Conference Program
1st Pacific Northwest Community Psychology Conference

A Regional Meeting sponsored by
The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)

October 13th, 2006
Smith Memorial Student Union, Rooms 328-329
Portland State University
Portland, Oregon
All events throughout the day will take place at the Smith Memorial Student Union, Rooms 328-329.

8 AM – 8:30 AM  Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM  Welcome and Introductions  
Eric Mankowski, Ph.D., Portland State University  
Elizabeth Thomas, Ph.D., University of Washington, Bothell

9:30 AM – 10:20 AM  Concurrent Sessions I

Room 328: Weaving Sustainable Communities: Strategies and Vision at Tryon Farm  
Tod Sloan, Ph.D., Lewis & Clark College  
Brenna Bell, Tryon Life Community Farm  
J. Brush, Tryon Life Community Farm

Many citizens in North America are aware of the need for very dramatic changes in our general lifestyle, yet find themselves incapable of making these changes on their own as individuals. Our modes of transportation, housing, urban design, energy consumption, and agriculture are basically unsustainable from an environmental point of view and not especially conducive to social well-being either. Some communities are leading the way in exploring ways to work and play in ecologically sustainable modes, but these experiments have often failed in the past because they disconnect too extensively from larger society or rely too much on it. The potential for such communities to catalyze necessary change is thus erased.

This symposium introduces community psychologists to the work of Tryon Life Community Farm, a non-profit organization in Portland, Oregon that aims to demonstrate how a small urban farm can synergize sustainable modes of living in the surrounding city and region. Residents of the intentional community at the Farm rallied Portland citizens recently to save the farm from development into expensive residences in order to establish the core of an eco-village capable of growing much of its own food, fostering arts and spirituality, building eco-businesses, and linking to global movements for justice.

Participants in this session will hear brief presentations by TLC Farm leaders and a community psychologist who has been accompanying their strategic planning, and all will engage in dialogue about the possibilities for maximizing the impact of the organization on the expansion of sustainable practices of living in Portland and elsewhere.
Room 329: Oregon Community Engagement Initiative: A Methodology to Increase Community Participation for People with Disabilities
Charles E. Drum, J.D., Ph.D., Willi Horner-Johnson, Ph.D., & Marilyn Berardinelli, B.S., Center on Community Accessibility, Oregon Institute on Disability and Development, Oregon Health & Science University

For people with disabilities, personal health and social and emotional well being are impacted by the ability to successfully participate in community life. Viewed in its entirety, community life encompasses several access domains, including employment, health care, education, housing, recreation, transportation, and public places. Research indicates that people with disabilities encounter numerous barriers that inhibit or preclude community participation across the domains. Diminished participation can lead to adverse health and social-emotional outcomes such as lack of preventative health care, isolation, and depression.

The key goal of the Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) is to bring together members of the community to identify community assets and barriers, foster the development of local collaborations, and increase access for people with disabilities. Strategies utilized include a three step process of town hall meetings, subsequent infrastructure meetings, and mobilization efforts; the Community Assessment Survey; Geographic Information System maps; the use of extant data; and, more recently, cooperative agreements with local entities.

Initial findings indicate that community based participatory research is most successful when local community members identify and prioritize issues, take ownership of the identified project, identify partnerships, and are supported by adequate resources. The session will address sustainability challenges encountered and the particular success of the cooperative agreement strategy as a remedy.

The session will use an interactive lecture format and provide ample opportunity for discussion and questions and answers. At session’s end, participants will be able to describe the impact of access barriers on community participation for people with disabilities, and apply community development strategies to increase participation for people with disabilities.

10:30 AM – 11:20 AM     Concurrent Sessions II

Room 328: Beyond Consumption: Retail as Community Psychology
Mara Adelman, Ph.D., Department of Communication, Seattle University

The marketplace often represents “liminal spaces”, neither home nor work, the “inbetween” spaces where people connect with strangers, cultivate social capital, and engage in quasi-therapeutic discourse. Retail and service encounters are pervasive forms of everyday talk. While most commercial exchanges are reminiscent of “mindless” small talk, more routine than personal, these encounters can also be very profound sources of social support and lay therapy for customers (Adelman, Ahuvia, & Goodwin, 1994). In part, this support reflects the semiotics of space, the meanings imbued within the physicality of space. It also reflects the invitation to “weak ties” to engage beyond the mundane.
Weak ties are nonintimate network connections removed from close, intimate ties (Grannovetter, 1982). Weak ties can be highly specialized (e.g., funeral directors), geographically accessible, nonstigmatized, and low cost venues for helping a broad spectrum of the general public with personal issues. Local settings, such as retail stores, are particularly important to fostering weak ties and providing people with a sense of community. High mobility rates, social fragmentation, and anomic of everyday life, makes these servicescapes (Sherry, 1998) even more poignant as public settings for private confessions.

This paper integrates the conceptual frameworks of network theory, social support, frame analysis, and semiotics to examine the role of “trouble-talk” in localized, situated commercial transactions. A visual ethnography produced by the presenter will provide two case studies of these retail settings that reveals the fuzzy boundaries between commercial and social support/therapeutic discourse, tangible and intangible product/service, and where private-public lives converge in the familiarity and safety of the marketplace.

Room 329: Access to Research Participation: Considering Implications for Action, Theory, Practice and Research
Katherine E. McDonald, Ph.D., Portland State University

Negative attitudes that limit the community participation of individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) inform how they are engaged in research. Increased awareness of the precarious position of individuals with ID has, at times, lead to restrictions on their participation in research. In a context that increasingly recognizes the rights of marginalized individuals, there is some concern that individuals with ID are facing discrimination within the research context. However, there has been little empirical study of this. Recently, I examined how characteristics of the research (the inclusion of individuals with ID and the level of harm posed) and the individual making decisions about the research (their role in the research and attitudes toward the research participation of individuals with intellectual disabilities) affect access to research participation (as defined by perceptions of capacity to consent, risk level, and level of protections).

Findings indicate that when individuals with ID were engaged in research and when the research presented greater harm to participants, ID researchers perceived less capacity to consent than IRB-IDR members. Furthermore, including individuals with ID in higher harm research led to lower ratings of capacity to consent and higher ratings of amount of risk. Interestingly, ID researchers endorsed lower levels of capacity to consent and higher levels of protections when the research studied presented more harm than IRB members. When non-disabled individuals were included in the research, ID researchers perceived less capacity to consent and a greater need for protections than IRB members. Controlling for the effects of attitudes toward the research participation of individuals with ID generally attenuated the significant main effects of disability and harm and their interaction effects. I invite you to join me in a discussion of the implications of these findings for action, theory, practice and future research.
Room 328: Ethical Dilemmas Facing Domestic Violence Researchers: A Roundtable Discussion

Stephanie S. Morgan, Margaret F. Braun, Lorraine Escribano, Gino Galvez, Erin Mahaffy, Eric S. Mankowski, & Mika Maruyama, Portland State University

Research with survivors, perpetrators, and service providers of domestic violence (DV) creates ethical dilemmas (Poister Tusher, Smith, & Cook, 2005). The purpose of this roundtable discussion is to share challenges we experience and encourage others to discuss their obstacles and methods to address them. Our discussion will include challenges working with survivors, perpetrators and the criminal justice system (both in the U.S. and Japan). These challenges include the following:

- Trauma survivors are often in need of more than an objective research interviewer, prompting researchers to develop skills to conduct supportive interviews. However, participants (and researchers) may be confused about the researcher’s role. Is the interviewer only a researcher, or also an advocate or DV counselor?

- In our research with abusive men, administering surveys to assess abusive behaviors in the workplace potentially reveals new abusive behaviors to perpetrators (e.g., use of e-mail to harass partner). To assess the risk, we asked participants if they learned new abuse tactics from the survey. These data inform our concern about “informing” batterers of new workplace abuse tactics.

- Gathering data from public records raises ethical concerns regarding confidentiality. Our program evaluation research necessitates investigating perpetrators’ criminal behavior via public record databases. The databases require identifying information to search criminal cases, sometimes revealing victims’ identities to researchers. Ethical concerns include maintaining confidentiality, as well obtaining public data without participants’ consent.

- Different cultural contexts also inform our work. For instance, attendance in DV intervention in Japan is not mandated by the legal system. We will discuss difficulties identifying and surveying DV intervention programs in Japan in this different legal context. Similarly, the decision to translate non-English data poses an interesting dilemma for researchers. At what point is translation necessary to reach a wider audience (including policy makers) while remaining ‘faithful’ to participants? Addressing these unintended consequences is a task all community psychologists face.

Room 329: What Do I Want To Do With My Life?: How Communities Can Equip Diverse Youth with a Sense of Purpose

Krystal J. White, Med, MA, Residential Community, Fuller Theological Seminary

Participants who attend this seminar will gain an understanding of youth purpose and how it is expressed differently across youth. Participants will be challenged to create community responses to facilitate its development in all youth.

Through a brief interactive lecture, the first part of the seminar will educate participants on a) the psychological definition of a sense of purpose b) the expression of purpose in diverse youth c) how purpose varies between at-risk youth and thriving youth and d) the psychological
benefits of purpose. Findings will be presented from a study of 60 ethnically, economically and academically diverse sample that indicate that purpose is present in most young men. However, what youth identify as purposeful may depend on their academic achievement. At-risk youth in a continuation school are more likely to name school achievement as purpose than their academically successful peers, who are more likely to identify acts of service as purposeful. Why is this the case? Discussion will explore how communities naturally reinforce and expect thriving youth to serve and volunteer, while failing to inspire or equip at-risk youth to make communal contributions. How can schools, counselors/therapists, churches and community programs (such as mentoring or sports programs) facilitate purpose development? The remainder of the seminar will break the participants into four groups in order to explore how each of the settings above can cultivate purpose in youth. Participants will be guided through hands-on activities to design an intervention the setting could employ aiming to support youth purpose development. The presenter will offer best practice research for consulting with each setting, and offer participants key tools (measures, evaluations, possible consultation exercises and workshop activities) that could possibly be employed in a purpose-based consultation with these settings.

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM       Lunch

1:30 PM – 2:20 PM       Concurrent Sessions IV

Room 328: SALONS: A New Model for Building Well-Being and Community in Academe
Mara Adelman, Ph.D., Department of Communication, Seattle University

If universities grant degrees, but do not cultivate physical, psychological and social well-being then they abdicate a critical influence on students health. College years are highly formative in solidifying body image and habits for a healthy lifestyle. For the past three years, Seattle University has addressed their commitment to personal and community well-being through an innovative program called “Academic Salons.” The themes for each year included sexual justice (52 salons), consumption and poverty (67 Salons) and “The Body: Site of Oppression and Liberation (over 78 salons).

At the heart of the academic salon model is the notion of “building community” by increasing the social and intellectual capital of participatory academic life. More than a series of discrete events, the academic salon model is designed to foster a culture of engaged academic life, with an emphasis on personal and social well-being.

This presentation will outline the organizational and community practices and theory that underlie the salon model. These practices are efforts to create inclusion, empowerment, and vision for the university-at-large and for various campus groups affected by these salons. Critical practices included: numerous boundary-spanning activities bridging various administrative, staff, faculty, student, and outside community groups; sites of empowerment or physical environments that would foster more personal discussion of controversial and taboo topics; creating a rhetorical vision through language, rituals and symbols; and providing diverse platforms to various stakeholders to acknowledge and inspire their efforts.
In addition to the formal assessment results, this presentation will also present unexpected outcomes of the salon model: including increased student appointments at the counseling center; the staging of the play “The Vagina Monologues” (which was banned at another state Jesuit university); and significant school and local newspaper coverage.

Room 329: A Focus Group Study of Social Support among Foster and Adoptive Parents
Samuel Girgulis, PsyD & Katharine Meese Putman, PsyD MsPH, Fuller Graduate School of Psychology

The current study identifies elements of perceived support and its sources among foster/adoptive parents associated with an organization called Child S.H.A.R.E. (Shelter Homes: A Rescue Effort). Eighteen foster/adoptive parents participated in focus groups where they were asked about their experience as foster care providers, including, “What do you find supportive as a foster/adoptive parent?” and “What has been helpful about connecting with other foster/adoptive families?” The discussion transcripts were coded and analyzed for frequency, extensiveness, and intensity of responses. Networking with other foster families was most frequent theme as well as the most extensive and intense. Other prevalent themes were Foster care workers, Church, and Family/Friends (listed in order of frequency and extensiveness). Data analysis revealed that emotional support and information exchange were salient factors across themes, suggesting that networking with other foster families provides the greatest level of emotional support and information exchange to foster/adoptive parents. Recommendations for agencies focused on supporting foster/adoptive parents are provided.

2:30 PM – 3:20 PM   Concurrent Sessions V

Room 328: Bridging Troubled Waters: Women’s Advocates, Domestic Violence Services, and Coordinated Community Response
Diana Rempe, MA, Karen Morgaine, MA, & Jan Haaken, Ph.D., Portland State University

Advocates have always been at the heart of the struggle to end violence against women. Since the beginning of the grassroots movement, they have worked to bring the issue into public consciousness, positioning battering as a social rather than individual problem and calling for public responses to domestic violence. As domestic violence service provision has continued to metamorphose, domestic violence service providers have forged complex alliances with such disparate groups as child welfare, the department of human services and the criminal justice system. When these groups, often with conflicting philosophies, negotiate a common space, border tensions arise. Often the community-based advocates are found at the center, navigating the relationships between their agencies, the partnering groups and one another. How do advocates understand their roles at these borderlines? How are their identities—as “unbiased allies of the battered woman”—affected by this position?

This roundtable discussion centers on findings from a focus group conducted with advocates in Portland, Oregon, who work at these border sites. The advocates articulated sources of ambivalence in casting themselves as representatives of the larger battered women's movement,
responsible for (re)producing the unifying narrative of the movement within these new partnerships. They described discomfort with the limits of available narratives and the constraint upon both women seeking services and advocates. Simultaneously, they reflected on the danger inherent to altering this unifying account.

This discussion will explore the implications of these tensions and possibilities for generating unifying accounts that reflect the rich range of women's experience. Is there a space for political mobilization within a movement so bound to the State? How can local responses to domestic violence be created, that are specific to each community and preserve accountability—particularly when our communities have become so migratory? What is the role of the advocate in negotiating political change?

Room 329: Questions of Accessibility, Inclusion, and Usefulness in Reporting Community-Based Research
Heather Mosher, M.S., Portland State University
Susan Finley, Ph.D., Washington State University-Vancouver

Community-based research speaks not only to the process of doing research, but also to the accessibility of our research reports to a wide range of communities. Greater accessibility of the report breaks down academic barriers and enables the inclusion of more voices and perspectives in public discourse. This symposium will spotlight two research projects with homeless communities in an effort to open dialogue in the context of researchers as community partners, posing questions of accessibility, inclusion, and usefulness in academic reporting on community-based work. We will ask: How can we create accessible and useful research reports that reach beyond the ivory tower? What are the trade-offs in reporting to multiple audiences? The first speaker will describe a participatory action research project with Dignity Village - a homeless tent city community. The research purpose is to collaboratively develop empowering social dynamics in the community through the process of creating an orientation video. A central goal of the research is to create a research report that is accessible and useful to Dignity Village as well as to the academic community. This speaker will describe some of the dilemmas and questions that have emerged in utilizing video for reporting the collaborative research. A sample of the video will be shown. The second speaker will describe an arts-based research project on At Home At School, an after-school and summer program that responds to educational and social concerns of unhoused children sheltered and unsheltered, and children who are otherwise economically very poor. This speaker will discuss redefining the role of researcher to artist and activist, and the challenges to tenured and untenured faculty in utilizing alternative forms of reporting within acdemae. In this context the author will discuss hands-on community based research as teaching and the roles of teachers as community partners.

3:40 PM – 4:40 PM  Closing Session and Reflections
Discussants: Julie Genz, Mt. Hood Community College
Al Ratcliffe, Ph.D., Clinical and Community Psychologist, Tacoma, WA
6:30 PM  Informal Dinner at Bridgeport Brewpub

Conference participants are invited to gather for dinner at Bridgeport Brewpub, 1313 NW Marshall Street, telephone: 503.241.3612. We will meet inside the East Entrance in the lobby of Smith Memorial Student Union (where conference events will be held) at 6:15pm and will take the streetcar to the restaurant. Those who wish can also meet us at the restaurant. Dinner is not included in the conference registration fee, so we have selected a restaurant with food options that are less expensive.

Saturday, October 14  Visit to Tryon Life Community Farm

Conference participants who are able to stay in Portland until Saturday morning are invited to gather for a visit to Tryon Life Community Farm. Tod Sloan and his Tryon Farm partners, Brenna Bell and J. Brush, who present their work in building sustainable communities on Friday, will be our guides.

For the Tryon Farm visit, meet inside the East Entrance in the lobby of the Smith Memorial Student Union (where Friday’s conference events will be held) at 9:15 am. We will return to the Student Union by 12:30pm.