edu>.

References


Geared toward school psychologists and counselors, this book provides the rationale, theory and methods to assist students in service learning activities. It focuses on how service learning can aid in their social, emotional, career and academic development. Of particular strength is the emphasis on connecting community service to the reflective exercises that school personnel can do to ensure student development and wellbeing. Providing a format that is easy to follow, Wilczenski and Coomey present descriptions of the supports that facilitate service learning, participatory methods, ethical and logistical considerations and how to evaluate the process and outcome. Special emphasis is placed on supporting mental health and students with special needs such as physical, cognitive and sensory disabilities, gifted students and those with social, emotional and behavioral impairments. Further, the benefits of service learning for reducing health and sexual risk-taking, dropping out of school and school violence are identified.

It is likely that busy school personnel will most appreciate the blueprints provided at the end of the book. Using a strengths-based developmental assets approach, programs for conducting environmental sustainability projects that can be tied to the curriculum are provided for a wide range of grades and students with differing abilities. The tasks, essential questions to pose for reflection and potential benefits to the student and community are understandable and easy to follow. All in all, the book provides a comprehensive guide for adult-led community service learning.

The following example provides an alternative perspective on community service learning. Similar to the book’s blueprint examples, this project is also focused on re-cycling but describes a more youth-led initiative. Instead of looking at how adults can help students who help their communities, this project describes how students can help both adults and their communities.

The Story of the Knick Knack Nook: An Example of a Community Service and Learning Project with Students in Grades 4-9.

The author was asked to be the volunteer community service learning coordinator for her son’s school, an independent middle school for grades 6-9. The community service learning component is part of the school’s International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, whose focus is to help students participate actively and responsibly in a changing and increasingly interrelated world. This school is one of three schools on a small island in British Columbia, Canada—twenty minutes from the mainland and accessible by a ferry. This semi-isolated island has the largest population of children under five years per capita adult in BC according to the 2001 Canadian Census, 3500 permanent residents and is surrounded by forest and ocean. About 500 workers and over 200 students commute to offices and high schools on the mainland each day. There are 65 km of hiking/walking trails, shops, four churches, a thriving arts community and a parks and recreational program that runs mainly out of the community public school.

Concurrently, a zero waste initiative intended to enhance environmental sustainability was gaining support within the community. One missing component of this initiative was the lack of a re-use-it store on the island, resulting in residents either ferrying used goods off island, throwing them out, or giving them away. The author and coordinator of the zero waste initiative thought that the development and running of a re-use-it store would be a great project for youth’s community service and learning, while at the same time providing a needed resource for the island. The first stage in this project was to mobilize students and interested community members through a visioning meeting, in order to determine what this place would look like, how it would be run and what the store would be called. The condition for involvement of the students, set out by the author (a community psychologist), was that they would conduct the meeting and be meaningfully involved in all aspects of the project from planning to building to running the store. To date, all activity has been filmed and will become a documentary about youth engagement within their community.

Mobilizing the Community

A date for the community visioning meeting was set and venue determined. The author spent a day with the students of the middle school (n=56), explaining the project, discussing various ideas about running such a store and teaching the eighteen grade 9 students and fourteen grade 8 students how to facilitate and scribe at a community town hall meeting. To garner community-wide support, it was also decided to include the other two island schools (public elementary school and supported home schooling program). An elementary teacher of grades 4 and 5 who is dedicated to recycling answered the call and agreed to include her class in the program (n=30). The older students (grades 4-6) of the supported home schooling program (n=21) also agreed to participate in the project.

Prior to the town hall meeting, all students were asked to draw a picture of their ideal store and discuss with their teacher their ideas of how the store would look and be run. This exercise was conducted to prepare the students with ideas and provide the community with visual presentations of their vision. The drawings ranged from simple line to elaborate painted pictures of an ideal building and surrounding area. They were collected and mounted at the location for the town hall meeting. A public announcement was made in the local weekly newspaper and invitations sent out to all councilors in the municipal government.

In all, 130 people attended the meeting. Ninety-six students from the three schools and thirty-four interested community adults (including three out of seven municipal councilors). Quick introductions were made about the purpose of the meeting, a grade 9 student spoke about how sustainability was important to...
youth, a short film was shown about recycling and then the crowd was divided into brainstorming groups. Each group consisted of a grade 9 student facilitator, a grade 8 student scribe, mixed aged students and adults. Three questions were asked: (1) What should this store look like?, (2) How should it be run? and, (3) What should we call it? The brainstorming went on for one hour and then groups of students got up to present their results to the entire meeting. As well, a list of eighty-two suggested names were posted on the wall and each participant was given a sticker to vote on their favorite name.

The Knick Knack Nook was born. These participants (mainly students), envisioned a community meeting place that was creative, colorful with funky art and had spaces for younger children to play or read books. Most of the drawings represented a cottage-type building in an open green space. It was determined that it should be open one day on the weekend and another evening during the week. Most of the participants felt that costs for the goods should be minimal, just enough to cover heating and electrical expenses. They envisioned spaces to sell books, clothing, small appliances, linens, knick knacks, and toys. It was agreed that larger items would not be accepted but a link to an on-line forum would be established. A sign-up sheet was circulated for people to volunteer for further committee work, help run the store, fundraising, assisting with building the store or providing donations.

The meeting created an incredible buzz in the community. People were amazed at how well the students took a leadership role and were able to efficiently run the meeting. Phrases such as “incredible, I didn’t know they could do that” or “simply inspiring—gives one hope for the future” were common. People were also surprised that students from the three schools could work together, saying things such as “that has never happened before—they usually compete with each other.” One of the three municipal councilors attending the meeting was so inspired that he invited the students and the original organizers to the next council meeting to present their vision. Five adults and three youth attended the meeting and were informed that the municipality was willing to support their cause. The council indicated that they were inspired by the vision of these youth and that the Knick Knack Nook was a win-win for the community. A motion passed that evening (three days after the town hall meeting), where they donated 1000 sq. feet of land to the project; the speed of this action was previously unheard of from this government.

Training the Adults and Supporting the Youth

Other adults motivated by the town hall meeting decided to join a planning committee to make the vision a reality. At the first meeting, sitting around the table was the author, the zero waste coordinator, the principal from the middle school, the public school teacher, two representatives from a local philanthropic foundation and a retired therapist. The author spent twenty minutes explaining to the group that youth needed to be on the planning committee. With the exception of the zero waste coordinator and the public school teacher, all others were unconvinced. “What can they add?” was the typical response. It was clear that the idea of youth being part of the decision-making aspect of the project, beyond the actual town hall meeting, was a novel and uncomfortable idea for most. They weren’t sure how to involve youth in an organizing committee. The second discussion that ensued was “how many do we need?” I pushed for equal numbers of adults and youth, they pushed for two students, we compromised on two representatives from each school (six in total).

My role changed to supporter of the youth and a source of information for the adults. I sent the adults such information as Youth Voice: A Guide for Engaging Youth in Leadership and Decision-Making in Service-learning Programs (Justinianno & Scheror, 2001) and FireStarter Youth Empowerment Program (Freechild Organization, 2007). Even with all of the information, it was the little things that became important during our monthly meetings. It was clear that the student representatives were a little overwhelmed and intimidated. Our students included two students each from grades 4, 5, and 6. The grade 5 students were supported by their teacher at the public school who ensured they had rides to and from the meeting. The grade 4 students also had an adult teacher’s aide who attended the meetings and sat with them. The older students were supported by the middle school principal. Below are some of the techniques that helped integrate the student representatives into the committee:

1. Reducing power imbalances. In order to make the students more comfortable, all members were introduced to the students on a first name basis. For the grade 5 and 6 students, this was a novel experience which they seemed to enjoy (giggling whenever they called their teacher or principal by their first name).
2. Publicly acknowledging and valuing their participation. At the very first meeting with the student representatives, the author thanked them for participating and went on to explain the importance of their input. They (and the adults) were told about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) where Canada and almost every other nation in the world agreed that children have a right to have a say in decisions that take place in their community that impact
them. They learned that they are representing the students from their school and that this was an important responsibility. We also talked about the benefits of being on a committee such as having a say and being able to include their participation on their resumes. They were also assured that if they ever had any questions or concerns, they could bring it up at any time or ask for support from the author or their teacher.

3. Providing information about the process. The older retiree who assumed the chair of the committee was very used to formal committee meetings, following Robert’s Rules of Order (Robert, 1982). During the second meeting and watching the confusion on the faces of the youth, the author requested the meeting be stopped to explain the process. We talked about what seconding meant, why previous minutes need to be approved, what consensus meant and why someone was taking notes. Over time, the adults became more conscious of this issue and would stop to explain an unfamiliar term or process.

4. Ensuring students have valued roles and responsibilities. The group was divided into various subcommittees including: fund raising, communications, finding a building and site and volunteer coordination. The youth and I formed the “design and youth facilitation committee.” We became responsible for the design of the building, decorating and ensuring participation from other youth in the community. Along with this role, concrete activities where the youth could lead were sought. For example, the youth from the public school were charged with writing up an article for their school newspaper to spread the word to other students, school personnel and the parent community. This exercise resulted in the students paying very close attention to the process, and it gave them notoriety within their school and community. Their school newspaper article was then re-printed in the community newspaper to aid in further dissemination of the project and the students’ role.

5. Making the meetings “child friendly.” Over time, as the students gained confidence and began to participate more, even the “reluctant” adults began to see the value of their involvement. Before long, people were bringing cookies and juice to the meetings, ensuring that meetings were held at locations in their school and community. Their school newspaper article was then re-printed in the community newspaper to aid in further dissemination of the project and the students’ role.

In fact, there are key overlapping principles between service learning as described by Wilczenski and Coomey (2007) and Child Friendly initiatives. Three commonalities are participatory planning and governance, the active involvement of children’s voices in the process and the importance of addressing real community needs. Whether it is for community service and learning or environmental, community or social planning, involving children and youth has become more widely accepted.

The participation of children and youth in the shaping of their settings plays a central role in the creation of child friendly environments. (p. 225)

Environmental child-friendliness is a community product developed from local structures beyond the individual level. It comprises a network of places with meaningful activities, where young and old can experience a sense of belonging whether individually or collectively. The participation of children and youth in the shaping of their settings plays a central role in the creation of child friendly environments.

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Reflections

The Knick Knack Nook example highlights the potential for community service and learning projects to be embedded into larger community development initiatives such as creating Child Friendly Cities/Communities (UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2004). The child friendly cities movement is a world-wide initiative to research, build and evaluate environments that promote child-environment congruence. This movement was launched in 1996 based on the resolution passed during the second UN Conference on Human Settlements <www.unhabitat.org> to make cities livable places for all, particularly children. Three defining features intrinsic to this movement and associated research are: (1) that children and youth are involved in planning and decision-making in compliance with the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); (2) a focus on positive environmental features; and (3) consideration of sociocultural differences of children in the natural and built environment (Chawla & Heft, 2002). According to Horelli (1998):

...
(2003) recommend co-facilitation, co-leadership and/or co-mentorship between youth and adults. Breitbart and Kepes (2007) recommend that the most basic and essential function that an adult can play is one of supporter; who guides, is an ally, mentor, trainer, ambassador and advocate for the youth. Other features of successful youth participation recommended by The McCreary Centre Society <http://www.mcs.bc.ca/ya_base.htm> include: (1) respect (a non-judgmental, inclusive and inviting environment); (2) skills and tools; (3) models that work (have a vision, but be flexible to change); (4) things to do (tasks); (5) variety of expression (interesting and engaging); and (6) support.

Observations of the youth involvement process associated with the Knick Knack Nook corroborate these recommendations. At different stages of the project, the level of youth involvement changed from adult initiated (initial planning) to student run (town hall meeting) to cooperation (committee meetings). Students were given informational support and skills training to provide them a sense of competency. Adults were also provided with information on how to involve students in meaningful ways on committees and in community development. The students were publicly acknowledged for their passion, effort and abilities—stressing the value of their perspective and experiential knowledge. Efforts to reduce power imbalances between the youth and adults were made such as not using titles or ensuring all participants had valued roles and responsibilities. Finally, effort was made to ensure meetings were held at times and in places accessible to the students.

This experience provides a different lens of youth involvement than is presented in Wilczenski and Coomey’s book. Although students in the Knick Knack Nook project are making a difference in their community through community service and learning and are developing skills and competencies, the focus of the project is on promoting an environment where the youth will eventually lead in decision-making and action. This position is predicated on the principles of Child Friendly Communities and the belief that children and youth have a valued and sometimes different perspective of their environment than adults (Jans, 2004; Pivik, 2005), that they have important information to teach adults about community identity and space (Howard, 2006; Chawla, 2002) and that efforts now to involve youth will serve as catalysts for their future interest in community building, planning and civic responsibility (Balsano, 2005; Finn & Checkoway, 1998). Ultimate goals for our current work are that the municipal government will invite youth to be a part of a youth council for decisions that impact them and that there will be an ongoing group of youth who feel confident and have the skills to participate.

References


This presentation is based on the opening speech of the II International Conference on Community Psychology held in Lisboa, Portugal from the 2nd to the 6th of June, 2008. It is dedicated to all the colleagues, professionals and students who invest a great deal of their lives to community intervention, and it is a message of appreciation to all of those that with their talented work, support and care contributed to this endeavor.

The II ICCP 2008 follows the first world-wide effort for community psychology that was the I Conference, held in Puerto Rico in 2005.

The Lisboa event was for us a major challenge both at the national level, and internationally. The partnership created with ISPA (Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada), the Portuguese Society for Community Psychology, and a non-governmental organization AEIPS (Association for the Study and Psychosocial Integration) was crucial to the organization of an event of this scale. There were also two sponsors we were honored to have on board that were the Portuguese State Foundation for Science and Technology, and SCRA.

At the national level we have developed a strategy to disseminate and influence the consolidation of community psychology contributions towards specific fields that we have considered to be politically relevant, where this influence could be more effective, and bring about renovation and social change. So, for the seven pre-conference institutes held on the 2nd and 3rd of June, there was a selection of specific thematic areas and trainers probing for concrete influences and impacts. The themes selected were Community Coalitions (Tom Wolff), Ending Domestic Violence (Nicole Allen), Youth Community Participation (Sheperd Zeldin), LGBT and Community Psychology (Gary Harper), Recovery and Mental Health (Bret Kloos), Collaborative Research (MaryBeth Shinn) and Program Evaluation (Irma Serrano–Garcia & David Jiminez).

The pre-conference institutes required one year of preparation and were opened to the community as a whole, to other scientific areas, and to social movements involved in community organization or community support systems. This initiative was also demanding for the trainers, because each of the institutes required the development of a detailed program that had to be translated and adapted to Portuguese. Every trainer was excellent, both in commitment and professionalism in delivering training and coping with different languages. In all the institutes, we had a total of 300 participants besides those who also participated in the conference.

For the preparation and dissemination of these institutes we developed a very careful strategy combining email advertising, flyer dissemination, presence in more than fifty other national (e.g. conferences where we were invited or arranged to have advertisement) and international events (e.g. Prague, Sevilla, or Utrecht), and meetings with directors of governmental agencies and other organizations to involve the leaders in the pre-conference institutes.

The result was that in the majority of institutes we had the presence of program directors or coordinators, many outside of the field of community psychology, that usually attend these events as speakers or facilitators not as regular participants, and also some students, as well as youth involved in community organizing, people with experience of mental illness, women with personal reports of domestic violence, and junior researchers. The global feedback of participants was that the pre-conference institutes were rewarding experiences, refresh-
ing, very dynamic, oriented towards concrete knowledge and skill, and very useful for their practice. Many participants stated that they enjoyed very much the close contact with the trainers, and in the LGBT institute a new network was entailed for future concrete collaboration.

The effort entailed for the conference held from the 4th to the 6th of June was also supported by the involvement of organizations such as SCRA (Society for Community Research and Action), the Community Psychology Group of the Sociedad Ibero-Americana de Psicología, the Community Psychology College of the Australian Psychological Society, the German Community Psychology Association, the Community Psychology Associations from Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, New Zealand, and other national and regional groups demonstrating the potential of community psychology in the search to establish global platforms for dialogue and joint effort.

For the conference, we had around 550 participants who brought 600 presentations and represented 36 countries from all the continents, with larger delegations coming from Australia/New Zealand, Japan, Mexico, United States of America, Italy, Brazil, Canada or Germany. But also participants from countries where, only through a very consistent diplomatic effort, we were able to honor with their presence, like Turkey, Russia, Indonesia, Cuba or Ghana. Within the several formats we had 60 symposia, 264 presentations structured in panels, 24 roundtable discussions, 24 workshops, 20 innovative sessions, and 133 poster presentations, meaning 12 simultaneous rooms.

The main aim of this conference was to contribute to the consolidation of an international movement inspired in the principles of community psychology. Although community psychology has a history of more than four decades we are still separated by ideological and geographic justifications.

So far, this isolation might have been necessary or even a catalyst of epistemological growth with positive implications in the community practice, but now it is time for us to identify the common ground and transform this diversified field of ideas, research, and outcomes in a global social movement promoting a strong link of the universities with community contexts.

It is of relevance to raise the following question: “Why doesn’t community psychology have an international federation of individuals and organizations like many others similar disciplines (e.g. social or political psychology)?”

Considering that community psychology has a significant scientific production and a vast publication of articles and manuals (only in Europe in 2008 were published three manuals: one in Spain by Alípio Sanhez–Vidal, one in England by Jim Orford, and one in Portugal by José Ornelas) we have to look for other explanations to try to understand this isolation phenomenon.

The initiative of our colleagues from the San Juan University of Puerto Rico where the First International Conference was held opened new opportunities for this international gathering that now we are consolidating with the second conference. Now, we believe that the conditions to build a global movement for community psychology are created and are irreversible.

With these two initiatives we are able, in different languages, different cultures, with different theoretical points of view, to share our divergences and identify our common ground in order to become stronger, to have more influence, and to be more efficient in developing programs in the following domains: academic curricula; building new contexts and alternative practices; influencing social change; influencing innovation in public policies; and developing promising international research and social interventions.

Do we have a common ground? Yes, without any doubt! In first place, we share a set of principles and values that guide our practice. Probably, we are the only discipline in the academic context of the social sciences that is guided by a set of structured principles beyond the professional ethical codes, and those are: social justice, democratic participation, the respect of diversity, sense of community, empowerment. These guiding principles are anchored in two fundamental purposes, social change (the result), and collaborative research (the process).

The existence of these principles is the guarantee of the involvement and commitment to civic advocacy with the powerless in the different systems that we intervene. This set of principles makes community psychology the social conscience of psychology and other social sciences.

However, it is still relevant to discuss how these principles may be transformed into action in democratic social contexts. For some, it may seem a little odd to raise this issue, because it is apparently taken for granted, but to focus on the democratic framework we would wish to share a concern as Maritza Montero (2008) eloquently posed “democratic conditions foster community development, whereas authoritarianism, populism, and paternalism halt communities’ transformation.”

In Europe, the process of building the European Union transformed us into citizens alert and sensitized to social and political authoritarian tendencies and we were able to create a vast space with common democratic values within contexts of a wide diversity. This reality, created an enormous space and acceptability of the principles of community psychology which are present in the main programmatic document of the European Union.

How specifically may Portugal contribute to this movement? Contemporary political scientists like Huntington (1996), consider Portugal, and its transition to democracy in 1974, to have initiated a new wave of global democratization. We are a historical context of ethnic diversity, linked to Europe, Africa and a Trans-Atlantic vision of the world. Our history is an example of “Boundary Spanning.” We are an example of resilience, because we have survived during 800 years of various forms of social and political control.

What have been our contributions for the development of community psychology? The Gulbenkian Foundation was the II International Conference held and is full of history and tales of community psychology.

In 1988, with the Community Mental Health Congress, we started the dissemination of community psychology in Portugal. In 1992, we started the European Network of Community Psychologists, and in 1998, we organized the II European Congress of Community Psychology where the ECPA (European Community Psychology Association) was entailed.

With the theme for the II International Conference, Building Participative, Empowering and Diverse Communities, we wish to launch a proposal for debate; it is within our local communities that we ensure individual wellbeing, and if each of the community members become more participative and empowered, express-
Another result we expect to achieve with this conference is that we depart feeling more cohesion and strength, and that we have debated about ideas for social change. In the present we observe two main trends that it would be of interest to reflect upon. There is a vision of community psychology as a critical attitude and as a conscientization movement concerned with inequalities, the prevalence of poverty at the local level, and the persistence of poverty in vast geographic areas of the world, which is apparently compromised with the values of community psychology.

Concerning the conscientization movements, there are thousands of intervention agents in socially disadvantaged contexts that use a variety of involvement techniques, including pedagogic, entertainment or artistic expressions as a vehicle for that process. The result in the majority of such initiatives has not produced change in the sometimes intolerable living conditions of the “favelas,” or the poor neighborhoods. What we sometimes observe is that the conscientization remains as the result to be achieved and is not a process through which effective change is brought about.

However, what was and is for me fascinating in community psychology is the belief in the potential of social change in a democratic context. What differentiates community psychology is not the critical attitude about reality but the willingness, the search for knowledge, the social compromise with change, and betterment of the surrounding world.

We should therefore consolidate our efforts with the change in public policies, the development of alternative systems, where people living in poverty, homelessness, domestic violence, and other abusive situations, and other forms of segregation or stigma may overcome them. Community psychology in Portugal, for instance, has been the source of inspiration for the change in the mental health field, through which we have been trying to demonstrate that social change is possible.

Another challenge that we face is the interdisciplinary approach that in many circumstances is presented as the association of segmented and incongruent knowledge, instead of epistemological creations that contribute for the development of theory and of practical science to be used by individuals, groups, organizations, or communities. The congregation of theory, practice, and empirical research in a cross-disciplinary approach is useful if we have the talent, creativity, and wisdom of using those inputs towards a concrete and congruent intervention and not as generalist acknowledgements about the relevance of other fields of knowledge.

To congregate the knowledge accumulated during these past decades we have to face another challenge that is to create a global community psychology platform. During the three days of the conference, we have held what we have named the Community Psychology International Forum, aimed to discuss the paths of building our common ground. The specific aims designed for the forum were to facilitate communication and learning about international efforts in the field of community psychology, to exchange information and build capacity for theory, research and practice, promote networking and international cooperation with in the most relevant domains of intervention (e.g. poverty, violence, natural hazards) and areas of social change and betterment.

The United Nations development goals for the Millennium (2015) provide a source of inspiration for global thinking about community psychology. The goals concerning the promotion of democracy; the protection of human rights, specifically those related to gender; social cohesion; and poverty elimination are congruent with the values of community psychology.

The idea of a global coalition for development may be influenced by the research and practice of community psychology, systematizing experiences and pilot interventions in community contexts. This movement should be integrated in a global appeal to participation and knowledge exchange.

We are sure that our colleagues from Puebla, Mexico that will host the III International Conference on Community Psychology will proceed with this spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and appreciation of diversity.

On behalf of the organizers of the II ICCP Lisboa 08, we thank the scientific and the committees, to all the speakers and participants for sharing and contributing for this event, hasta la vista.

References
In the Spring 2008 issue of *The Community Psychologist*, I described some summit activities that occurred at the 2007 Biennial First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice (Corbett, 2008, p. 66-69). The summit attracted 100 community psychologists including leaders, researchers, and practitioners from both applied and academic settings, as well as enthusiastic graduates and students of community psychology (p. 66). [Also see Meisen, Hazel, Berkowitz & Wolff, 2008, pp. 40-41.]

Relying on a renewed vision and core principles for the future of the field (Wolff, 2006, pp. 76-78), along with a developing set of core competencies—as described in various issues of *The Community Psychologist*, including 40(1) & (2)—many specific action steps were developed to advance the field. Participants focused on three domains: (1) graduate education of community psychology practitioners; (2) community practice publications; and (3) establishing, promoting and supporting community psychology practice.

The article focused on the third domain and we started with five goals and expected outcomes (Corbett, 2008, p. 66). Our group selected the second goal, as follows:

**Goal:** Community practitioners are integral, active participants in SCRA. SCRA activities support practitioners who will see SCRA as a valuable support and seek professional affiliation.  

**Outcome:** A 50% increase in SCRA membership by community based practitioners (p. 66).

The group brainstormed many ideas and action steps to advance the goal and gain progress towards the expected outcome of a 50% increase in membership. We concluded SCRA must increase its value to community psychology (CP) practitioners and identified CP conferences as a primary and regular way to institutionalize greater utility and service to practitioners. We developed specific action steps, particularly expanding the number of workshops to promote and support the practice of community psychology. The group proposed a 100% increase in workshops of value to community practitioners with a focus on the core competencies (Community Practice Summit Notes, 2007).

The article further proposed a short term goal of twelve workshops and that workshops should be welcomed based on any of the various conceptions of core competencies, such as proposed by Ramos (2007) and Scott (2007a; 2007b), as well as any international perspectives such as proposed by Francescato (2007), or any other conceptions relevant to training community practitioners (p. 67). [Also see Bishop & Dzidic (2008, p. 44) and other internationally-grounded views by Francescato (2008, p. 41).]

The Spring 2008 article explained the opportunities presented, identified numerous types of workshops and described the important need for a much expanded role for workshops at future CP conferences. To solicit volunteers to deliver workshops, the article urged academics, researchers and practitioners to consider presenting workshops in a core competency. One important reason noted for doing so is that many of us have benefitted greatly from the field personally, professionally and financially and offering a workshop is a golden opportunity to give back to the field and build it for the future (Corbett, 2008, p. 67).

The purpose of this article is to re-cap the prior article, update it for possible implications of the Lisbon Conference, refine the proposed vision for future workshops and solicit volunteers for presenting workshops both in Montclair and beyond. This article also proposes that SCRA establish new organizational membership categories to enable the formal inclusion of for-profits, non-profits, foundations, NGOs and government organizations within SCRA, increasing system level linkages into communities internationally and supporting the training and deployment of community practitioners, while bolstering SCRA membership in the process.

**From Ideas to Action: Types of Workshops**

With the next SCRA conference in Montclair, NJ fast approaching, the time is ripe to identify potential ways to participate. Why not consider offering a workshop on a core competency? “*What special skills do you have, that fall within the realm of a core competency that you are willing to share?*” (p. 67). While some may mistakenly assume workshops should only be provided by professors or assistant professors, and certainly they are all encouraged to offer workshops, many master’s level practitioners and researchers have the qualifications and practical skills as well (p. 67). Moreover, there are many formats to choose from to suit your interests and skills.

While the initial recommended focus was on regular conference workshops that are available at no incremental charge beyond the initial conference registration fee, other types include pre-conference workshops, with or without a fee, which have a potentially powerful role as well. For example at the last SCRA conference in La Verne, there was a public policy workshop the day prior that I attended that was very well received (Miles & Tomkins, 2007). Another example is the recent Second International Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal. While I was unable to attend, a review of the program and reports from attendees indicates the conference was very strong in its delivery of workshops, both during the conference, as well as before. There appear very useful lessons to be learned from the Lisbon Conference.

**Workshops and Pre-Conference Institutes at the Lisbon Conference**

A review of the Second International Conference Program (2008) reveals an aggressive stance on accepting and supporting workshops for attendees. For example, during the June 4th-6th period, some twenty-one workshops are described and included in the regular conference program. The workshops cover a wide variety of topics, including many that appear to reasonably fall within the various conceptions of core competencies such as including: capacity building, computer literacy (internet tools), evaluation, cultural diversity and ethical issues in community practice, to name a few.

With regard to the pre-conference workshop, which can be either with or without a fee, the Lisbon Conference also aggressively incorporated pre-conference institutes. According to the call for proposals, eight institutes were scheduled for either one or two
days before the regular conference. Another noteworthy aspect of the Lisbon pre-conference institutes is that they were inclusive of the local community. That is, the institutes were open for attendance by the local community. According to reports from those in attendance, over 200 individuals attended these institutes. The Lisbon institutes were structured as for fee, at 75 € per day.

Implications of Lisbon?

There appear several implications relating to number of conference and pre-conference venues, topics, length and audience. With regard to number, over twenty regular conference workshops at the Lisbon Conference is impressive. Moreover, considering the proposed level is only twelve workshops in the core competencies, a short term goal for future conferences (Corbett, 2008, p. 67); this goal, while a significant increase from the La Verne Conference level of five (Conference Program, 2007), appears feasible. Based on the Lisbon experience, twelve appears not an excessive expectation for SCRA's substantial membership.

On the issue of topics, for those willing to consider presenting, a brief review of the workshop titles contained in the Second International Conference Program (2008) will provide a wide range of ideas that you might consider in identifying potential areas of interest to you in developing and submitting a workshop proposal at a future CP conference. [Note: workshop proposals would be subject to the normal conference review process (Corbett, 2008, p. 69).]

Regarding length, the pre-conference institutes were either one or two days and should open up a wide variety of opportunities to provide in-depth training, creating the opportunity not only to provide exposure but to go beyond towards proficiency and even expertise in the core competencies, one paradigm proposed for conceptualizing a workshop training proposal (Corbett, 2008, p. 68). Moreover, the one and two day workshop potential would also lend itself to support for-credit training or even certification in a specialized area of expertise, such as in grant making (p. 68).

Perhaps most noteworthy of all, the audience of the Lisbon pre-conference institutes was inclusive of, and open to, the local community. This raises the issue of whether greater inclusion of the local community is in order for future workshop planning for SCRA conferences. This appears to make sense and provides an additional way for the field to serve the community, particularly promoting knowledge and skill development, promoting highly desirable Level III consultation (Parsons & Meyers, 1984, p. 159). Further, this is very important because it creates new linkages into the community, directly furthering Goal Two's most challenging Expected Outcome of a 50% increase in SCRA membership by community based practitioners.

Direct Engagement of the Community: Membership Implications

One potential advantage of opening up conference and pre-conference trainings to practitioners from the community is that it increases public exposure of the field. Further, by becoming more inclusive of local communities, not only will the field potentially be expanded, but such inclusion would create opportunity to expand membership in organizations like SCRA, likely resulting from directly engaging the community.

Such expansion creates the opportunity to move beyond the individual level of membership, which increased workshop advocacy will further, to organizational memberships—that is, for-profits, nonprofits, non-government organizations (NGOs) and government organizations that typically employ community practitioners. The very ambitious 30% expansion in membership of community based practitioners could most effectively be advanced by establishing at least one, or preferably two, new categories of memberships such as Organizational and Supporting Organizational memberships. Further, this is desirable because it creates the opportunity to intervene at the employer, or system level, at for-profits, nonprofits, NGOs and government organizations. Expanding SCRA to allow organizational memberships will increase the diversity and sponsorship of researcher and alter SCRA's behavior setting by including representatives of higher level systems including government and NGOs (Corbett, 1999, p. 7). It also creates new opportunities to form relationships with foundations and other voluntary organizations that may provide financial support for community practitioners and provide direct or indirect grants to fund community interventions. By including such organizations, allies can be identified that support the core values of the field and can be recruited to financially contribute to the propagation of those values cross-nationally (Corbett, 2006, p. 31-32). Moreover, such member organizations are prime candidates to help support or fund the cost of training, including conference workshops, as well as possibly conference and associated expenses that practitioners must incur.

As an example, both of my other research organizations ARNOVA (Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action) and ISTR (International Society for Third Sector Research), have membership categories that rise above the individual level. For example, ARNOVA has an Institution Membership category with an annual rate of $300. Another category ARNOVA has is the Supporting Institute Membership with additional membership benefits, including a listing in each issue of the ARNOVA quarterly newsletter, in its annual report and also in ARNOVA's homepage. The rate for the supporting institution is $500 (see <www.arnova.org> for a full description of the benefits of each type of membership). Another example is ISTR. Its institutional membership category has a membership rate of $500 for a two year membership. It has an Institutional Supporting category with a rate of $2000 for two year membership (see <www.istr.org> for a full description of the benefits of each type of membership). There is ample precedent for establishing organizational memberships with these levels of membership fees.

Benefits of Organizational Memberships

There are many ways for-profits, nonprofits, NGOs and government organizations will directly benefit from organizational membership with SCRA, if properly structured. For example, aside from the direct benefits that apply to ARNOVA supporting memberships, such as providing a listing in the quarterly newsletter, in the annual report and in the homepage (as SCRA could also provide), SCRA organizational memberships will also provide direct access to the enormous talent of its membership of community psychologists, including, potential access to heavily discounted, or pro-bono, community consultation services. That is, SCRA could solicit from its membership academics, researchers and practitioners willing to provide such services, establishing SCRA's own bank of consultation resources. Organizational
memberships could entitle member organizations to guaranteed access to such consultation resources as a member benefit. While this may not have been practically feasible in prior eras, with the proliferation of the internet such services could readily and efficiently be delivered by email and teleconference to U.S. as well as international organizational members anywhere throughout the world. This approach would encourage the delivery of community consultation services at the organizational level or system level, Level IV, the most desirable level of intervention due to its prevention potential (Parsons & Meyers, 1984, p. 181).

Various direct benefits will translate to SCRA and its membership. The organizations that find value in membership provide a significant source of dues available for various purposes including: first, holding down the cost to individual practitioners and; second, providing discounted memberships to international members and third, funding awards and scholarships. Organizational members may also be willing to provide sponsorship and funding support for SCRA conferences. Another possibility is for supporting organizational members to fund the cost of a conference workshop or pre-conference workshop enabling it to be provided at no charge to attendees—with sponsor attribution in the conference proceedings. This creates incremental value using an existing process at no significant additional cost. Further, organizational memberships can lead to increased individual memberships by those associated with the supporting institution. This creates opportunity for significant progress towards achieving the goal of a 50% increase in membership of community practitioners. In contrast, preserving the status quo of existing membership categories may very well lead to, or ensure, membership attrition, including to international organizations, rather than the significant growth SCRA seeks.

Such categories as these could allow SCRA to create incremental value to organizations that hire community practitioners and provide support to communities through their mission and the resources they deploy on communities’ behalf. Opening future SCRA workshops of all types, whether within the conference or as pre-conference institutes, with or without a fee, to practitioners as well as any interested members of the community is a valuable way to serve community practitioners, expand direct service to communities and increase opportunities for establishing long term linkages with organizations that employ and support community practitioners and serve communities through their missions. Clearly, significant potential benefits will accrue to: participating organizations; SCRA; SCRA’s membership; the field of CP; and most importantly, communities that will be far more effectively served with the expansion or proliferation of community based practitioners, well skilled to design and deliver community-based interventions.

Adding at least one, or preferably two, new categories of organizational memberships, along with the proper structuring of corresponding benefits for each type, should help enable significant progress in advancing the most challenging 50% increased membership goal, while benefitting everyone involved. Besides, by establishing new organizational membership categories now, what does SCRA have to lose?

Considering the potential benefits, it appears an Organizational Membership of $250 and Supporting Organizational Membership of $350 could easily be justified first, based on the benefits provided and secondly, based on the rates charged by other research organizations, as noted above. Moreover, this can be structured to essentially be Pareto improving, where all parties—members, organizations, SCRA, the field and communities are all incrementally better off as a result of the proposed arrangement, while no one stands to lose.

**Refining a Future Vision for Conference Workshops**

In order to further expand the proposed future vision to be inclusive of the community and the organizations that hire community practitioners, the following modification to the prior vision (Corbett, 2008, p. 69) is proposed as follows (modification in italics): “A future vision for conference workshops is first, that all registrants will have the option and choice of attending core competency workshops, during both morning and afternoon sessions, on all days of a conference, and secondly, attendees would have some choices regarding depth of training ranging from exposure to a core competency, to developing or maintaining proficiency and finally, expertise.” Further, this vision may be accomplished with a combination of conference and pre-conference workshops or institutes, with or without fee, inclusive of, and open to, community practitioners and any organizations that employ, support or fund community practitioners in the communities or locale of future CP conferences or who otherwise support the mission of SCRA. This may also include use of electronic media, teleconference or other technologies that promote distant participation by interested practitioners, researchers, academics and organizations that serve communities consistent with the values of the field of community psychology.

**Conclusion**

Expanding the future vision of conference workshops to be inclusive of community practitioners and the organizations that employ them, or otherwise serve communities appears, not only desirable, but necessary to help further evolution of the field. Moreover, the preceding recommendations not only advance Goal Two, as described above, but should help advance three of the four additional Goals and Expected Outcomes by increasing communities’ exposure to the field, creating direct links with new constituents through membership and establishing mutually reinforcing exchange relationships between resources of the field and resources of community players. That is, those goals include: (1) increasing the visibility of and demand for the field, with skills and knowledge of CP sought after by employers; (4) increasing connections of practitioners from diverse fields and providing professional development with SCRA as a linchpin; and (5) creating multiple local, regional and national opportunities for sharing expertise, networking and professional development at affordable rates (Community Practice Summit Notes, 2007; Corbett, 2008, p. 66).

The expansion of workshops, as proposed, coupled with establishment of organizational and supporting organizational categories of membership should also open the door to international organizations, furthering the international evolution of the field. Just as international individual memberships are provided at discount, International Organizational memberships should receive such option, too. This would recognize and respect widely differing economic conditions in various developing areas of the world. The preceding approach could enable SCRA to play an important role, in the way of being a catalyst for greater inclusion of practitioners, organizations and communities internationally.
By relying upon, or at least being open to, the experience of other international organizations, such as ARNOVA and ISTR, in establishing organizational memberships, SCRA can more effectively play that catalyst role. SCRA and its members can also learn from the experiences and insights gained from the international conferences, including the Lisbon Conference, as well as from the various perspectives on internationalization of the field, such as described by Watts, Chavis, DeGirmencioğlu, Francescato, Serrano–Garcia, Krause, Naidoo, Reich, Robertson, & Swift (2008).

In sum, expanding the workshop venue to support community practice, as described, and by establishing such new organizational categories of membership, properly structured, will provide direct benefits to: organizations, SCRA, SCRA members and communities too, while promoting the delivery of Levels III and IV community consultation (Parsons & Meyers, 1984), advancing the above cited goals cross-nationally, as well as the state of the field.

**From Ideas to Action: Workshop Presenters Needed!**

If this vision makes sense to you and you are willing to help make it reality, will you consider presenting a workshop at the Montcamb, New Jersey conference? Are you willing, and able, to help “infuse practice” (Hazel, 2007) into future CP conferences? What skills do you have in the “core competencies” that you are willing to share? The next conference is fast approaching; it is not too early to identify possible workshops or institutes and assess your own willingness to participate.

Why participate? Many of us have benefitted greatly from the field of CP, personally, professionally and financially. Offering a workshop in an area of interest and expertise is an ideal way to give back to the field, building it for the future. What skill from your perspective of a “core competency,” whether U.S. or internationally oriented, do you have that you are willing to share?

Or if you wish to further your own communication “core competency,” why not offer a workshop in an area of expertise to develop your own communication, teaching and presentation skills? There are a wide variety of reasons to consider sharing your talents by offering such a workshop yourself—regardless of whether you are an academic, a researcher or a practitioner. If you know of someone else who is well suited, consider asking them as well—the future of the field depends upon it.

Will you consider this request and opportunity? If you wish to discuss any workshop ideas or proposals, or would like a copy of a workshop conference proposal I submitted that was accepted and presented (Corbett, 2007), please contact me any time at chris_corbett1994@hotmail.com. With your assistance and support, the goal of significantly expanding the practice and field of community psychology will be achieved.

**References**


Collaborative efforts between psychologists and physicians are nothing new. They have long worked together on multidisciplinary teams, made referrals to each other, and shared concepts and ideas via their research endeavors and interventions. In fact, several of the community psychologists who wrote articles for the last issue of TCP (Spring 2008) are employed by medical school departments. Finding a psychologist in a psychiatry department is not uncommon. However, finding a psychologist, particularly a community psychologist, in a surgery department is slightly rarer, maybe even “cutting edge.” What makes our collaboration even more interesting is that we work on cultural competency initiatives focused on surgical residents, which is a relatively new area of study in surgical research.

Our work (community psychologist and surgeon) aligns with SCRA’s mission of “advancing theory, research and social action” and “promoting health and empowerment and to preventing problems in communities, groups, and individuals” (SCRA, 2008). Through our work on cultural competency, we have already shaken a few assumptions. Surgeons have stereotypically been viewed as lacking in interpersonal and communication skills. Therefore, the idea of a surgery department taking the lead on cultural competency efforts has been puzzling to some. We recently initiated and completed a draft cultural competency resource guide for our school as a means to encourage collaboration between the various departments and programs in the medical school. The very first response we received to our initial inquiry for information was: “Why is the Department of Surgery involved with this?” Several other individuals mentioned that cultural competency was not important for surgeons because of their limited patient interaction. Just recently, we had asked if our department could become involved in another cultural competency initiative and were told it would fail because surgeons rarely volunteer their time. In reality, many of the surgeons in our department have expressed interest in assisting us with cultural competency projects. We feel that our work on cultural competency reflects several of SCRA’s goals (SCRA, 2008).

Promoting the use of social and behavioral science to enhance the wellbeing of people and their communities and to prevent harmful outcomes.

Utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods, we are in the process of conducting a needs assessment in our department regarding training in cross-cultural care for our surgical residents. Ultimately, our goal is to train surgeons who are prepared to provide high quality care to diverse patient populations. The Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), which is the body responsible for the accreditation of post-MD medical training programs in the United States, has developed specific requirements with regard to cultural competency that fall under two of the six “core competencies” (ACGME, 2008). The ACGME dictates that residents gain competency in six core areas: patient care, medical knowledge, systems-based practice, practice-based learning and improvement, professionalism, and interpersonal and communication skills. Cultural competency is linked to both professionalism and interpersonal and communication skills, with a specific focus on sensitivity, responsiveness, and effective communication with diverse patient populations.

For the quantitative part of our study, we recently distributed a survey to our surgical residents on resident preparedness to provide cross-cultural care, which was based on a national study (Weissman, Betancourt, Campbell, Park, Kim, Clarridge, Blumenthal, Lee, & Maina, 2005). Comprised of residents from seven medical specialties (internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, emergency medicine, psychiatry, and family medicine), most respondents in the national study viewed a patient’s culture as an important factor when providing care, but the degree of importance varied by specialty. For our study, we also attempted to obtain data from other specialties but were only able to collect adequate data from residents of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. This will, however, still allow for us to compare our more informal program with a residency program that provides extensive, formal training on cross-cultural care. We are currently analyzing the data and plan to present it at an Association for Surgical Education conference in spring 2009.

For the qualitative part of our study, we are currently conducting interviews and focus groups with surgical teaching faculty and residents to determine: (1) how the respondents define culture and cultural identity; (2) whether the respondents feel that any type of training is needed with regard to cross-cultural care; and (3) what specific types of training (informal, formal) the respondents feel would be helpful. We also intend to obtain approval to expand our study to the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health to, once again, allow for comparison with a residency program that has an established training program in cross-cultural care.

In addition to the development of our cross-cultural care training program, we plan to develop a standardized evaluative tool. Reliable and valid tools and measures that evaluate the effectiveness of cultural competency initiatives are sorely lacking (e.g., Chun & Takanishi, 2008).

Promoting theory development and research that increases our understanding of human behavior in context.

After we complete our needs assessment, we plan to shadow surgical residents when they are on patient rounds with the teaching faculty so that we can observe their professionalism and interpersonal and communication skills in a “real life” context. Currently, the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health routinely observes its residents through its Director of Research who is a medical anthropologist. He has offered to train us so that we may implement a similar practice.

Additionally, we are considering having the residents work with standardized patients, which involves the use of well in-
dividuals who simulate various medical conditions to allow for clinical skills training. This is yet another teaching method we hope to learn from the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, who has been engaging in this for years. A case study is developed and an actor or lay person is trained to demonstrate symptoms of a particular medical condition. The resident is not just tested to determine if he or she can diagnose the patient but rather the process involved with reaching that conclusion (e.g., types of questions asked, physical exams conducted, tests requested). Although not completely new, the integration of cultural competency in these situations is still being refined. One of the main concerns is the avoidance of creating a scenario that is too contrived and may end up being stereotypical. Encouraging the ongoing and mutual exchange of knowledge and skills among community psychologists, those in other academic disciplines, and community stakeholders so that community research and action benefits from the strengths of all perspectives.

In addition to the community psychology and surgery partnership, we have begun collaborating with a number of other departments in the UH medical school. As mentioned previously, we have learned much from the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health. We have also received and continue to learn from the Department of Native Hawaiian Health, which spearheads many of the cultural competency efforts in the medical school. Both departments have invited us to join their cultural competency initiatives; for example, they have encouraged us to participate in their curriculum committee and to attend cultural immersion events focused on the Native Hawaiian population. What is most intriguing about working with these two departments is their deep commitment to working for and with the community.

Although the possibility of surgeons developing community interventions may not be obvious, the subspecialty of trauma surgery has a natural community component. For example, the trauma surgeons in our department, teach a Rural Trauma Team Development Course that was developed by the American College of Surgeons (American College of Surgeons, 2007). They conduct community outreach by visiting rural hospitals on Oahu and the neighbor islands. Not only do the trauma surgeons provide training on how rural hospital staff can best deal with a trauma situation, but they also attempt to build relationships with the staff to improve communication and collaboration.

Promoting the development of careers in community research and action in both academic and applied settings.

We hope that our work will lead to similar opportunities for other community psychologists. Although we are part of an academic surgery department, we have the opportunity to actually translate our theory into action by training our residents to provide culturally competent care for their patients. And, we can have an even more direct impact by identifying innovative ways to assist the larger community. In fact, if any readers of this article are community psychologists in a surgery department or know of someone who is, please contact Maria Chun at: <mariachu@hawaii.edu>. We would love to learn from and hopefully collaborate with you. ☞

Community News & Announcements

2008 APA Program Co-Chair Report and Program Schedule

~Anita Davis, Rhodes College, Memphis, TN & Colleen Loomis, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, ON 2008 APA Program Co-Chairs

As AP A Program Co-Chairs for the 2008 AP A Convention in Boston, MA (Aug 14th-17th), we are pleased to provide a report of SCRA programming for this year’s convention. This year we received considerably more submissions than the number of hours allocated to our division by the AP A Convention Office and regrettably had to turn away many strong proposals. We worked hard, however, to find opportunities to co-sponsor with other divisions to increase space in our program. The final program included symposia [with two symposia offering continuing education (CE) credit], workshops, a conversation hour, and a joint social hour. Anne Bogat also gave her outgoing Presidential Address, and two additional symposia were invited by President-Elect, Maurice Elias. We were very fortunate to have an Invited Address by Raymond Lorion, 2007 recipient of the Seymour Sarason Award. There were also twenty-five posters presented during the divisional poster session.

For the full 2008 APA Program Schedule please see inset, following page.

References


We also want to give a heartfelt thanks to the reviewers listed below for their willingness to give their time over the winter break to participate in the review process. Finally, special thanks are extended to Judy Pierce, who served as the administrative assistant for this process. 😊

Mona Amer
Nicole Allen
Fabricio Balcazar
G. Anne Bogat

Joseph Durlak
Benjamin Graham
Gina Hijjawi
Richard Jenkins
Sharon Lambert
Raymond Lorion
Pamela Martin
Kenneth Maton
Katie McDonald
Greg Meissen

Patricia O’Connor
Carlton Parks
Cynthia Rohrbeck
Michele Schlehofer
Raymond Scott
Pia Stanard
Maggie Symes
Richard Wolitski
Tomoyuki Yasuda
Scott Young
THE AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THEORY AND RESEARCH IN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY was initiated in 1974 and is presented annually to an individual whose career of high quality and innovative research and scholarship has resulted in a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in community psychology. Criteria include:

1. Demonstrated positive impact on the quality of community theory and research.
2. Innovation in community theory and/or research. That is, scholarship of a path-breaking quality that introduces important new ideas and new findings. Such distinguished work often challenges prevailing conceptual frameworks, research approaches, and/or empirical results.
3. A major single contribution or series of significant contributions with an enduring influence on community theory, research and/or action over time.

Initial nominations should be sent to Mark Aber at <maber@uiuc.edu> by December 1, 2008 and include: (1) The name and contact information of the nominee and (2) a 250-500 word summary of the rationale for nomination. Finalists for the award will be contacted by the committee and asked to provide more information.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

2001 Rhona Weinstein
2000 Stephanie Riger
1998 Dickon Reppucci
1997 Leonard Jason
1996 Marybeth Shinn
1995 Ed Trickett
1994 John Newbrough
1993 William Ryan
1992 Irwin Altman
1991 Kenneth Heller
1990 Edward Seidman
1989 Edward Zigler
1988 Richard Price
1987 Murray Levine
1986 Julian Rappaport
1985 George Fairweather
1984 George Spivack, Myrna Shure
1983 Rudolf Moos
1982 Charles Spielberger
1981 George Albee
1980 Barbara & Bruce Dohrenwend
1979 Emory Cowen
1978 James Kelly
1977 Bernard Bloom
1976 Ira Issoe
1975 John Glidewell
1974 Seymour Sarason

SCRA Award Nominations 2008-2009

DEADLINE FOR ALL AWARD NOMINATIONS: December 1, 2008

THE SEYMOUR B. SARASON AWARD FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND ACTION was established in 1993 to recognize people working in the conceptually demanding, creative, and groundbreaking tradition of Seymour B. Sarason. Criteria include:

1. Novel and critical rethinking, reframing, and reworking of basic assumptions, approaches, and issues in the human services, education, psychology, mental retardation and other areas of community research and action.
2. Major books and other scholarship that reflect these new approaches within the context of historical wisdom.
3. Action-research and other action efforts that reflect these new approaches.

Those working both in academia and applied settings, including government, are eligible for this $1,000 award. The nomination deadline is December 1, 2008. Please send your nomination to the chair of this committee, Judy Primavera at <jprimavera@mail.fairfield.edu>.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

1999 Julian Rappaport
1998 Dickon Reppucci
1997 William Ryan
1996 Marybeth Shinn
1995 Ed Trickett
1994 John Newbrough
1993 William Ryan
1992 Irwin Altman
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1982 Charles Spielberger
1981 George Albee
1980 Barbara & Bruce Dohrenwend
1979 Emory Cowen
1978 James Kelly
1977 Bernard Bloom
1976 Ira Issoe
1975 John Glidewell
1974 Seymour Sarason
THE AWARD FOR DISTINGUISHED CONTRIBUTION TO PRACTICE IN COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY is presented annually to an individual whose career of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles has demonstrated positive impact on, or significant illumination of the ecology of, communities or community settings, and has significantly benefited the practice of community psychology. The person receiving this award will have demonstrated innovation and leadership in one or more of the following roles: (1) community service provider or manager/administrator of service programs, (2) trainer or manager of training programs for service providers, (3) developer and/or implementer of public policy, (4) developer and/or implementer of interventions in the media (including cyberspace) to promote community psychology goals and priorities, (5) developer, implementer, and/or evaluator of ongoing preventive/service programs in community settings or, (6) other innovative roles.

Criteria for the award include the following. The first criterion applies in all cases; one or more of the remaining criteria must be present:

1. Engaged at least 75% time, for a minimum of ten years, in settings such as government, business or industry, community or human service programs, in the practice of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles that have significantly benefited the practice of community psychology; past winners cannot be nominated.

2. Demonstrated positive impact on the natural ecology of community life resulting from the application of psychological principles.

3. Challenge to the status quo or prevailing conceptual models and applied methods.

4. Demonstrated personal success in exercising leadership based on applied practice.

Both self-nominations and nominations by students or colleagues will be accepted. Nominations should include: (1) a nomination letter (no more than three pages long) summarizing the contributions of the nominee to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons, (2) name and contact information of at least one additional reference (two if a self-nomination) who can speak to the contributions the nominee has made to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons, (3) a CV of the nominee, that documents clearly and specifically his or her eligibility for this award by describing how he or she “engaged at least 75% time, for a minimum of ten years, in settings such as government, business or industry, community or human service programs, in the practice of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles that have significantly benefited the practice of community psychology.” This statement can consist of a brief list of the years, the settings, and the activities, but it should be sufficiently detailed so that there is no doubt about the eligibility. Finalists for the award will be contacted by the committee and asked to provide more information.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS

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THE ETHNIC MINORITY MENTORSHIP AWARD is presented annually to recognize an SCRA member who has made exemplary contributions to the mentorship of ethnic minority persons. Mentorship may be provided in various forms. It may entail serving as the academic advisor of ethnic minority graduate or undergraduate students; developing strategies to increase the acceptance and retention of ethnic minority students; involvement in efforts to recruit and retain ethnic minority faculty members; or providing opportunities for ethnic minority persons to become involved in positions of leadership within community-oriented research or intervention projects. Criteria include two or more of the following:

1. Consistent, high quality mentorship and contributions to the professional development of one or more ethnic minority students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action.

2. Contribution to fostering a climate in their setting that is supportive of issues relevant to racial/ethnic diversity and conducive to the growth of ethnic minority students and/or beginning level graduates.

3. A history of involvement in efforts to increase the representation of ethnic minority persons either in their own institutions, research programs, or within SCRA.

4. Consistent contributions to the structure and process of training in psychology related to cultural diversity, particularly in community programs.

Initial nominations should be sent to Mark Aber at <maber@uiuc.edu> by December 1, 2008 and include: (1) the name and contact information of the nominee, (2) a 250-500 word summary of the rationale for nomination, (3) a statement, which can be from the nominee, that documents clearly and specifically his or her eligibility for this award by describing how he or she “engaged at least 75% time, for a minimum of ten years, in settings such as government, business or industry, community or human service programs, in the practice of high quality and innovative applications of psychological principles that have significantly benefited the practice of community psychology.” This statement can consist of a brief list of the years, the settings, and the activities, but it should be sufficiently detailed so that there is no doubt about the eligibility. Finalists for the award will be contacted by the committee and asked to provide more information.

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THE AWARD FOR SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PUBLIC POLICY recognizes individuals or organizations that have made exemplary contributions in the public policy arena. Those whose work contributes to public policy, whether from community agencies, academia, or non-government agencies, both national and international, are eligible for consideration. Priority will be given to a living member of SCRA, an allied discipline, or an organization involving individuals who have made important contributions to public policy, broadly defined. Both self-nominations and nominations by students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send:

• For an individual: CV or resume (full or abbreviated), statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the individual, and up to three letters of support.
• For an organization: CV or resume for organization head or key individual, organization description/mission statement, statement (maximum of four pages) regarding major social policy contributions of the organization, and up to three letters of support.

Please send nominations by December 1, 2008 to Chair of the Social Policy Committee: Nicole Porter, <nporter@depaul.edu>, or to Center for Community Research, 990 W. Fullerton, Suite 3100, Chicago, IL 60614. Submissions by email would be especially appreciated.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENT
2007 Leonard Jason

THE OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD AND THE EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS AWARDS are sponsored by the SCRA Council of Education Programs. Criteria for these awards include two or more of the following:

1. Promotion of innovative strategies in education that integrate community psychology theory and action.
2. Significant contributions to the structure and process of education in community psychology, research, and action.
3. Consistent, high quality teaching and mentorship contributing to the professional development of students and/or recent graduates involved in community research and action.
4. Contribution to fostering a positive climate that supports undergraduate and graduate students in their setting. Collaborative work with students, activities, publications, and curricula relevant to the criteria indicated above, should be highlighted.

OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARD: this annual award recognizes a SCRA member who has made exemplary and innovative contributions to the education of students about community psychology and community research and action. Both self-nominations and nominations by students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send: (1) a nomination letter (no more than three pages long) summarizing the innovative educational strategies promoted by the nominee, and how they contribute to the education of community psychologists and the development of the field of community research and action (and speak to the criteria listed above), (2) one letter of reference (two letters if the nomination is a self-nomination), (3) course evaluations and other types of evaluations from students/recent grads and, (4) a curriculum vita of the nominee.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENTS
2008 Marek Wosinski  2007 Patricia O’Connor

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS AWARD: this biannual award recognizes an exemplary undergraduate and/or graduate program that has innovative structures, strategies, and curricula that promote development of the field of community psychology and community research and action. Both self-nominations and nominations by individuals or organizations outside the program will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send: (1) a nomination letter (no more than four pages long) should describe the basis of the recommendation and summarize the features of the program that would qualify it for the award (in relation to criteria specified above). The nomination letter should also include a listing of the program faculty and other resources (e.g., community-based organizations, community expertise), relevant publications, and the ways in which they contribute to the education of undergraduate and/or graduate students and (2) one letter of reference (two letters if the nomination is a self-nomination). Reference letters should come from individuals outside the program, and may include representatives of community agencies/organizations with whom the program is associated, graduates of the program (out for at least three years), or colleagues in other programs in the college/university or outside the college/university.

PREVIOUS RECIPIENT
2007 DePaul University

Please send nominations for both awards by December 1, 2008 to: Steven M. Davis, <smdavis@noctrl.edu>, Dept. of Psychology, North Central College, 30 N Brainard St., Naperville, IL 60566.

JOHN KALAFAT AWARDS
John Kalafat’s life work integrated the principles and research of community psychology with their practical applications. John left a rich legacy in the published literature and in the many communities he helped strengthen. To continue his vision, two annual awards have been created in his honor.

THE COMMUNITY PROGRAM AWARD will honor programs or initiatives that demonstrate a positive impact on groups or communities as validated by program evaluation; build foundational bridges between theory, research, and improving the world, and/or demonstrate excellence in integrating training and program development in crisis intervention.

THE PRACTITIONER AWARD AWARD will be a monetary stipend to an individual who exemplifies John’s unique characteristics as mentor, teacher, and advocate, and especially his passion in making the benefits of community psychology accessible to all.

To make a nomination, email <kalafataward@scra27.org> by December 1, 2008. More at <www.johnkalafat.com>.
**Now is the Time to Nominate SCRA Fellows!!**  
**DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS:**  
December 1, 2008

What is a SCRA Fellow? SCRA seeks to recognize a variety of exceptional contributions that significantly advance the field of community research and action including, but not limited to, theory development, research, evaluation, teaching, intervention, policy development and implementation, advocacy, consultation, program development, administration and service. A SCRA Fellow is someone who provides evidence of “unusual and outstanding contributions or performance in community research and action.” Fellows show evidence of:

1. Sustained productivity in community research and action over a period of a minimum of five years.
2. Distinctive contributions to knowledge and/or practice in community psychology that are recognized by others as excellent.
3. Impact beyond the immediate setting in which the fellow works.

Applications for initial fellow status must include the following materials: (1) a two-page Uniform Fellow Application (available from Anne Bogat—see email and address at end of section) completed by the nominee, (2) three to six endorsement letters written by current fellows, (3) supporting materials, including a vita with refereed publications marked with an “R” and (4) a nominee’s self-statement setting forth her/his accomplishments that warrant nomination to fellow status.

SCRA members who are fellows of other APA divisions should also apply for SCRA fellow status if they have made outstanding contributions to community research and action. Fellows of other APA divisions should send to the chair of the Fellows Committee a statement detailing their contributions to community research and action, three to six letters of support, and a vita. Complete nominations should be submitted by December 1, 2008 to Anne Bogat at <bogat@msu.edu> or to U.S. mailing address: Department of Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824. Submissions by email would be especially appreciated.

**CALL FOR PAPERS**  
*The Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*  
Due On or Before January 15, 2009

**Special Section on “Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Trauma in Children and Adolescents”**

*The Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* (JCCP) invites submission of stress disorder (PTSD) and trauma reactions in children and adolescents. It is essential that papers directly discuss: areas of research need and important “next steps” that will help guide future research, prevention, and treatment efforts, and recommendations for disseminating information to stakeholders interested in helping children and their families in the aftermath of trauma, such as parents/caregivers, health-care providers, practitioners, policy makers, and government agencies. Findings are intended to help inform the next generation of studies for PTSD and trauma reactions in children and adolescents, as well as the practice of psychologists working with children, adolescents, and families.

For more information, please visit our website: <http://www.apa.org/journals/ccp/papercall-ptsd.html>. Questions should be addressed to the journal office via phone (305) 284-8823 or email.

**SCRA Dissertation Awards**  
**DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS:**  
December 1, 2008

**BEST DISSERTATION ON A TOPIC RELEVANT TO COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY:** The purpose of the annual dissertation award is to identify the best doctoral dissertation on a topic relevant to the field of community psychology completed between September 1, 2006 and August 31, 2008—any dissertation completed within these dates may be submitted. The completion date for the dissertation refers to the date of acceptance of the dissertation by the granting university’s designate officer (e.g., the graduate officer), not the graduation date. Last year’s nominees (excluding the winner) may resubmit dissertations if the dates are still within the specified timeframe. **Criteria for the award:** (1) relevance of the study to community psychology, with particular emphasis on important and emerging trends in the field, (2) scholarly excellence, (3) innovation and implications for theory, research and action and (4) methodological appropriateness.

**EMORY L. COWEN DISSERTATION AWARD FOR THE PROMOTION OF WELLNESS:** This award will honor the best dissertation of the year in the area of promotion of wellness. Wellness is defined consistent with the conceptualization developed by Emory Cowen, to include the promotion of positive wellbeing and the prevention of dysfunction. Dissertations are considered eligible that deal with a range of topics relevant to the promotion of wellness, including: (a) promoting positive attachments between infant and parent, (b) development of age appropriate cognitive and interpersonal competencies, (c) developing settings such as families and schools that favor wellness outcomes, (d) having the empowering sense of being in control of one’s fate, and (e) coping effectively with stress. **Criteria for the award:** Dissertations of high scholarly excellence that contribute to knowledge about theoretical issues or interventions are eligible for this award.

**For Both Dissertation Awards:** The winners of both dissertation awards will each receive a prize of $100, a one-year complimentary membership in SCRA, and up to $300 in reimbursement for travel expenses in order to receive the award at the APA meeting in 2008.

**Materials required:** Individuals may nominate themselves or be nominated by a member of SCRA. A cover letter and four copies of a detailed dissertation abstract should be submitted to the chair of the Dissertation Awards Committee. The nomination cover letter should include the name, graduate school affiliation and thesis advisor, current address, phone number, and (if available) email address and fax number of the nominee. The abstract should present a statement of the problem, methods, findings, and conclusions. Abstracts typically range from four-eight pages and may not exceed ten double-spaced pages, including tables and figures. Identifying information should be omitted from the abstract.

**Evaluation process:** All abstracts will be reviewed by the dissertation award committee. Finalists will be selected and asked to submit their full dissertation electronically (finalists whose dissertations exceed 150 pages may be asked to send selected chapters). The committee will then review the full dissertations and select the winners.

**Nomination Process and Deadline for Submission:** Submit a cover letter and five hard copies of the dissertation abstract to Sarah Chilenski by December 1, 2008: Sarah Chilenski, Missouri Institute of Mental Health, 5400 Arsenal Street, St. Louis, MO 63139. In addition, please send an electronic copy of the abstract to Sarah Chilenski at <sarah.chilenski@mimh.edu>.

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Call for Nominations for General Psychology Awards for Year 2009
DEADLINE: February 15, 2009

The Society for General Psychology, Division One of the American Psychological Association is conducting its Year 2009 awards competition, including the William James Book Award for a recent book that serves to integrate material across psychological subfields or to provide coherence to the diverse subject matter of psychology, the Ernest R. Hilgard Award for a Career Contribution to General Psychology, the George A. Miller Award for an Outstanding Recent Article on General Psychology, the Student Poster Award and the Arthur W. Staats Lecture for Unifying Psychology, which is an American Psychological Foundation Award managed by the Society for General Psychology.

All nominations and supporting materials for each award must be received on or before February 15, 2009. There are no restrictions on nominees, and self-nominations as well as nominations by others are encouraged for these awards.

For the **WILLIAM JAMES BOOK AWARD**, nominations should include: (1) the title of the book (dated post-2004 and published in print), (2) a one-page statement that explains the strengths of the submission as an integrative work or how it meets criteria established by the society. Specific criteria can be found on the society’s website <http://www.apa.org/divisions/div1/awards.html>. Textbooks, analytic reviews, biographies, and examples of applications are generally discouraged. Nominations letters and supporting materials should be sent to John D. Hogan, PhD, Psychology Department, St. John’s University, Jamaica, NY 11439.

For the **ERNEST R. HILGARD AWARD**, nominations packets should include the candidate’s vita along with a detailed statement indicating why the nominee is a worthy candidate for the award and supporting letters from others who endorse the nomination. Nominations letters and supporting materials should be sent to Thomas Bouchard, PhD, Psychology, N249 Elliott Hall, University of Minnesota, 75 E River Road, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

For the **GEORGE A. MILLER AWARD**, nominations packets should include four copies of: (1) the article being considered (which can be of any length but must be in print and have a post-2004 publication date), (2) the curriculum vitae of the author(s), and (3) a statement detailing the strength of the candidate article as an outstanding contribution to General Psychology. Nomination letters and supporting materials should be sent to Donald Dewsbury, WIBA Award chair, Department of Psychology, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250.

The 2010 **ARTHUR W. STAATS LECTURE FOR UNIFYING PSYCHOLOGY** is to be announced in 2009 and given at APA’s 2010 annual convention. Nominations materials should include the nominee’s curriculum vitae along with a detailed statement indicating why the nominee is a worthy candidate for the award including evidence that the nominee would give a good lecture. They should be sent to Harold Takooshian, PhD, Psychology-916, Fordham University, New York NY 10023.

Candidates for the **STUDENT POSTER AWARD** should submit their poster abstract to the Division One Posters upon call for APA Convention Programs.

Translating Research and Policy for the Real World Conference

~Eduardo Morales, California School of Professional Psychology, San Francisco Alliant International University

The first national conference on evidenced based practices and ethnic minorities was held in Bethesda, MD March 13th and 14th. The conference entitled Culturally Informed Evidence Based Practices: Translating Research and Policy for the Real World was the first attempt to bring scientists, policy makers and practitioners together to examine a broad set of issues and challenges. The first day focused on methodological and research issues in developing evidence with these populations that are linguistically and culturally appropriate and efficacious. While traditional research models have helped to develop some theoretical paradigms in the field, when applied to real settings many times the efficacy is reduced or nonexistent for various reasons. The second day of the conference focused on specific examples of how research can use collaborative models in their approach for developing efficacious interventions with ethnic minorities. Research efforts for different ethnic groups were presented in the plenary session as well as breakout session that focused on specific evidence-based practices for ethnic minorities in great depth.

There were over 200 persons attending the conference that included federal NIH workers, APA members, scientists, directors of intervention programs and graduate students. Over 30 presenters were invited to share their expertise in generating data for efficacious interventions with ethnic minorities. The conference committee is planning on getting the presentations published in a special journal issue, monographs, and books. The PowerPoint presentations of the conference presenters and the conference agenda are located on the web at: <http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/aacdr/ciebp08.html>. The conference was dedicated to A. Toy Caldwell–Colbert who helped launch this conference and was instrumental in the advancing the issues of psychology and ethnic minorities in her career and her leadership of many organizations. Dr. Caldwell–Colbert lost her battle with cancer and passed away on March 12th, 2008 the day before the conference.
The Division of Community Psychology (27) of the American Psychological Association:

The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA), Division 27 of the American Psychological Association, is an international organization devoted to advancing theory, research, and social action. Its members are committed to promoting health and empowerment and to preventing problems in communities, groups, and individuals.

Four broad principles guide SCRA:

1. Community research and action requires explicit attention to and respect for diversity among peoples and settings.
2. Human competencies and problems are best understood by viewing people within their social, cultural, economic, geographic, and historical contexts.
3. Community research and action is an active collaboration among researchers, practitioners, and community members that uses multiple methodologies.
4. Change strategies are needed at multiple levels in order to foster settings that promote competence and well-being.

The SCRA serves many different disciplines that focus on community research and action. Our members have found that, regardless of the professional work they do, the knowledge and professional relationships they gain in SCRA are invaluable and invigorating. Membership provides new ideas and strategies for research and action that benefit people and improve institutions and communities.

Who Should Join:

- Applied & Action Researchers
- Social & Community Activists
- Program Developers & Evaluators
- Psychologists
- Public Health Professionals
- Public Policy Makers
- Consultants
- Students from a variety of disciplines

Interests of SCRA Members Include:

- Community Mental Health
- Consultation & Evaluation
- Culture, Race & Gender
- Empowerment & Community Development
- Human Diversity
- Prevention & Health Promotion
- Self-Help & Mutual Support
- Social Policy
- Training & Competency Building

SCRA Goals:

- To promote the use of social and behavioral science to enhance the well-being of people and their communities and to prevent harmful outcomes
- To promote theory development and research that increase our understanding of human behavior in context
- To encourage the exchange of knowledge and skills in community research and action among those in academic and applied settings
- To engage in action, research, and practice committed to liberating oppressed peoples and respecting all cultures
- To promote the development of careers in community research and action in both academic and applied settings

SCRA Membership Benefits & Opportunities:

- A subscription to the American Journal of Community Psychology (a $105 value)
- A subscription to The Community Psychologist, our outstanding newsletter
- 25% discount on books from Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers
- Special subscription rates for the Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation
- Involvement in formal and informal meetings at regional and national conferences
- Participation in Interest Groups, Task Forces, and Committees
- The SCRA electronic mailing list for more active and continuous interaction about resources and issues in community research and action
- Numerous activities to support members in their work, including student mentoring initiatives and advice for new authors writing on race or culture
SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH & ACTION
Membership Application

Name: ____________________________________________
Title/Institution: __________________________________
Mailing Address: __________________________________
__________________________________________________
__________________________________________________
Day phone:_________________________________________
Evening phone:____________________________________
Fax: _______________________________________________
Email: ____________________________________________

May we include your name in the SCRA membership directory?
☐ Yes  ☐ No

Are you a member of APA?
☐ No  ☐ Yes  APA membership # ______________________

If yes, please indicate your membership status:
☐ Fellow ☐ Associate ☐ Member ☐ Student Affiliate

Please indicate any interest groups or committees you would like to join:
☐ Aging Interest Group
☐ Children & Youth Interest Group
☐ Committee on Women
☐ Community Action Interest Group
☐ Community Health Interest Group
☐ Cultural & Racial Affairs Committee
☐ Disabilities Interest Group
☐ Interdisciplinary Linkages Committee
☐ International Community Psychology Committee
☐ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Concerns Interest Group
☐ Prevention & Promotion Interest Group
☐ Rural Interest Group
☐ School Intervention Interest Group
☐ Self-Help/Mutual Support Interest Group
☐ Social Policy Committee
☐ Stress & Coping Interest Group
☐ Students of Color Interest Group
☐ Undergraduate Awareness
☐ Women’s Committee

The following questions are optional, but they do help us to better serve our members:

What is your gender? _______________________________
Your race/ethnicity? _______________________________
Do you identify as a sexual minority? _______________
Do you identify as disabled? ________________________
How did you hear about SCRA membership?
________________________________________________________________________

Membership Dues:
☐ SCRA Member $60.
☐ Student Member $30.
☐ International Member $50.
☐ Senior Member $15.
You must be 65 or older, retired, and a member of SCRA Division 27 for 25 years to qualify for this rate.
Senior members will receive The Community Psychologist but not American Journal of Community Psychology.

Payment:
☐ Check enclosed (payable to SCRA)
☐ Charge to credit card: ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard
Account #: ___________________________________________
Expiration date: ___________________________________________
Authorized signature: _______________________________________
Signature of applicant: _______________________________________
Date: _____________________________________________________

Please mail this form along with payment for your membership dues to:

SCRA
16 Sconticut Neck Rd. #290
Fairhaven, MA 02719
About the *Community Psychologist*:
The *Community Psychologist* is published four times a year to provide information to members of the [Society for Community Research and Action](mailto:www.scra.org) (SCRA). A fifth “Membership Directory” issue is published approximately every three years. Opinions expressed in *The Community Psychologist* are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect official positions taken by SCRA. Materials that appear in *The Community Psychologist* may be reproduced for educational and training purposes. Citation of source is appreciated.

**To submit copy to The Community Psychologist:**
Articles, columns, features, “Letters to the Editor,” and announcements should be submitted, if possible, as Word attachments in an email message to: <ethomas@uwb.edu>. The editor encourages authors to include digital photos or graphics (at least 300 dpi) along with their submissions. Materials can also be submitted as a Word document on disk or as a hard copy by conventional mail to Elizabeth Thomas, University of Washington Bothell, Box 358530, 18115 Campus Way NE, Bothell, WA 98011-8246. You may reach the editor by phone at (425) 352-3590 or fax at (425) 352-5233. **UPCOMING DEADLINES:**
- Winter 2009—November 30, 2008
- Spring 2009—February 29, 2009
- Summer 2009—May 31, 2009
- Fall 2009—August 31, 2009

**Subscription information:** *The Community Psychologist* and the [American Journal of Community Psychology](mailto:www.ajcp.org) are mailed to all SCRA members. To join SCRA and receive these publications, send membership dues to SCRA, 16 Sconticut Neck Rd., #290, Fairhaven, MA, 02719. Membership dues are $30 for student members, $60 for United States members, $50 for international members, and $15 for senior members (must be 65 or over, retired, and a member of SCRA/Division 27 for 25 years; senior members will receive *TCP* but not *AJCP*). The membership application is on the inside back cover.

**Change of address:** Address changes may be made online through the SCRA website <www.scra27.org>. Address changes may also be sent to SCRA, 16 Sconticut Neck Rd., #290, Fairhaven, MA, 02719. Email: <office@scra27.org>. APA members should also send changes to the APA Central Office, Data Processing Manager for revision of the APA mailing lists, 750 First St., NE, Washington, DC 20002-4422.