Throughout my professional career I have had an on-again/off-again relationship with APA. As a graduate student, I joined both APA and SCRA (then known simply as Division 27), but only my membership in SCRA has been continuous since that time. [Because we are a “society,” one can be a member of SCRA without being a member of APA.]

As a new faculty person, in the early 1980s, one of the first dissertation committees on which I sat was that of a Black student from South Africa. [This was still during the time of apartheid.] After receiving his degree, and before he left to go back to South Africa, he asked me to investigate how he could remain an APA member once his current membership expired. Unfortunately, by law, he could not send money out of South Africa, and so once he returned home, he would be unable to pay the APA membership fee. He wanted to maintain professional connections once he was home, and he saw associations with American psychology as important and crucial to his professional development, as he knew he would be unlikely to make many connections within his country. I contacted APA because I thought that they would certainly make an exception for this man and waive the membership fee. In response to my inquiry, APA reminded me that there were many countries in which citizens could not send money out of the country, and they couldn’t offer free membership to everyone in all of these countries. I guess their point was that they didn’t want to open the floodgates. But it didn’t make sense to me; I really felt that this man’s situation was quite different—how many people in these various countries would be as profes-
As I found out early in my career, and as I continue to undertake, APA regarding its position on psychologists involved in US activities, which are not defined as torture by the US government and yet are considered torture and inhumane treatment by others. Some of our members have chosen to resign from APA over the torture/interrogation issue, others have chosen to withhold their dues from APA as a protest (see http://www.withholdapadues.com/ for more information). I deeply respect both of these decisions. At the midwinter meeting of SCRA’s Executive Committee, we will discuss APA’s position on torture/interrogation and determine whether there are ways for SCRA to make more of a difference. I will keep you posted on these discussions. In the interim, I want to mention two things that APA/SCRA members can do to increase our division’s voice within the organization, and, thus, working from within APA, help to reshape APA’s future.

First, I sent out an announcement to all SCRA members this fall asking that you allocate all of your votes for apportionment to Division 27. The number of votes determines how many representatives our division sends to APA’s Council of Representatives. As I said in my email, last year we came very close to winning a second seat on council—we were short by only 100 votes. Currently we have only a single council representative; in earlier years, we had two. The more seats we have on council, the more influential is the voice of our division within APA. Our voice always matters, but with some issues the stakes are higher than others—for example, it is the council that votes on resolutions regarding APA’s policies. I’ll keep you posted as to whether we were able to capture a second seat this year.

Second, I encourage you to consider attending the APA convention. Yes, there is very little programming of interest to community psychologists. But, as community psychologists stop attending APA, we pretty much guarantee that there will be little programming relevant to our interests. And here’s why:

The Community Student
edited by Marco A. Hidalgo & Christopher Zambakari

47 Children as Stakeholders and “Unheard Voices:” Informing Participants of Evaluation Results, by Christopher J. Reiger, Melissa A. Maras, & Paul D. Flaspohler

Articles
51 SCRA’s International Consciousness: An Introduction to the Internationalization Task Force, by Roderick J. Watts, David Chavis, Serdar M. Degirmencioğlu, Donata Francescato, Irma Serrano García, Mariane Krause, Anthony Naidoo, Stephanie Reich, Neville Robertson, & Carolyn Swift

53 Community News & Announcements

The structure for the meeting will involve three levels of programming—divisional programming, divisional cross-cutting programming, and association-wide mini-plenary sessions. Each level of programming has been assigned time periods during the four days of the convention. The number of substantive program hours available in the Moscone Center during those time periods has been divided up among the 54 divisions. The Board of Convention Affairs uses a formula for determining hours based on the number of division members attending the last three conventions and the number of members in the division at the time of the last convention. Only the primary division membership indicated on an APA member’s registration...
form is used in the attendance portion of the formula. The resulting usage projection is translated directly to hours with a maxima of 80 hours and a minima of 14 hours assigned to any division. For 2007, the calculations were based on the following:

1. Number of members (percentage) in the division at the time of the New Orleans Convention
2. Number of division members (percentage) attending the Hawai‘i Convention primary division only
3. Number of division members (percentage) attending the Washington, DC Convention—primary division only
4. Number of division members (percentage) attending the New Orleans Convention—primary division only

Using the columns on the data sheet, the formula was \( .32 \times (1) + .08 \times (2) + .17 \times (3 + 4) \) = usage projection = rounded off to (5) (also a percentage) and then adjusted (6) for substantive hours allotted.

[I thank Anita Davis, one of our Members-At-Large, for forwarding me the email that APA sent to her explaining the allocation of hours for divisions at the 2007 convention.]

In other words, SCRA attendance at APA translates into future SCRA programming hours (or the lack thereof). Why do programming hours matter? The small number of hours we are allocated means that (1) our members have fewer opportunities to present their work, (2) we can rarely partner with other divisions to present “mini-themes” or “mini-conferences” within the larger conference (we are reluctant to relinquish many of the few hours we are allocated), (3) there is unlikely to ever be enough “community psychology programming” to fill up an individual’s conference schedule, thus, again, discouraging community psychologists from attending APA.

At APA in San Francisco, we did not have a quorum for the executive committee. The SCRA business meeting, which, according to our by-laws takes place at APA, was sparsely attended, as was the social hour. Clearly, attendance was poor because, just months earlier, SCRA members had flown to California for our biennial. But, attendance was also poor because, ostensibly, there is so little to interest our members at APA. And, thus, the cycle continues—few community psychologists attend APA because there is little relevant programming, and the fact that few attend APA assures that there will always be little relevant programming.

In 2007, however, there were community psychology-relevant presentations and activities at the APA conference, including, for example, an extensive mini-convention on ethics and interrogation as well as a rally for an ethical APA. As I write this column, I do not yet know the programming for the APA conference in 2008. But I encourage all of you, when the conference program is announced, to determine whether or not your attendance is warranted. Are there presentations relevant for your professional development? Are there venues that will allow you to express your feelings about APA’s position on torture/interrogation? And, if you decide to attend, please mark SCRA as your primary divisional affiliation. ☑
THE SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH & ACTION

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2007–2008

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Michigan State University
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Christian University, Tokyo, Japan

AUSTRALIA/New Zealand/
SOUTH PACIFIC
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Curtin University of Technology

CANADA
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Wilfred Laurier University

EUROPE
David Fryer,
University of Stirling, Scotland

LATIN AMERICA
Vacant

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,
margaretm@earthlink.net

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES
The Children, Youth and 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,
435-797-3346

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: Bradley Olson,
415-338-1440,
louisbud@mskcc.org

COMMUNITY SAFETY
The Disability interest group promotes understanding of the depth and diversity of disabilities issues in the community that are ready for research and action, and influences community psychologists’ involvement in policy and practices that enhance self determination, personal choice, and full inclusion in the community for people with disabilities.
Chair: Katherine E. McDonald,
503-725-3995,
kmc@pdx.edu

LESBIAN/GAY/BISEXUAL/
TRANSGENDER
(LGBT)
The LGBT interest group increases awareness of the need for community research and action related to issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are either interested in research/service/policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.
Chair: Richard Jenkins,
jenkinsri@nida.nih.gov
Colleen Loomis,
519-884-1970 x 2858,
cloomis@wlu.ca

PREVENTION AND PROMOTION
The Prevention and Promotion 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.
Chair: Monica Adams,
adamas@depaul.edu
Derek Griffith,
devkmg@umich.edu

RURAL
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,
c.lardon@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.
Chair: Paul Flaspohler,
flaspohler@muohio.edu
Susana Helm, sheim@hawaii.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: Lynne Mock,
lm@tchcouncil-online.org
FROM THE EDITOR—

Elizabeth Thomas,  
University of Washington Bothell

I am pleased to share this Winter 2008 issue of The Community Psychologist with you. Thanks to all of the column editors and contributors for their fine work in this edition. Welcome and thanks again to our new column editors whose work is featured in this issue: Raymond Scott, Katherine McDonald, Bernadette Sánchez, Paul Flaspohler, Steven Pokorny, and Christopher Zambakari. Many thanks also to Joseph Ferrari, who just completed his term as Editor for the Social Policy Column.

In this issue, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to get to know not just one—but two—community psychology colleagues, Lindsey Stillman and Judy Primavera, in the Living Community Column. I also invite readers to learn more about the Community Action Research Centers Network. The last issue featured the work of the Center for Women and Work at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. This issue allows us to step inside the Center for Community Support and Research at Wichita State University.

In the Education Connection Column, read about the 2007 Outstanding Educator Award Recipient, Patricia O’Conner, and the Excellence in Education Programs Award Recipient, DePaul University. Contact Kelly Hazel, incoming Chair of the Council of Education Programs, to nominate an Outstanding Educator for the 2008 Award.

Student Issues Column Editors, Marco Hidalgo and Christopher Zambakari, bring readers exciting news about regional Eco Conferences and invite students to participate in SCRA in a variety of ways (including submitting articles to future issues of TCP!). In The Community Student, they also bring to us a great article written by students and faculty at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

A powerful discussion continues in the Community Practitioner. This issue includes a paper that describes “The First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice” held in June 2007; it also includes papers that continue a discussion of core competencies for community psychology practice. Editor David Julian invites readers to “join the conversation by authoring an article or commentary about any of these articles or other material published in the Community Practitioner.”

Finally, be sure to read about and comment upon the initial work of the SCRA Internationalization Task Force (ITF) whose members include Roderick J. Watts (US and chair, ITF), David Chavis (US), Serdar M. Degirmenciglu (Turkey and chair, SCRA International Committee), Donata Francescato (Italy), Irma Serrano García (Puerto Rico), Mariane Krause (Chile), Anthony Naidoo (South Africa), Stephanie Reich (US), Neville Robertson (New Zealand), and Carolyn Swift, ex officio (US and Past President, SCRA).

These are just a few of the many highlights. Thanks again to all of the column editors and contributors for their excellent work.

BOOK REVIEWS—

Edited by Raymond L. Scott


~ Reviewed by Patricia A. O’Connor, The Sage Colleges

“Context is not just something, it is the heart and soul of the matter” (p. 212) has long been this reviewer’s favorite quote from Kelly. In this book, Becoming Ecological: An Expedition into Community Psychology, we are privileged to be taken behind the scenes, as it were, to understand context as both participants and observers: observers of Kelly’s journey and participants through our adoption of the becoming process. Becoming Ecological illustrates that, for Kelly, the notion of context still must be taken in its broadest sense, including physical setting, community, stakeholders, history, self, etc.

A simple description of James G. Kelly is prolific writer, innovative researcher, creative thinker, and one of the most highly regarded members of SCRA. Campbell & Rappaport (2006), in their Foreword, describe Kelly as “a founder and perhaps the foremost theoretician of community psychology (p. vii).” According to Trickett (2006) in the Afterword (p. 289), Seymour Sarason stated that “You cannot talk about community psychology without paying serious attention to the ideas and research of Jim Kelly.”

The book begins with autobiographical vignettes, each of which provides a context for seven concepts (the role of social class, the power of place, diversity of experiences and roles, the power of social support, reducing the impact of noxious events and places, the power of ideas from other places, and the power of coincidence) that frame the personal-professional link for Kelly. The vignettes illustrate the varied influences that shaped Kelly’s thinking; the concepts emerge as the consequence of his particular experiences, and the basis for his applied research focus.

The core of the book comprises 13 original articles, all seminal works, selected by Kelly in consultation with 10 colleagues, for their significant contributions to community psychology. Ten were published before 1995, the most recent is 2002. Each article is preceded by a brief narrative, “Reflections,” in which Kelly describes the personal and personal contexts for the emergence of each, including the importance of his collaborators on the various projects. Kelly then gives us windows into his current thinking with four essays, which summarize and develop the framing points for ecological theory in the collected articles, specifically, the discovery process, inquiry through multiple methods, community practice, and implementation through training. A final “Summing Up” chapter emphasizes and elaborates the notion of interdependence.

Two basics themes emerge in this volume: first, the personal is also professional and the reverse, and second, becom-
ing is simply the state of being, nothing is done or over. Kelly begins with “This will not be a finished statement” (p.3). That Kelly has and continues to live his work is also reflected in the numerous collaborations noted with appreciation throughout the book. Each is described with a warmth and respect that makes the reader wish to have been one of them.

Though the majority of readers will likely be familiar with nearly all of the articles, the re-reading is particularly valuable as it clarifies their importance in two ways. First, most set directions for future research endeavors; it is enlightening to return to the source to appreciate both the initial context and the development of the concepts. Second, and more important, these original works have a surprisingly current relevance. For example, the inclusion (Kelly’s position, Chapter 11), or not, of interdisciplinary courses in community psychology training programs remains an unfinished debate. In his 1969 Presidential Address (Chapter 3), Kelly offers seven principles as basic to community psychology and, in 1971 (Chapter 6), seven qualities of community psychologists; both were foundational and are still relevant for the field. And the call to the Society for Community Research and Action members to seek its original spirit (Chapter 11), Kelly’s most recent publication in this volume, continues to stir attention.

Kelly’s use of the “Reflections” as an introduction to each article is an effective mechanism to illustrate his personal-professional connections, providing a welcomed context for each work. Though the final four essays and “Summing Up” chapter are his current thoughts, this reader might also have appreciated some post-article reflections, Kelly’s assessment of what followed the publications, possibly titled “Reflections on Consequence.”

On the professional side, the strength and power of Kelly’s thinking, already known to anyone in the field of community psychology and beyond, is well demonstrated in the 13 selected articles. This volume confirms and solidifies Kelly’s legacy.

Additionally we are given a window into the personal side of Kelly through the autobiographical first section and through the “Reflections.” Here is a man who is intensely thoughtful, in positions of influence, who retains a clear sense of humility, seeing himself as a player, not a director. He consistently acknowledges others’ contributions to his accomplishments, noting and modeling the fruitfulness of collaborations.

His writing style in these sections is more hesitant, not at all flagrant, as though there is a discomfort in being so public about the personal. It is exactly this personal that enhances the quality of the book—we get to know James G. Kelly, the individual, who had successes and unfortunate events in his childhood, had opportunities and hurdles in starting his career, and felt pride and humility in work-related experiences. Kelly describes, in the chapter 9 Reflections, that speaking at the Harvard Medical School Library, surrounded by portraits of luminaries, was “rather intimidating” (p.153); reviewing a book authored by Kelly is, frankly, also intimidating. However, he enables us, dare I say, more ordinary community psychologists, to identify with his struggles and successes, to understand that he is a person still Becoming Ecological.

This book provides a collection of major papers, personal reflections and additional materials from James G. Kelly. In the Forward section, Rebecca Campbell & Julian Rappaport (2006) describe him as “one of the founders and perhaps the foremost theoretician of community psychology (p. vii).” It begins with a brief autobiography by James Kelly that presents background for understanding the topics he thought about and studied. Kelly organized the story by seven concepts that help to connect the personal to professional. He concludes the chapter by emphasizing that although we rarely discuss it, our careers and work are evolutionary, and they are influenced by past experiences and these seven concepts.

Part I of this book consists of 13 of Kelly’s published works, each preceded by his own personal reflections that place each article in historical context while demonstrating that each has current relevance for the field of community psychology. The articles span a time period from 1968 to 2002. They demonstrate the evolutionary processes involved in developing theory and methods. The personal reflections illustrate how Kelly’s thinking was influenced by contextual factors, including the political and social climate and the individuals present.

The first article is where Kelly introduced his ecological principles of interdependence, the cycling of resources, adaptation and succession, each derived from field biology, and then describes proposed interventions based upon an interdependent viewpoint of the relationship between individual behavior and the setting.

The second article presents results of a study of exploratory behavior in adolescent boys in two different high schools. The results demonstrated that outcomes are derived from the qualities of the individual interacting with qualities of the environment. They also illustrated the importance of multiple methods.

The third article is “Antidotes for Arrogance.” It is the Division 27 presidential address Kelly gave at the 1969 American Psychological Association meeting. Kelly presents seven principles for the creation and nurturance of community psychology training. The principles had implications for the selection of graduate students, their training and socialization, and the role of faculty and the university, and they represented a departure from the traditional ways of educating graduate students.

The fourth article presents three methods for preventive interventions that include mental health consultation, organizational change and community development. Each of these proposed methods suggest alternative criteria from those used in the past for similarly focused interventions.

The fifth article describes Kelly’s experience teaching a Social Adaptation class at the University of Michigan. This class provided students with an opportunity to work in the community on multidisciplinary teams on topics that they considered important. Kelly designed the course to give


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graduate students experience with the needs and resources of communities while helping communities to solve problems. Kelly describes the premises behind this course that arose from working in communities, and how the community serves as the teacher.

Kelly describes seven qualities for the community psychologist in a speech presented to faculty at the Lila Acheson Wallace School of Community Service and Public Affairs in November 1970 for the sixth article. Kelly chose this topic because personal qualities are an important part of working in the community, yet they are rarely discussed.

The seventh article is the speech Kelly delivered when he received the 1978 Division 27 Award for Distinguished Contributions to Community Psychology and Community Mental Health, called Taint What You Do, It's The Way That You Do It. Kelly used this opportunity to make the point that it is not only the content of an intervention that is important, but the process also matters, and implementation processes should vary across communities. It includes discussion on working in responsive versus resistant communities.

When the Prevention Research Branch at the National Institute of Mental Health was created, 18 scholars, including James Kelly, were brought together to present their viewpoints on methods and strategies for prevention research. The eighth article, “Seven Criteria When Conducting Community Based Prevention Research,” is Kelly’s contribution. These criteria were inspired by lectures Eudora Welty gave in 1984. The central concepts were listening, learning to see, and finding a voice.

The ninth article describes six concepts for social settings focusing on what professionals do when they are forming collaborative relationships, based on the premise that most professionals are neither trained nor socialized to work collaboratively. It highlights the interdependence between the professional and citizens in the creation of social settings.

In the tenth article, Kelly presents a “contextualist epistemology for ecological research.” He illustrates the value of taking an ecological approach to research in community psychology, and of taking alternative viewpoints and methodologies. Kelly highlights examples of contextualist epistemologies in biology, psychology, and feminism.

The eleventh article was written in response to a request to contribute a chapter to a book in honor of Emory Cowen. “Wellness as an Ecological Enterprise” presents ideas to help shift the point of view of the researcher to examining protective factors related to wellness, rather than risk factors related to illness. Kelly drew on older and classical works and ideas from anthropology, sociology, and social psychology, as well as more recent works by community psychologists to develop these ideas.

Community leadership is the theme of the twelfth article. It was Kelly’s address for the APA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest in 1997. It is the culmination of a decade of Kelly’s “ecological expedition” to document community leadership. Leadership is viewed as a process rather than a set of traits.

The final article is a revised version of Kelly’s address in honor of Seymour Sarason presented in 2001 and talks about the spirit of community psychology. Kelly was concerned that community psychology may have lost some of the spirit that was inherent when it was founded in 1965, and he offers ideas and actions to preserve it.

In the second part of this book, Kelly presents four new essays. First is an essay about thinking ecologically. Second is an essay implying that rather than having generalized laws that can account for individual behaviors across settings, we can only make conclusions about specific persons in specific settings. The third essay presents insights Kelly has developed for doing ecologically based preventive work. The fourth essay addresses education and training for the ecological perspective. The final chapter provides further discussion of the concept of interdependence. The book ends with a chapter of reflections by Edison Trickett.

The articles and essays presented in this book cover a wide variety of ideas that have added significantly to the field of community psychology. In addition to the theoretical and methodological contributions Kelly has made, he has also made recommendations for the selection, education, and socialization of community psychologists. He reminds us that in addition to the technical competencies required, our work also requires certain personal characteristics and beliefs. Kelly begins the conclusion of Chapter 13 with the statement, “Community psychology is a special field.” James Kelly’s articles and essays illustrate how true that statement is.

This book can be useful and appeal to a wide audience. For the undergraduate student trying to decide whether community psychology is the right career path, this book presents a set of values and ideas that will entice the individual for whom community psychology is a good fit, and repel those whose interests or values are inconsistent. For graduate students in community psychology, this book provides an excellent summary of Kelly’s works while illustrating the development of the ecological viewpoint. For those who are past their school years, it can be useful as a reference or serve as a reminder of our values and perspectives while imparting a nice booster dose of ecological thinking. All community psychologists might want to read and occasionally reread this book and even share it with associates from other disciplines.

As I read this book I could feel my synapses firing in a thousand different directions, and it evoked both personal and professional memories. It made me remember my first exposure to Kelly’s four ecological principles as an undergraduate and later using them as the framework for one of my answers on my doctoral exams. It also made me explore how my own life events led me to this discipline and influenced my career and choices. It made me think about how community psychology has influenced my choice of methodologies, perspectives, and approaches to my work throughout my career. Most of all it reinforced my decision to study community psychology and be a part of such a special field and made me want to thank James Kelly personally for putting together this collection, and adding his extra touch to it.
COMMUNITY ACTION RESEARCH CENTERS NETWORK—

Edited by Chris Keys, Bob Newbrough, Bradley Olson, & Yolanda Suarez–Balcazar

The Center for Community Support & Research (CCSR) at Wichita State University

~Greg Meissen & Scot Wituk, Wichita State University

Step inside CCSR’s building and there is a constant buzz of community research and activity.

The Center for Community Support & Research (CCSR) at Wichita State University (WSU) started in 1984 as the Self-Help Network and continues to be part of the community psychology doctoral program at WSU. Over the past two decades, the CCSR has conducted community-based research and helped in building the capacity of self-help groups, nonprofit organizations, community coalitions, adult & youth leadership programs, faith-based organizations, and government entities across the state of Kansas. Under the direction of Greg Meissen and Scott Wituk, the CCSR has become internationally recognized for its community-based capacity building efforts that combine practical community and organizational development practices with applied research and evaluation methods. Guided by the socio-ecological model, the CCSR conducts action-research to better understand leadership development, organizational capacity-building, and system transformation.

The CCSR has a multi-disciplinary team of dedicated and diverse professionals in a three-story downtown Wichita building with 35 staff from community psychology, social work, education, business, and 15 psychology graduate and undergraduate students. Step inside CCSR’s building and there is a constant buzz of community research and activity. As you enter the lobby, you are greeted by WSU student assistants who assist people from groups and organizations from across the state through the front door to various meetings and activities. As you head towards the staircase, you pass by several of the staffs’ offices and co-located space provided to Youth United for Positive Action (a youth-led non-profit group dedicated to developing youth leadership) and the Kansas Mental Health Consumer Advisory Council who help empower people with psychiatric disabilities through education, advocacy, and leadership.

In the “Wichita Meeting Room,” CCSR research associates are discussing the research design for assessing an after-school leadership development initiative. The initiative, supported by the W. T. Grant Foundation, examines the impact of a setting-level intervention on afterschool programs.

Across the hall in the “Sedgwick Meeting Room” CCSR staff are facilitating one of the Visioneering Wichita Alliances for early childhood development. As part of Visioneering Wichita, the CCSR assists 15 Visioneering coalitions on a variety of topics, including health care, older adults, mentoring, small business development, and racial diversity. CCSR staff are able to assist coalition meetings, as well as conduct survey research when requested.

On the second floor, the leaders of 22 Consumer Run Organizations (CROs) and CCSR staff are meeting in the “Kansas Meeting Room” to share ideas for improving and spreading leadership throughout their organizations. The CCSR has received multiple grants from the Kansas Department of Social & Rehabilitation Services, the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH), and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agency (SAMHSA) to better understand promising organizational practices in CROs. The CCSR is conducting a longitudinal study examining people who participate in CROs, organizational characteristics of CROs, and the growth of CROs in the Kansas mental health system. Recent research has been guided by setting theories, examining setting characteristics and individual outcomes.

Nearby in the “Sunflower Meeting Room,” approximately 40 leaders of small faith and community-based organizations have gathered for a workshop on logic models and evaluation. The workshop is part of a larger six-year initiative to build the organizational capacity of small faith and community-based organizations funded by the Department of Health & Human Services. The CCSR provides organizational capacity building to selected faith and community-based organizations, assessing their organizational capacity needs and the extent to which such capacity building makes a difference on organizational functioning.

Take the elevator to the third floor and in the “High Plains Meeting Room” you encounter another pair of CCSR staff working with the Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership—10 African American youth-serving organizations addressing gang activity and youth violence. The Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership is a three-year action research project supported by the Administration for Children & Families designed to better understand and assist African American

CCSR’s vision: That all Kansans use their talents and experiences to create thriving communities.

CCSR’s mission: To strengthen Kansas through education, leadership development, facilitation, and research.
youth-serving organizations. Working with the 10 partners and local youth, the CCSR has recently completed a multi-method community strengths and needs assessment.

Down the hall another team of CCSR research associates are on a conference call with staff from the Kansas Social Rehabilitation Services and the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services regarding a five-year system transformation assessment of long-term care services. The initiative is designed to strengthen the state system to more adequately meet the needs of long-term care recipients (e.g., older adults, people with mental illness, people with developmental disabilities) who wish to live in the community. The CCSR has been asked to assess the extent to which the state of Kansas is able to achieve its objectives and the process by which it is done.

Finally, other CCSR staff are on a national conference call with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and other state empowerment evaluators regarding the Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) project. DELTA is the first large-scale primary prevention initiative of domestic violence in the country. CCSR staff serve as local evaluators for Kansas utilizing the principles from Empowerment Evaluation to guide local groups and a statewide coalition.

On any given floor, you will find CCSR staff working with a variety of community partners to strengthen local communities and organizations. The CCSR staff utilize a variety of research methods and applied strategies to meet the needs of its community partners. It is through these methods and strategies that the CCSR continues to help people help each other as it has for the past twenty years. The Center for Community Support and Research exemplifies the value driven action-research model of community psychology making the community a better place and providing educational opportunities for future community psychologists.

**CCSR’s vision:** That all Kansans use their talents and experiences to create thriving communities.

**CCSR’s mission:** WSU Center for Community Support & Research partners with communities and organizations to strengthen Kansas through education, leadership development, facilitation, and research.

**CCSR’s Current Projects:**

- Kansas Mental Health Consumer Empowerment Initiative
- Compassion Kansas
- Wichita Youth Empowerment Partnership
- Kansas Afterschool Leadership Development Initiative
- Mental Health Certified Peer Specialists
- Long Term Care System Transformation Evaluation
- Primary Prevention of Domestic Violence (DELTA Empowerment Evaluation)
- Visioneering Wichita
- Kansas Community Leadership Initiative

For additional information about the CCSR or any of its current projects, please contact Greg Meissen at (316) 978-3039 or visit the website at <www.ccsr.wichita.edu>.

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**Community Health**

Edited & written by David Lounsbury & Shannon Gwin Mitchell

**Fostering Interdisciplinary Community Health Research**

This fall the CHIG organized a conference call for members to reconnect with each other since meeting at the biennial. As a general objective of the meeting, we wanted to identify at least one collaborative project, one that each member could be a party to and that all members found engaging.

Keeping with our focus on the interdisciplinary nature of community health research, as evidenced by the diversity of types of partners and topics currently taken up by our members, the idea of organizing a special meeting dedicated to interdisciplinary research and action in community health surfaced. The purpose of the meeting would be to organize a one-day program of presentations and workshops that would bring together researchers and practitioners from multiple disciplines who are engaged in community health research. Our proposed title for the meeting is Interdisciplinary Meeting on Community Health Research.

To fund this meeting, we plan to apply for support from the National Institutes of Health, Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research (OBSSR). We are also exploring the possibility of arranging the meeting as a satellite event to the 2009 SCRA Biennial, which will be hosted by Montclair State University in New Jersey (Milton Fuentes, Planning Chair).

We are currently at work developing a detailed proposal for the meeting and would like your feedback about our idea. Our conference planning workgroup includes both of us, as well as the following CHIG members: Ralph Levine (Michigan State University), Rebeca Rios (Arizona State University), and Sheila La Housse (UCSD and Michigan State University). We are particularly interested in hearing whether or not you would find such a meeting on interdisciplinary community health research of relevance to your own work.

We welcome you to join in our planning process for this meeting. Please feel free to contact us for more information.

David Lounsbury: Lounsbud@mskcc.org
Shannon Gwin Mitchell: sgwinmitchell@hotmail.com
Cultural and Racial Affairs—

Edited by Pamela P. Martin

Accentuating the Positive: Utilizing Religious Beliefs and Practices in Adolescent Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

~Lillian Robinson, North Carolina State University

Why explore the issue of adolescent substance abuse in a publication that focuses on the community? Substance abuse is a clinical issue, right? Now, think of the number of communities who are impacted by substance influenced behaviors such as domestic violence, crime, related deaths, sexual abuse, etc. Substance abuse problems experienced by individuals manifest in issues at all system levels. The abuse of substances and its prevention/treatment is a subject that crosses professional boundaries and requires the involvement of all. The prevalence of adolescent substance abuse requires a collective effort, with 4.9 million youth between the ages of 12 and 17 reporting use of illicit substances within the past year and more than 1 million diagnosable for a substance dependence disorder (McClelland, Teplin, & Abram, 2004). Finding prevention and intervention methods for substance abusing adolescents is crucial not only for the individual but also the families, the communities, and society at large.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and other 12 step programs built on a spiritual foundation have shown benefits for adult substance abusers (Stewart & Koeske, 2005). These programs are based on the premise that trust in a Higher Power and participation in 12 step activities (prayer, meditation, repentance, meeting attendance) facilitate success in substance abuse recovery and relapse prevention. Researchers have found that a combination of biomedical and spiritual treatment is better than the sole use of either treatment alone (Stewart & Koeske, 2005). Unfortunately, the spiritual aspect is not systematically incorporated in the prevention or treatment of adolescent substance abuse.

Supporting spiritual growth and development connects/reconnects the adolescent to potential resources within their communities.

Incorporating religious beliefs in adolescent substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts has several potential benefits. Generally speaking, increase in belief of religious importance and involvement is associated with decreased levels of substance use (Kendler, Liu, Gardner, McCullough, Larson, & Prescott, 2003; Nonnemaker, McNeely, & Blum, 2003; Willis, Yaeger, & Sandy, 2003). Instructing adolescents how to utilize their faith to transform religious beliefs into tools of action to improve their everyday life is something every practitioner and program implementer can carry out. Also, supporting spiritual growth and development connects/reconnects the adolescent to potential resources within their communities. Faith-based communities are potential sources of support to the family and individual before, during, and after treatment.

Few studies have examined the benefits of including religious principles in treatment (Vaughn & Howard, 2004). The current article shares findings of a secondary data analysis conducted with data from the Drug Abuse Treatment Outcome Study of Adolescents (DATOS-A). DATOS-A was a longitudinal, prospective cohort study that spanned six cities (Chicago, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, Pittsburgh, Portland) with multiple treatment sites from November 1993 to 1995. Findings in the study were consistent with previous results of an inverse relationship between dimensions of religiosity and substance abuse. However, in this analysis the strength and prevalence of results varied depending on the treatment modality (residential inpatient, short-term, outpatient) of the adolescent. In the short-term group, female participants who reported higher levels of religious importance and attendance before treatment had lower levels of marijuana use after treatment. In the outpatient group, female participants who had higher levels of religious attendance before or after treatment reported lower levels of marijuana use after treatment. Non-Caucasian adolescents with higher levels of religious attendance after treatment also reported lower levels of alcohol use after treatment. In the residential therapeutic community, participants with higher rates of attendance after treatment had lower levels of marijuana use after treatment. Non-Caucasian participants with higher levels of attendance after treatment had lower levels of alcohol use after treatment. Although results varied each treatment modality contained promising results for the influence of religious beliefs and practices on substance use.

Religious beliefs and participation aid in the fight against adolescent substance abuse. These aspects of identity should be explored and nurtured in adolescent substance abuse prevention and treatment efforts. No matter how superb the program, resources are limited. Once complete, the supports from within the program are gone. The adolescent is placed back into an environment that contributed to his/her condition. There needs to exist some entity that will have a continual vested interest in the youth and his or her family providing support once funding ends. Faith-based communities are well positioned to fulfill this role. Religious communities have the capacity to provide social and emotional support to the family and opportunities for youth to make pro-social connections (Johnson, Jang, De Li, & Larson, 2000; Simons, Simons, & Conger, 2004). The majority of adolescents in all treatment modalities thought it was very important or fairly important to turn over their will and life to the care of a higher power.
The support of religious identity development in adolescent substance abuse prevention and treatment not only impacts the immediate health of the individual but it is also capable of fostering a bond with individuals and institutions within the community who can help facilitate and maintain constructive living. Scientists, practitioners and programmers should support prevention and intervention efforts for substance abusing adolescents that not only focus on the elimination of substance abuse but also aiding the youth in forming a healthy self-identity and utilizing intrinsic strengths like religious beliefs and practices that encourage and help sustain a positive way of life.

References

**Disabilities Action**

*Edited by Katherine McDonald*

Much of our work in community psychology is motivated by personal accounts that help us better understand the lived experiences of marginalized individuals. Below, Sandra Nelms, a student at Portland State University who anticipates beginning doctoral studies in community psychology next year, shares the words of a young man with an intellectual disability. I hope you find his story illuminating and inspiring as we work towards social justice for people with disabilities.

~Katie McDonald

Memories of Life in the System by a Young Man with Intellectual Disability

~Sandra Nelms, Portland State University

“A lot of people got hurt and property got destroyed ‘cause no one would listen to me.”

These are the words of Lee1, a close friend of mine. He and I have known and worked with each other for over seven years. He is 25 years old. We met when he moved into a group home for adults with developmental disabilities run by the agency where I was employed as a program director. He has agreed to share some of his memories of his younger life in the developmental disabilities service system. The story he tells of his young life is one of powerlessness and suppression, perpetuated under the guise of treatment and protection. Throughout his story, Lee associates a lack of voice with lack of power, and a lack of power with challenging behavior. The opening quotation clearly links a lack of voice to aggressive behavior. His use of passive voice in this statement may suggest a lack of accountability for his behavior. The reader is encouraged to consider, however, that his use of passive voice reflects a diminished sense of personal agency that resulted from living within a disempowering system.

Before hearing directly from Lee, allow me to provide relevant information about the context of Lee’s upbringing. Lee entered the service system after being removed from an abusive and neglectful home when he was a toddler. He was placed in foster care and remembers having supervised visits with his mother. He remembers feeling confused and angry after these visits, and wondering why he was not allowed to return to his mother’s home. He knew that his younger brother and sister still lived with their mother, and could not figure out why only he was made to live in foster care. He does not remember receiving an explanation for his questions about this situation. Contact with his mother was severed when he was in grade school, because her presence in his life appeared to cause him extreme anxiety. His upbringing was, therefore, primarily the work of the service system.

1 All names are pseudonyms to protect individuals’ privacy.
From a young age Lee had explosive episodes of yelling, destroying property, and physically aggressing on others. This behavior repeatedly resulted in Lee being abruptly uprooted and moved on to a new foster home or group home, when the current home could not tolerate his behavior anymore. His move to a new home often meant moving to a new school as well. Lee recalls the psychological evaluations, the IQ tests, the neurological exams, and placement testing that were often associated with moving to a new home and school. He has told me that he felt like a “guinea pig” when he was a child, as though he was just another test subject for each service professional’s favorite treatment or intervention. Lee is very critical of the treatment he received as a child and adolescent, and his criticism serves as striking reinforcement of core principles of community psychology; specifically, the need to analyze social problems at multiple levels (Moos, 1973), and the importance of genuine listening and meaningful involvement of members of marginalized populations in our efforts to understand them and improve their lives (Zimmerman, 2000).

I recently had the opportunity to speak with Lee about how scientific research might be used to improve the service system. My general question to him was: What experiences about your life do you think researchers need to understand? Below is Lee’s response, in his own words.

**Labeling and Rights**

*When you got disabilities, when you’re younger, you don’t get a lot more rights. People have more power over you and they can put these certain titles on your name to make it seem worse, or another way is to add more [labels] to you so they can get more money from the government. They can make you seem more 'high risk.'*

I lived at Bonnie Smith’s [foster home—age 10 through 15] for about five years, but I was probably only actually there for about three years. I was always having to go to the mental hospital or [juvenile detention centers], always back and forth between all those places. I was always the ‘bad kid,’ the ‘troublemaker’ at that house. Whenever anything went wrong, I always got blamed. Even if [other children in the house] did it, they would just blame me, and I’d get punished for it. They called me a ‘compulsive liar.’ They thought I just made things up. They didn’t understand why I was sick so much when I was younger. Eventually they figured out that I was lactose intolerant. But before that when Bonnie Smith would give me a pill that makes you ‘go stupid’ instead of just trying to figure out why I was mad, they gave me a pill that makes you ‘go stupid’ instead of just trying to figure out why I was mad in the first place.

For Lee, being labeled meant loss of personal power. His disability and behavioral labels resulted in loss of credibility with his foster parents, and scapegoating by the other children who lived in the home. Lee’s complaints of illness were discounted as a result of his loss of credibility, and a medical condition was left untreated because of this. Lee has told me that other children in the home victimized him on different occasions, but that when he reported their behavior, he was not believed. Lee is aware that labels can bring practical advantages, such as securing funding for services, but for him these labels also had significant social costs.

**Physical and Chemical Restraint**

*Bud Smith was the one who would put you to the floor if you got mad. One time Bud Smith was out of cigarettes, and he and Bonnie Smith got into an argument, and then I started to get mad, and he picked me up and threw me. One time I got mad and Bud Smith tried to restrain me and I got loose and I broke the door. They had these folding doors, and I just ran right through them and broke them down. That didn’t turn out too well, though, because then he came after me, and he held me down even harder.*

I’ve been on so many kinds of pills. They had one med that they could give me through a needle or a pill when I was getting upset. In the hospital they would use the needle, but at Bonnie Smith’s they would give me the pill. I heard Bud Smith and Bonnie Smith talking in the next room one time, and they said they were scared to use the needle with me, because they thought I might turn it around and get it into them. So they used the pill instead. Bud Smith was the one who would hold me down and pry my mouth open, and then Bonnie Smith would put the pill in my mouth and pour water in to make me swallow. This certain kind of pill is made to dissolve right away once it hit water, so it would get into me whether I wanted it or not. It took about 15 minutes to take effect, and that’s how long Bud Smith would hold me down. Once the pill was working, I wouldn’t be able to do anything. I’d drool, too. Pretty much the only thing I could control was going to the bathroom. I couldn’t talk, I couldn’t move too much, but I still knew everything that was going on. I was still mad inside, but I just couldn’t get it out. Actually, then I would get more mad that they gave me a pill that makes you ‘go stupid’ instead of just trying to figure out why I was mad in the first place.

Personally, myself, I grew up on medication and I didn’t like it. When I turned 18, I said, ‘No more. I’m off.’ And everyone that knows me now from when I was younger; from 18 and under, that’s seen me now, they don’t know who I am sometimes. I’m a whole different person. I have a whole different reaction.

Medication is what is used to try to control people. If I was on medication and I was going off, I could almost bust my arm open and break my arm and my
Lee’s interpretations of being medicated should prompt us to consider other ways of evaluating the effects of medication. Specifically, what is the social meaning of medication for the person?

Inconsistent Interpersonal Context

One thing about growing up in my life was always having someone new in my life. In group homes, it’s always somebody new. Staff, they’ll act like they give a damn who you are, but when their shift’s over a new person comes in. Sometimes, there were probably one or two staff who were like, with you, and they’d help you out. I believe that people need to have a background in their life, like maybe a family member who’s disabled or something, before they can even think of going into the field. I believe that people should have a little more credentials to work in a group home, because if people come in just for a job, their chances of connecting with the clients where they’re at is this big. [He holds up two fingers at short distance apart.] A lot of times in group homes, it don’t matter what you feel, it really don’t. They’re just trying to mediate what’s going on. They don’t give a damn who you are. And then there’s also the, ‘pat-you-on-the-back’ kind of, ‘everything’s gonna be OK, that’s gonna be fine.’ [The staff] don’t go through it all, they’re on the payroll.

Allen was the first counselor who actually listened to what I have to say, and then I moved from Allen to . . . You and Robert are the two people in my life who actually listen and respond and know what I’m saying. When you can express what’s on your mind, anything and everything: ‘It’s Superbowl Sunday’ or it’s this over here. It’s not always a problem in life. It’s not always someone just listening because there’s a problem. It’s sometimes you get so much stuff stored in your head that you don’t know where to put the next five things someone’s telling you. And you just need someone to say, ‘How you doin? What did you do all week?’ or drain half of what’s in your head at one time. Part of the reason I talk so much is because, still to this day, I’m trying to get out half of what’s going on in my mind, even though it’s coming out all different ways.

Listening and Understanding

People who work in the field, if they haven’t been in the field, if they haven’t lived it, experienced it, they can tell me whatever they want to tell me. But until they’ve actually been there and lived through hell and come back, they don’t know what they’re talking about. That’s why a lot of times when I was growing up, with counselors, I didn’t really like very many of them because they think they know it all. They think they have all the power and that they can just prescribe some pill for you, or the doctors can just prescribe some pill for you and they think you’re going to, that that’s going to cover everything! It’s going to be the fixer of all. People think everything can be controlled by one thing.

When the staff try to solve your problems without asking you, and they sit there and write a documentation out, or they write a little letter out, and they sit there and they take it to a meeting, and you’re sitting there at the meeting, and they’re going, ‘This is what we’re gonna do for him now, and this is what we’re gonna do for him next time.’ And they don’t really consult with you. How can they really figure out what’s going on if they don’t talk to you? You can’t. You get a support plan all written out about you, and 99% of the time you just know there’s a support plan on you. Maybe once in a blue moon they’ll actually sit down and read it with you. The only reason [group home—age 16 to 18] let me see...
my support plan is because I had an attorney sitting right there with me. The state appointed me an attorney. That’s the only reason I ever got to see that. [Staff members] will go to the meetings, they’ll talk about your support plans in the meetings, but that will be the only time you ever hear it. And then they’re talking so fast amongst each other and then they send you a piece of paper, saying, ‘Sign this.’

Lee’s experience with clinical treatment should be unsurprising to community psychologists. Even as a child, he was aware of the power dynamic between the professionals and himself. He viewed counselors and psychiatrists as the powerful parties, the ones with the right therapy for his faulty thought processes or the right pill for his faulty neurochemical processes. He, on the other hand, was seen as the broken person who needed repair, the “bad kid.” His treatment exemplifies victim-blaming (Ryan, 1971). Lee recognizes that his anger and aggression had complex roots, however, and that a unidimensional approach would never be the “fixer of all.” In fact, his sense of frustration and resentment was only intensified by being held to the ground and suppressed with drugs when what he really wanted was to be heard and understood.

Implications for Research and Intervention

Understanding challenging behavior: It is heartening to know that positive behavior support has replaced behavior modification as the model of choice in the developmental disabilities service system. Training in positive behavior support teaches support staff that when the individual with disability has his/her needs met, and has opportunity for positive experiences, then the likelihood of challenging behavior decreases. Further, support staff are trained to look for reasons behind challenging behavior, and to construct prevention plans based around these reasons. This respectful and understanding approach to challenging behavior coexists strangely with an almost automatic tendency to medicate persons with intellectual disability who exhibit challenging behavior. In my 10 years of working with this population, it has often appeared to me that this reflexive behavior is reflective of the social role of the person with an intellectual disability. It is as though the disability label “clinicalizes” the individual, and transforms any form of behavioral deviance into psychiatric abnormality (Pledger, 2003; Rioux, 1997). Social policy on psychotropic medication and intellectual disabilities acknowledges the need to reduce medication use with this population. Understanding the social meanings of psychotropic medication use for both service providers and recipients may help us to design interventions that move us more effectively toward this goal.

Providing homes, not placements: As we all do, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities benefit from warm, consistent relationships and stable homes. In the course of my work, I have met countless employees who are truly dedicated to the individuals they support. Ecological inquiry involves recognition of existing resources, and these workers need to be recognized as the important resource they represent (Trickett, Kelly, & Vincent, 1985). It is noteworthy that the employees who work directly with the individuals in their homes, the ones who form the most meaningful relationships with the individuals, are also the employees who receive the least pay and who have the least amount of power in their organizations. It is worth asking whose ends are best served by this arrangement. It is also worth asking how our system might be restructured to secure in-home support to individuals that is stable, consistent and of high quality.

Participatory action research: Lee’s need to be heard is expressed throughout this narrative, as well as his lack of trust of professionals who draw conclusions about a particular population without involvement of its individuals. Lee has never heard of participatory action research (PAR), and yet this is what he calls for. PAR is a model that involves members of the target population in every stage of the research process, and it is recognized as particularly useful in understanding marginalized populations (Keys, McMahon, Sánchez, London, & Abdul-Adil, 2004). Our treatment of persons with intellectual disabilities has undoubtedly progressed since the days of institutionalization, but much progress is still needed to achieve genuine inclusion and empowerment of this segment of our citizenry. Involvement of this population in PAR projects may represent one more step toward this end, but such involvement will require that we learn to trust the validity of perspectives expressed by persons with intellectual disabilities. As Lee’s perspectives demonstrate, the presence of intellectual disability does not prevent a person from having insight into the meaning of one’s own life. ☐

References


Forging Boldly Ahead: An Update from the Council of Education Programs

~Holly Angelique, Penn State, Harrisburg

Introduction
The Council of Education Programs (CEP) met in early November 2007 for its second annual mid-fall meeting. Greg Meissen (out-going chair) hosted the two-day event in Wichita, KS. The CEP is the educational arm of SCRA whose mission is to support and advocate excellence in education in community research and action. As such, we have representation on and on-going communication with the executive committee. The three primary strategies of the CEP involve (1) Information Exchange, (2) Support, Advocacy, and Enhancement of Education Programs, and (3) Recognition and Celebration of Accomplishments of Education programs. We are very excited about the progress that this committee has made in such a short time-period and are pleased to provide an update to the membership.

With regard to general business, we updated our vision and mission statements, revised our roles and responsibilities and revisited our initial short and long-term goals. Newly elected members include: Steve Davis (North Central College, IL), Tara Gregory (student, Wichita State University), Christopher Nettles (student, George Washington University), and Raymond Scott (University of Laverne, CA). New and continuing members include: Steve Davis (North Central College, IL), Tara Gregory (student, Wichita State University), Christopher Nettles, webpage moderator; and Susan McMahon (DePaul University), Steve Davis and Tara Gregory, awards committee. These members will also serve on various time-anchored task forces as needed. Three members transitioned off the committee: Greg Meissen (Wichita State), Mark Pancer (Wilfred Laurier), and Cathy Stein (Bowling Green).

Support, Advocacy, and Enhancement of Education

As part of our information exchange strategy, we have accomplished a number of our initiatives. We completed an updated list of graduate programs that can be found on the SCRA website. You can also find teaching resources on the website. A paper version of the list of graduate programs was published in TCP (Hazel & Meissen, 2007) as well as two articles on graduate training (Hazel, 2006, 2007), and an article describing the re-emergence of this council (Mankowski & Meissen, 2007). At last summer’s biennial, members of the CEP, along with colleagues, offered a syllabus exchange, as well as a session on graduate (McMahon, et al., 2007) and undergraduate (Hazel & Gutiérrez, 2007) education.

We also have a number of plans underway. They include the development of a section of the “new” SCRA website dedicated to education that will include (a) those items that are education focused on the current website (list of training programs and teaching resources), (b) a user-friendly data set of the 2005 survey of graduate programs, (c) a list of community-friendly practica/internships, and (d) special topics in community psychology podcasts. We are also proposing to develop a community psychology contribution within iTunes’s university section, and a brochure to advertise community psychology and training opportunities.

Information Exchange

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Recognition and Celebration of Accomplishments

Perhaps our most visible contribution to the SCRA community has been in the form of two awards that we established and presented at the 2007 biennial. These included the Outstanding Educator Award and the Excellence in Education Programs Award (see article by McMahon & Gregory in this issue). We are currently introducing a 3rd award, the Community-University Partnership Award. In addition, the CEP co-sponsored (with the Interdisciplinary Committee and Practice Task Force) several pre-conference skill-building workshops at the 2007 biennial. We have accomplished all this in part because of our linkages with the SCRA Interdisciplinary Interest Group and the SCRA Practice Task Force—two very fast paced and “get the job done” oriented groups who work are striving to make SCRA a visible force in society.

In addition to the activities already noted, we plan to highlight new and innovative training programs in TCP as well as feature our more established programs. We also are in the initial planning stages of developing a special issue on education for a leading journal in community psychology.

Conclusion

The members of the CEP are dedicated to developing open lines of communication with program leaders and educators in SCRA. We want to be accessible to the membership and encourage your comments and suggestions. Feel free to contact Kelly Hazel (chair) at <kelly.hazel@metrostate.edu> or by phone at (651) 999-5827, especially if you would like to get involved and help us with any of our initiatives. We look forward to developing many avenues for information exchange. Our goal is to provide support and advocacy around educational issues. And of course, we will continue to recognize and celebrate the many wonderful accomplishments of educators and community research and action training programs. We will continue to share our accomplishments and plans and look forward to serving the membership as our field continues to develop and evolve.

References


SCRA Council of Education Programs: 2007 Award Winners and 2008 Nominations

Edited by Susan D. McMahon, DePaul University & Tara Gregory, Wichita State University

The SCRA Council of Education Programs (CEP) is pleased to showcase the first award recipients of the newly created education awards: Pat O’Connor received the Outstanding Educator Award and DePaul University received the Excellence in Education Programs Award. These awards are based on excellence in the following areas: (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; and (4) contribution to fostering a positive climate that supports undergraduate and graduate students in their setting.

2007 Outstanding Educator Award Recipient: Patricia O’Connor

The SCRA CEP is proud to recognize Patricia O’Connor, Professor of Psychology at The Sage Colleges in Troy, New York, as the first 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. Based on recommendations from students and colleagues, Dr. O’Connor clearly excels in these areas.

Dr. O’Connor began her academic career at the Sage Colleges in 1981 and was the Director of Graduate Programs in Psychology from 1990-2005. The community psychology program was quite new at that time and Dr. O’Connor showed particular dedication to building and growing the program over the years. Thanks to her efforts, the Community Psychology Master’s program at The Sage Colleges is one of the largest in the country. Dr. O’Connor is currently the chair in psychology and continues to teach undergraduate and graduate classes in community psychology. In her capacity as
professor, Dr. O'Connor has acted as a mentor to many students. As one former student commented, Dr. O'Connor consistently demonstrated an inspiring passion for community psychology as well as a devotion to her students.

Dr. O'Connor is a nationally recognized expert in program evaluation and has published extensively in this area. She is currently the Director of the Center for Community Based Evaluation at The Sage Colleges. Other research interests include interventions with women and their children, bicycle helmet interventions, and violence prevention.

In addition to her achievements and efforts in the academic setting, Dr. O'Connor has contributed to the field of community psychology through involvement in local, regional, and national organizations and committees. She has served as treasurer and secretary for SCRA, and she was the first woman to be named to the Council of Program Directors (the council that preceded CEP). Dr. O'Connor has taken a lead in several organizations that seek to advance master’s level training including the North American Association of Masters in Psychology, of which she was a founding member, and the Council of Applied Masters in Psychology Programs. She currently serves as the executive director of the Masters in Psychology Accreditation Council and is an APA Fellow.

The Council of Education Programs salutes Dr. O'Connor for her continuing efforts to support community psychology education programs and the field in general. Based on the recommendations from former students, many of whom she has continued to mentor in their professional careers, it is clear that Dr. O'Connor has positively influenced the development of many community psychologists. As part of our mission to support and advocate excellence in education in community research and action, the CEP is very pleased to bestow our first Outstanding Educator award on Dr. Patricia O'Connor.

2008 Call for Outstanding Educator Award Nominations

The SCRA Council of Education Programs requests nominations for the Outstanding Educator Award by February 28th, 2008. Please send nominations electronically to the Chair of the Council of Education Programs: Kelly Hazel at <kelly.hazel@metrostate.edu>. The Outstanding Educator Award will be given annually. The Excellence in Education Award will not be awarded again until 2009, as it is only awarded in the years in which a biennial meeting of SCRA is held.

Both self-nominations and nominations by students or colleagues will be accepted. Those submitting nominations should send: (1) A nomination letter, no more than 3 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 in the first paragraph; (2) One letter of reference, two letters if the nomination is a self-nomination; (3) Course evaluations or other types of evaluations from students/recent graduates; and (4) A curriculum vitae of the nominee. The CEP encourages you to apply!

2007 Excellence in Education Programs Award Recipient: DePaul University

The SCRA CEP is proud to recognize DePaul University as the first recipient of the Excellence in Education Programs Award. The purpose of the Excellence in Education Programs Award is to recognize 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.

DePaul University has two doctoral programs that focus on community psychology. The APA-approved Clinical Program was established in 1967 and the DePaul University Community Mental Health Center was established in the 1970s. The two tracks, Clinical-Community and Clinical-Child, were established in the early 1980s. The interdisciplinary Community Program was developed in 2000 and started accepting doctoral students in 2001. This program was built on the existing strengths of the faculty and curriculum.

Innovative Strengths of DePaul’s Community Programs:

- Faculty, students, and curriculum emphasize diversity, and many opportunities are created to address such issues in a supportive environment.
- There is a major focus on mentoring students, in terms of research, teaching, and applied work in the community. The positive results of this mentoring are evident through national mentoring awards received by faculty and the success of students in publishing, obtaining strong, community-based internships and first-rate positions upon graduation.
- DePaul’s Psychology Department houses one of the leading journals in community psychology, the Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community (Haworth Press, NY).
- Community psychology philosophy and values fit very well with the urban, Catholic, Vincentian mission of providing services to, promoting the empowerment of and preventing problems among disenfranchised people and communities.
- Many collaborative relationships with departments and centers within DePaul have been created, and students benefit from their experiences with the Center for Community Research, Community Mental Health Center, Cultural Center, Center for Community and Organizational Development, Steans Center for Community-Based Service Learning, the McNair Scholar’s Program, Center for Urban Education, and Chaddick Institute for Metropolitan Government.
- The community programs have developed relationships with more than 50 community-based organizations outside of the university in recent years and students and faculty work to address social issues and provide services to underserved populations and non-profit organizations.
- DePaul’s undergraduate curriculum has a new concentration in community psychology, in order to promote education and growth in the field of community psychology research and action.
Faculty and Students:
The Community Psychology Program includes a diverse group of 11 scientists that bridge different areas within the department, including clinical, industrial-organizational, and social psychology, as well as the Director of DePaul’s Cultural Center. The Clinical-Community Psychology Program includes 8 faculty, 7 of whom are faculty in the freestanding Community Program. Community affiliated faculty at DePaul include Joseph Ferrari, Gary Harper, Brigida Hernández, Gayle Iwamasa, Leonard Jason, Christopher Keys (Department Chair), Susan McMahon (Program Director), W. LaVome Robinson, Bernadette Sánchez, Douglas Cellar, PJ Henry, Midge Wilson, and Harvette Grey. Faculty and students from both programs are diverse on a wide variety of dimensions, including race, gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ability, and religion. DePaul currently has 49 doctoral students (34 Clinical-Community; 15 Community), and about 40% are ethnic/racial minorities. Faculty and students have a history of representation in leadership roles and awards both within SCRA as well as in related organizations.

Faculty research interests focus on social and diversity issues, urban disadvantaged populations, interventions, community-building, second-order change, and empowerment. A diverse array of topics are represented, including HIV and AIDS among youth, ethnic identity issues across the lifespan, disability issues in the workplace, chronic fatigue syndrome, preventing minor’s from accessing tobacco, alternative community settings for people in recovery, institutional mission and values, violence prevention, depression prevention, school transitions, mentoring, educational experiences of African American, Latino, and disabled youth, coping with health issues, human rights, and women’s issues.

Community and Clinical-Community Programs:
The Community and Clinical-Community programs share the core psychology and community psychology curriculum, and the primary differences are in the remaining curricular options and requirements. Outside of the core community curriculum, community students take interdisciplinary courses (e.g., public services, law, community development, commerce, sociology, women/gender studies); whereas, clinical-community students take clinical courses to fulfill their remaining requirements. Students complete empirical master’s theses and doctoral dissertations, as well as a comprehensive exam or project—grant, literature review, or empirical paper [see Appendices A and B].

Using a research-in-action training model, both programs focus on providing students with theory, knowledge, skills, and experience to work effectively with underserved communities promoting positive change, examining the interaction between individuals and settings, and understanding how contextual issues affect individuals and communities. Specifically, students are trained to: (1) develop, implement, and evaluate preventive interventions; (2) examine the bases of oppression and develop empowerment strategies for people marginalized from the mainstream by racism, sexism, ableism, heterosexism, elitism and other forms of prejudice and discrimination; (3) conduct action research that will help us to better understand and address social problems; (4) evaluate community-based programs to help them gather information that will lead to better service provision to disadvantaged populations; (5) consult with non-profit social service organizations to build organizational capacity; and (6) teach/conduct community research in college and university settings.

A Fieldwork Sequence is a distinctive strength of the community program curriculum, illustrating DePaul’s commitment to enhancing doctoral students’ capacity to address social and community concerns in a sophisticated, state-of-the-science manner. Students design a 1-2 year fieldwork practicum to meet the needs of a particular community-based organization. This supervised fieldwork experience is complemented by courses in program evaluation and consultation, which provide students with relevant theory and knowledge. Thus, this course sequence enables students to craft an experience that is of interest to them, in order to apply knowledge and theory and hone important collaborative consultation and evaluation skills. Organizations receive a product (e.g., training manual, evaluation report, workshops, needs assessment). Given the diversity of metropolitan Chicago and its history as a laboratory for constructive community study and intervention, students have numerous options to work with any particular population and setting of interest.

Students also may complete an interdisciplinary Certificate in Community Development, associated with psychology, sociology, and public service graduate programs. In addition to a set of interdisciplinary classes focused on urban issues (e.g., housing, policies, immigration), each student completes and presents a field-based project at the end of the program.

Undergraduate Concentration in Community Psychology—The Newest Development:
DePaul recently developed an undergraduate concentration in community psychology, in which students take a sequence of courses in community psychology that emphasize core content, diversity, methods, and an applied internship focused on research or practice [see Appendix C]. The psychology department has over 1,100 undergraduate majors, and if a portion of these students become invested in community psychology, this innovation can contribute to more students seeking graduate degrees and taking principles of community psychology into the community.

Conclusion
In sum, the CEP is honored to bestow the Excellence in Education Programs Award to DePaul University. DePaul University’s graduate Community and Clinical-Community Programs, interdisciplinary graduate Certificate in Community Development, and Undergraduate Community Psychology Concentration all have innovative strengths that contribute to the education, mentoring, and professional development of students in community research and action. Nominations for the 2009 Excellence in Education Programs Award will be solicited in the fall of 2008.
## Appendix A
### DePaul University Community MA/PhD Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
<th>WINTER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST YEAR</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>410, Statistics</td>
<td>411, Statistics II</td>
<td>420, Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>654, Community Psychology</td>
<td>492, Principles of Consultation</td>
<td>493, Principles of Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>500, Professional Ethics (2 cr)</td>
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<td>569, Program Evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>590, Thesis Seminar (optional)</td>
<td>590, Thesis Seminar (optional)</td>
<td>590, Thesis Seminar (optional)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>Workshop 2</td>
<td>Workshop 3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECOND YEAR</strong></td>
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<td>585, Field Work in the Community I</td>
<td>520, Principles of Diversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>(begin Field Work)</td>
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<td>(continue Field Work)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshop 1</td>
<td>Workshop 2</td>
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<td>Workshop 4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECOND OR THIRD YEAR</strong></td>
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<td>Sociology or MPS course (1)</td>
<td>Sociology or MPS course (1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>455, Training &amp; Development</td>
<td>418, Multivariate Statistics (2 of 4)</td>
<td>495, Grant Writing (1 of 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>416, Qualitative Methods (2 of 4)</td>
<td>568, Prevention/Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>419, Factor Analysis (2 of 4)</td>
<td>430, Advanced Social Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>561, Psychology of Women</td>
<td>567, Seminar in Empowerment (1 of 4)</td>
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<td>511, Health Psychology (1 of 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>THIRD YEAR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>585, Field Work in the Community II</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(begin Field Work)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(continue Field Work)</td>
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<td>550, Teaching Seminar</td>
<td>550, Teaching Seminar</td>
<td>550, Teaching Seminar</td>
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<td>COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OR PROJECT (literature review, grant, or empirical paper)</td>
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<td>OTHER REQUIRED COURSES</td>
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<tr>
<td>History &amp; Systems (course or exam)</td>
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## Appendix C
### DePaul University Undergraduate Concentration in Community Psychology

**PROGRAM GOALS**
- Provide training in community psychology
- Emphasize collaboration and change strategies to promote well-being
- Understand people within their social, cultural, economic, geographic, and historical contexts
- Promote health and empowerment and preventing problems in communities, groups, and individuals
- Provide students with knowledge and practical skills to work effectively in the community
- Facilitate the development of students as community advocates of social justice and empowerment
- Actively illustrate the relevance of academic work in applied settings
- Provide opportunities to apply concepts and ideas learned in community settings
- Enhance students’ employability by providing them with community-based skills and experiences

**Community Concentration Requirements**

**Common Core courses:**
- Psy 105 – Introductory Psychology I
- Psy 106 – Introductory Psychology II
- Psy 240 – Introductory Statistics I
- Psy 241 – Methods of Psychological Inquiry
- Psy 242 – Experimental Psychology
- Psy 361 – History & Systems in Psychology

**Community Concentration Courses:**
- Psy 354 – Community Psychology
- Psy 356 – Principles of Field Research & Action
- Psy 359 – Field Work in Community Research and Action (2 quarters)

1 course from each of the following selections is required:
- Psy 325 – Psychology of Women
- Psy 326 – Psychology of Men
- Psy 345 – Cultural Issues in Psychology
- Psy 346 – Psychology of the African American Child
- Psy 347 – Social Psychology
- Psy 380 – Industrial and Organizational Psychology
- Psy 333 – Child Psychology
- Psy 334 – Adolescent Psychology
- Psy 351 – Theories of Personality
- Psy 353 – Abnormal Psychology
## Appendix B

### DePaul University Clinical MA/PhD Course Schedule: Community Track

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL</th>
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<td><strong>FIRST YEAR</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<td>410 Statistics</td>
<td>4061 Physiological Processes</td>
<td>4201 Advanced Research Methodology</td>
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<tr>
<td>4391 Advanced Developmental</td>
<td>4111 Advanced Statistics</td>
<td>430 Advanced Social Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>4841 Behavioral Assessment</td>
<td>4811 Individual Intelligence Testing</td>
<td>4821 Personality Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>4861 Advanced Psychopathology</td>
<td>4871 Psychopathology of the Child</td>
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<td>590 Master’s Thesis Seminar (0 hours)</td>
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<td>404 Learning and Cognitive Processes</td>
<td>418 Multivariate Analysis&lt;sup&gt;32&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5201 Principles of Human Diversity</td>
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<td>4831 Advanced Psychodiagnosis</td>
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<td>4881 Principles of Psychotherapy</td>
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<td>577 Practicum (0 hours)</td>
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<td><strong>Electives:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>473 Judgment &amp; Decision-Making</td>
<td>368 Child Abuse and Neglect</td>
<td>489 Group Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>416 Methods in Qualitative Research&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>422 Computing for the Behavioral Scientist</td>
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<td>511 Health Psychology&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>561 Psychology of Women&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>492 Principles of Consultation</td>
<td>585 Fieldwork</td>
<td>495 Grant Writing&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>585 Fieldwork</td>
<td>583 Practicum (0 hours)</td>
<td>568 Prevention and Intervention Methods&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>595 Colloquium (0 hours)</td>
<td>595 Colloquium (0 hours)</td>
<td>569 Seminar in Program Evaluation</td>
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<td><strong>ALL STUDENTS</strong></td>
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<td>595 Colloquium (0 hours)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>489 Group Therapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>473 Judgment and Decision Making</td>
<td>416 Methods in Qualitative Research</td>
<td>550 Seminar in Teaching Psychology (0 hours)</td>
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<td>422 Computing for the Behavioral Scientist</td>
<td>558 Advanced Seminar in Statistics&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td><strong>Required:</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>599 Dissertation Research</td>
<td>599 Dissertation Research</td>
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20 Winter 2008 The Community Psychologist
“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The column’s purpose is to offer insights into community psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners. For this installment, we feature two interviews. The first is with a newly-minted community psychologist, at the very start of her professional career as a community psychology practitioner. Dr. Lindsey Stillman was first interviewed in June 2007, at the SCRA Biennial Conference and again, four months later for an update on her life, post-PhD degree.

Featuring: Lindsey Stillman
Professor, Department of Psychology
Planning Coordinator
State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless
Atlanta, Georgia
Email: Lindseystillman@hotmail.com

Lindsey Stillman hails from a very tolerant and open-minded community in Vermont. Neither of her parents was socially or politically active, but they were politically liberal, being supporters of equality and justice. From extensive travel in Europe when they were younger, they had an appreciation for and understanding of other cultures. Lindsey’s father was an accountant, during the last decade, he has been dealing with chronic depression and severe anxiety, making it difficult for him to work in his frequently stressful profession. Lindsey’s mother, who holds a degree in psychology, became the stable force in the family.

At a very early age, Lindsey became interested in Africa, but more specifically in chimpanzee behavior. Her father encouraged her to read about Jane Goodall who became her earliest career role model. Lindsey’s high school teachers encouraged her interest in science, especially a (male) biology teacher in whose summer science program for girls she was an avid participant.

Lindsey was heavily involved in activities at her high school but also in her community, volunteering on different projects. She admits to not focusing on academics, distracted by her active social life. Her father assisted her in applying to colleges and accompanied her on campus visits. Notwithstanding her average academic record, she was accepted on early admission to Emory University in Atlanta (Georgia). Emory’s appeal was its well-regarded primatology program; Emory houses the renowned Yerkes Primate Center where she worked one summer. Her scholarly interest was the social organization of primates, and she assisted Franz DeWaal, an Emory professor, on his research on peacemaking among primates. She was a double major in Anthropology and Psychology.

The fall semester of her senior year in college was spent in Tanzania, in a study abroad program organized by the School for International Training (SIT). Although SIT offers study programs all over the world, Africa was her obvious choice because Lindsey had always wanted to live there. She then chose a SIT program in Tanzania. Her SIT group began by taking classes in the Swahili language. One month was spent in a home stay. Lindsey was assigned to be hosted by an orphaned girl, two years younger than Lindsey, who was caring for her two younger siblings. Lindsey’s room and board was a significant source of income for the family. Another month was spent on safari, camping out in Tanzania’s national parks. The final month, she was expected to pursue an independent study by herself. Her study compared vocal calls of monkeys living in an urban setting with calls of those living in the rain forest. Through this method, she intended to determine the impact of human contact on monkeys. She found the calls were much louder among the urbanized monkeys, especially when people (a “threat” to the monkeys) were nearby.

Ironically, the social anxiety that she studied in monkeys was mirrored in the return of her own social anxiety, beginning with culture shock that set in two weeks after her arrival in Tanzania. She had an earlier history of significant anxiety, heightened by her genetic predisposition. In her senior year of high school, she was prescribed anti-anxiety medications for about a year and was then free of the otherwise debilitating problem through 3 years of college. She speculates that the anti-malarial drug she was administered for her stay in Tanzania—the ever controversial Lariam—may have played a contributing role in the return of her anxiety. Lindsey stuck it out in Tanzania and returned to finish at Emory in the spring.

Despite her bout with anxiety in Tanzania, Lindsey valued the overseas experience greatly, believing she had gained a new perspective on life. In particular, she marveled at the attitude of very poor people she met. They seemed much happier than people she knew in the US with wealth that was unimaginable to the average Tanzanian. On the other hand, her Tanzania experience generally belied her long held, idealized image of the African continent, gleaned from popular books and movies she had seen.

Lindsey returned to the US for her final semester at Emory and, upon graduation, moved to Philadelphia, accompanying her then-boyfriend who was attending medical school there. Wanting to work a few years before going to graduate school, Lindsey was employed by a research consulting firm, DeltaMetrics, primarily working on several statewide...
outcome experience in evaluation research. DeltaMetrics’ employees included PhDs whose careers were applied, rather than academic, so Lindsey had the opportunity to see models for the broader use of a doctoral degree.

She soon realized that graduate school does not provide students with the practical skills and tools needed to be a community practitioner.

During this time, while doing a web search for possible career directions, Lindsey discovered and was attracted to the field of community psychology. She applied to graduate schools along the East Coast. Her choices came down to the University of South Carolina’s (USC) doctoral program in clinical/community psychology and another university with a (straight) community psychology program. She accepted the prior offer, reasoning that the acquisition of clinical skills would always provide a fallback source of income for her. Lindsey found USC’s faculty to be very supportive of her ideas and of her, personally. During her first two years of graduate school, she worked with Dr. Abe Wandersman in the State’s First Steps for School Readiness program. “Abe was a good fit for me, especially in accepting my blunt and sometimes opinionated style. He is respectful of students who voice opinions that differ from his own.” By her third year, Dr. Bret Kloos had arrived at USC and shared her interest in homelessness and poverty, so she apprenticed with him.

Lindsey enjoyed graduate school and appreciated the opportunities and experiences extended to her. She praises her cohort of students as being bright and supportive, always willing to voice their opinions. She was frustrated, however, as she advanced in the program, with the diminishing amount of program involvement in community issues outside of research. She soon realized that graduate school does not provide students with the practical skills and tools needed to be a community practitioner. Therefore, she developed her own community internship, following the pathway created by prior students at USC.

Lindsey’s proactive development of her own community psychology internship was prompted by the inability of APIC to match her with a suitable community internship. She later learned that 669 psychology intern aspirants were not matched that year. “They need to rethink the process,” she suggests. With her department’s approval, Lindsey struck off on her own to develop an internship, with homelessness as her focus. She was already involved in the issue of homelessness in SC. Earlier, she volunteered to work with a local United Way homelessness program in Columbia, SC; later, her scope widened, and she worked on the implementation of a 10-year community plan to address homelessness. Lindsey’s internship advisor, a faculty member in the USC School of Medicine who was also a community consultant, successfully encouraged USC to fund her internship, so that her work would be free to the community—“I was an asset to them!” she proudly asserts.

As part of her internship, she began working with a smoothly collaborating coalition of local service providers. However, this effort met strong resistance from the community, involving the NIMBY (not in my back yard) phenomenon and competing commercial interests. At a marathon (six-hour long) public hearing, neighbors complained “how dare they put those people in our neighborhood!!” The political situation deteriorated to the extent that the coalition’s effort to house homeless persons “blew up.” “All my idealism went out the window,” Lindsey remembers, but she concedes that she learned much in the process.

At that point, early in her internship term, she was without an internship focus. She redirected her internship to a less risky, but equally frustrating track—developing methodologies for counting homeless persons and providing technical assistance to other groups planning to conduct counts of homeless persons within a community. She found this work exciting, in that she had to confront complicated issues such as protecting civil rights and appropriately framing results so that they were not misused by the media. She strongly encourages community-oriented students to create their own internships, saying “I learned a lot that I would not have in a structured internship.” She was able to work with community practitioners, from different educational backgrounds, who were extremely dedicated and knowledgeable. Lindsey was heartened by how willing everyone was to support and mentor her. “It was wonderful to work with people who were just as passionate about the issue of homeless as I am and from whom I could learn so much.” The internship year provided Lindsey with relationships and experiences that allowed her to fully understand what it meant to be an applied community psychologist.

Lindsey’s PhD dissertation was conducted under Dr. Kloos’s supervision and concerned supported housing of homeless persons who have severe mental illness. “I invited everyone that had mentored me during my internship year to my dissertation defense. It was a testament to how far I had come. For example, in high school, I would have been so anxious at even the thought of making a presentation that I would have become physically ill. It reminded me that I am now able to do so many things that I never would have imagined I could have done in earlier years.”

When first interviewed for this profile in early June 2007, Lindsey was actively seeking a community practice position. Because “there seem to be very few jobs for a practice-minded PhD with no job experience,” she sought mentoring and job leads from a number of practitioners. “Since faculty typically go directly from graduate school to an academic job, they couldn’t be very helpful to me.” Lindsey had conducted, as part of her community internship, an interview study of community psychology practitioners to learn about the relevance of their graduate training to
their current work—she presented a paper on this study at the Pasadena biennial conference. She participated in another biennial presentation pertaining to methodologies for counting homeless persons. A co-presenter on the latter panel and an official Biennial Mentor, Beth Shinn, was cited by Lindsey as having been helpful in identifying examples of employment for homelessness-related, applied persons with PhDs. Lindsey took full advantage of the SCRA biennial conference’s mentoring opportunities to network for her job search among community psychologists. While in California, she interview-ed for a job that she had arranged as a result of another of her outreach efforts—to alumni from the University of South Carolina. “The USC alumni were extremely helpful in my job search.”

Despite all her proactive outreach for employment at the Pasadena biennial conference, she first learned of the job that she now holds at the Los Angeles airport. Browsing the net on her laptop computer in LAX’s departure lounge, the fateful screen popped up announcing that Georgia’s Department of Community Affairs was seeking a coordinator of the State’s programs for homeless persons. She applied on the spot.

Back in South Carolina, she completed her internship and worked on a statewide homeless count. She also had a brief consulting job in Atlanta related to outreach to homeless persons. Over the Summer of 2007, Lindsey applied for 8-10 jobs, several of which were with the State of Georgia that had several vacancies. She was open to any job related to poverty issues, but was especially attracted to working on the social issue of homelessness. She reports some disappointing experiences in interviewing. For example, her application for one job was questioned because the hiring official considered her overqualified for a practice job. Another example was when a statistician interviewed her for a job with a state public health agency and revealed a lack of understanding of the field of community psychology, asking what psychology has to do with public health.

The interview for her current job took place in July. While waiting to hear about the position, she decided to move to Atlanta and hope for the best. Fortunately, she learned of her selection for the job only one week before moving to Atlanta on August 1st. SCRA Fellow, Debi Starnes, was particularly helpful in educating Lindsey about the political scene in Atlanta. Debi, when she served as an Atlanta City Council member, specialized in planning programs and overseeing their implementation for Atlanta’s homeless population. She is now policy advisor to the Mayor for homelessness. [See the Summer 2003, vol. 36, 3, issue of The Community Psychologist where Debi herself was featured in this column.]

One challenge that confronted Lindsey in her job search was deciding what salary to ask for, in preparation for salary negotiations. She took a guess when completing her online application at the Los Angeles airport for the Georgia State homelessness job. Fortunately, the salary she entered on the application was met, and she later learned that her guesstimate was a competitive figure, the most she could have received at her level. This was fortuitous as she doesn’t expect a salary increase anytime soon because, nowadays, substantial salary raises are rare for the state’s employees.

Lindsey started her job on September 4th, 2007 as the Planning Coordinator for the state’s Homeless Trust Fund. She is pleased that her employer, being a smaller state agency, does not fit common stereotypes of state bureaucracies as being inflexible and sluggish. Nonetheless, she has had to get used to a nonacademic work pace and in keeping to a standard work schedule—both distinct from her student days. She plans to eventually avail herself of the agency’s options for flexible work scheduling.

Re-interviewed one month after starting her job, Lindsey expressed feeling a bit overwhelmed by the scope of her job responsibilities and by facing so many life changes in a short period of time; she participated in two out of town conferences in her first three weeks on the job. It has been difficult to leave her friends in South Carolina, but she is settling into her new life in Atlanta. Fortunately, several friends—fellow USC graduates—live nearby.

In our earlier, June 2007 interview, Lindsey admitted to appearing “overly passionate, sometimes to the point of seeming juvenile.” Four months later, she recognized that her enthusiasm sometimes comes across in the government culture as abrasive. “I marched in with big plans,” she admitted, “which could be misinterpreted by co-workers as being critical of their accomplishments.” She recognizes that she needs to focus on long term change, and “my mother reminds me I’ve only been on the job for a short time.” The timing of her arrival, however, was fortuitous. The agency is gearing up to implement a new statewide homeless count methodology, which she will assist. They are also looking to incorporate more evaluation into their programs and to use research as a guide to planning.

Eventually, Lindsey would like to be an independent consultant. However, she currently enjoys the security of having a full time job with benefits. When asked what contribution she hopes to have made to community psychology by the end of her career, Lindsey responded with “capacity building in nonprofits.” Another one of her goals is to increase collaboration and research efforts in the Southeastern states in order to bring attention to the unique challenges that confront policymakers and providers in the region. She also hopes that, by using evaluation and research to influence the policy of homeless housing and service programs in Georgia, she will have helped to raise awareness of the issue and assisted in moving toward a permanent solution.
Judy Primavera attributes her commitment to social justice and her attraction to community psychology to her early “buy in” to the idealism of the 1960s, as represented by Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy. In fact, Robert Kennedy’s oft quoted line, “There are those who look at things the way they are and ask why . . . I dream of things that never were and ask why not,” has become the cornerstone of her own teaching as she challenges her students to question the status quo.

Raised in Stratford, Connecticut, a working class town, her family was solidly working class. All of her grandparents had emigrated from Italy to the US as teens, and each was a pioneer; they knew no one in the US when they arrived but, after establishing themselves with a steady job, they brought other relatives to the US. Although they celebrated the richness of the Italian tradition, her grandparents were determined that the family would be “American.” As a result, Judy was not allowed to learn or to speak Italian. “My grandparents had all experienced prejudice, and they were determined that, by my generation, people would no longer be able to identify us as immigrants. We were not to have a trace of an Italian accent.”

Her father, Bruno, started working in a factory but then established a small neighborhood grocery store. Judy’s mother, Theresa, went to work in the factories for the war effort in the 1940s and never returned to being a full time housewife. Family life centered on the family business. “Owning a grocery store, we ate well, but life was never extravagant. My father worked seven days a week; we rarely got a new car and only went on one family vacation my entire pre-college life. But I never felt like I was missing out on anything. I didn’t know we were ‘working class.’” My friends and family were all just like me. It wasn’t until I went to college that I became aware that another type of life existed—a much more privileged life.

Judy attended parochial school and then public high school. She was an excellent, if overly inquisitive, student. She got in trouble frequently during her Catholic school days for her questions. For example, in second grade, when taught the parable about the loaves and the fishes, she pressed her teacher (a nun) as to how God could feed so many with so little. When sent to the principal’s office for being a “non-believer,” Judy adamantly argued that the story was not possible. In school, she was a recognized leader among her peers although often told by the tradition-bound nuns that she was leading her friends in the wrong direction.

In high school, Judy was involved in student government and school service organizations as well as working as a waitress, accumulating savings for college costs. The family dream was for Judy to attend college, although they had no idea how to make it happen. Judy’s older brother and her teachers encouraged her to apply to Ivy League colleges. For Judy’s parents, college was the ultimate prize, the endpoint. But Judy had her sights set on becoming a physician. “I am the first in my family to get an advanced degree. My mother left school in eighth grade to care for her siblings. My father graduated high school. From their point of view, we already were living the American dream. I wanted more.”

Graduating second in her high school class in 1969, Judy was accepted into the college of her dreams, Mount Holyoke College. It was the perfect choice for Judy. In high school, boys held all of the leadership positions. Frustrated, she wanted to exercise leadership while in college which she was more likely to be able to do in a women’s college. Judy was elected president of the freshman class; in her sophomore year, she took charge of social events on campus; and her junior and senior years were devoted to other leadership roles. “Mount Holyoke was an intense educational experience. It was a watershed time in history to be in college—the Vietnam War protests, Earth Day, civil rights, women’s rights, gay rights—and Mount Holyoke was full of bright, passionate women who were not afraid to express their opinions or to take action.” Judy was ready for that type of experience. What she was not prepared for, however, was the stark realization of class disparity. She was dumbstruck by the opulence of opportunities and resources of a large proportion of her classmates. “They arrived at the campus in their limousines and boarded their horses in the campus stables. They talked about places and experiences I had only read about in books. I was starting my education from scratch. I had nothing to compare to their trips to the Louvre to view DaVinci’s Last Supper or the operas they had heard in Verona. It was exciting, but it was also incredibly intimidating.”

Judy financed her college expenses through a partial scholarship, loans, waitressing during college breaks, and a work study job as a waitress in her dorm. The students were served dinner family style in their own dormitories. “It was me and the women of color serving. Some of my so-called peers did not treat us considerately. They were rich and demanding; some of them were blatant bigots.” However, Judy was fortunate to have friends who arrived early for dinner to occupy the seats in Judy’s section to save her from that treatment.

Having begun college as a pre-med student, she credits the Vietnam War protests with her decision to study psychology instead. During the spring semester of 1970, Judy joined the student strike against the war, but her two pre-med professors, unlike most of the other professors on campus, would not offer students the option of receiving credit for their courses on a pass-fail basis. This meant that Judy would have to take
Cauce, who was about to begin a large-scale study in the psychological theory and research in socially relevant, meaningful justice and prevention and with its mission to actually use psychological program for admission and was accepted on a trial basis. With the rest of her life. She petitioned the clinical-community involvement in a field in which Judy could see herself spending her conscience in supporting the anti-war actions. “I did not want to be a part of a group that did not see the importance of what was going on, who believed that reviewing information in a textbook was more important than making a statement about the human condition.” In stark contrast, the Psychology Department was offering teach-ins about the history of the war, the nature of propaganda, and the use of social science for social change. Judy dropped her pre-med major and joined the psychology department. Having originally intended to be a pediatrician, she turned her focus to developmental psychology, attracted by its emphasis on health promotion rather than disease. An experimental psychology professor, Dave Kostanskik, became a natural mentor to her. “He was accessible, generous with his knowledge and validated me in my commitment to being a scientist, first and foremost!”

While at Mount Holyoke, Judy dated another Stratford native, Fred Hulley, and they were married after her graduation in 1973. (Fred has an MBA in Marketing, currently employed by AT&T.) Judy delayed graduate school for a year and worked as a research assistant at the Gesell Institute of Human Development in New Haven. Judy applied to graduate programs in both child development and experimental psychology. “I was still a working class kid blinded by the Ivies. When I was accepted to Yale’s experimental psychology program to work with two of the best researchers in the field—Allan Wagner and Bob Rescorla—how could I not choose Yale?” At the point that Judy was preparing to begin work on her thesis, she realized that she had made the wrong choice. Research with rats and rabbits yielding complex models of animal learning processes would never fulfill her desire to be relevant nor address the social issues she cared about.

The R&T Committee adopted a narrow definition of ‘scholarship,' not appreciating the scholarly underpinnings of her work or how the ‘action’ part of SCRA required just as much scholarship as the ‘research’ part.

Her Yale classmates, Larry Aber and LaRue Allen, were involved in a field in which Judy could see herself spending the rest of her life. She petitioned the clinical-community program for admission and was accepted on a trial basis. With community psychology’s focus on issues relevant to social justice and prevention and with its mission to actually use psychological theory and research in socially relevant, meaningful ways, Judy had found an intellectual and professional home at last.

Judy joined the work being done by a professor, Bob Felner, and also by a first year graduate student, Ana Mari Cauce, who was about to begin a large-scale study in the New Haven schools. The work was intended to tease apart factors related to school success and failure and would implement a major prevention effort. The results of this work are found in both A Quarter Century of Community Psychology (Revenson, D’Augelli, French & Hughes, 2002) and 14 Ounces of Prevention (Price, Cowen, Lorion & Ramos-McCay, 1988). Judy also met the eminent Yale faculty member Seymour Sarason. “He was an icon . . . he had this way of making you look at things from a perspective that made so much sense that you wondered how you had missed something so logical, so important and yet so simple. At first I was petrified to speak with him, but now he’s like my grandfather.”

Judy did her clinical internship at the Yale Child Study Center and, in 1981, she left Yale with her dissertation data in hand, started a full time job as a therapist at the Child Guidance Center of Greater Bridgeport (Connecticut), and delivered her first child, Jamie. Judy worked at Bridgeport Child Guidance for over seven years where, in addition to her clinical duties, she supervised a secondary prevention program related to child abuse and neglect. Two major events coincided—the birth of her daughter Kari and an invitation to return to Yale for a two-year teaching appointment. But the Yale job had one condition: she must buckle down and complete her degree. That was all the incentive she needed. In 1988, Judy surpassed the dreams of her parents and grandparents: she had become Doctor Judy Primavera.

In addition to the classes she taught as a Yale lecturer, Judy participated in Roger Weissberg’s social development research in the New Haven schools. “This was an exciting opportunity to change the curriculum so that it provided students with the tools they needed to be successful.” By this time, Judy was certain that “prevention is the way to go,” so aligned herself more with community than clinical psychology. At the end of the two-year lectureship, family matters once again confined her to a job search close to home, although she sometimes yearned for a career at a major research university elsewhere. “I have stayed in one geographic area pretty much my entire life. But there are times when I can’t help but wonder: what if?”

In 1990, Judy accepted a tenure-track faculty position at Fairfield University to teach in the undergraduate psychology program. She became, according to her biography on Fairfield’s website <http://www.fairfield.edu/x16974.html>, the “university’s first faculty practitioner of service-learning: coursework that involves students in the community so they reinforce by experience the lessons they learn as theory in the classroom.” Judy found the Jesuit mission of the school to be a “good fit,” with a high level of support from the administration for her work in the local Bridgeport community.

While Judy’s professional interests have always focused on children’s school adjustment and success, once at Fairfield University, she focused on children’s earliest academic challenge—preparing for kindergarten entry. Judy established a university-community partnership with Action for Bridgeport Community Development, Inc., the city’s largest Head Start and childcare provider. Together with Head Start staff and Fairfield University undergraduates, Judy planned The Family
Literacy Project using Sarason’s “resource exchange” model. Today the Literacy Project enjoys a fourteen-year history of success, involving approximately 175 undergraduate volunteers, 120 Head Start teachers and 750 preschoolers. The students provide approximately 6,000 hours of volunteer work, and The Family Literacy Project enjoys endowment support (from the F. M. Kirby Foundation). Her work in the community has garnered awards and accolades from a number of local, state and national sources.

As happens to many community psychology academics, however, Judy ran into difficulty with the university’s Rank and Tenure Committee when she applied for promotion to Full Professor in 2000. (She was already tenured.) The R&T Committee adopted a narrow definition of “scholarship,” not appreciating the scholarly underpinnings of her work or how the “action” part of SCRA required just as much scholarship as the “research” part.

I was caught at an unfortunate point in our university’s history when issues with the administration and the Board of Trustees as well as the unique constellation of people elected to the committee collided. The committee applied a rigid, professionally precious interpretation of what could be counted as ‘scholarship.’ I did not do lab studies, nor—with the few resources available in a relatively small undergraduate program—was it likely that I would be engaging in some large-scale, multi-site, highly controlled study. To the committee, scholarship required nothing less than the conduct of controlled studies. Research in the real, uncontrolled world of the community psychologist is messy. What they did not understand is that even ‘messy’ research could be ‘good’ research.

Rather than delay her promotion and crank out a series of controlled studies using the student subject pool, Judy appealed the R&T Committee’s decision. The Dean sent her materials to the National Review Board for the Scholarship of Engagement whose review was favorable. Letters were solicited from prominent SCRA members to explain the nature of community research and to corroborate Judy’s dossier of scholarship and professional service. The committee ignored these inputs; Judy’s appeal was denied. She pursued the one avenue left—an appeal to the university President. The President overruled the R&T Committee, and Judy was promoted. Now, even seven years later, her appeal is still viewed by some as a challenge to faculty governance. On the other hand, Judy’s work is credited by many as being an important contributor to improving the way in which community-based research, teaching and service are viewed when it comes to important decisions such as tenure, promotion, and merit pay.

Judy first joined Division 27/SCRA around 1977 when she became a clinical/community psychology graduate student. She served SCRA first as Northeast Coordinator, then as its National Coordinator. She makes a point of attending SCRA’s biennial conferences, and she regularly volunteers to serve on editorial boards, now serving on three journals. “I try to be plugged into organized community psychology.” Her research interests are school readiness, child and family literacy, technology access for low-income families, the promotion of wellness in high-risk children and families, and social policy issues related to children and their families. When asked what she feels will have been her major contribution(s) to community psychology, Judy offered that she is most proud of the special issue of the American Journal of Community Psychology, 33(3-4), co-edited with Anne Brodsky: Special Issue on the Process of Community Research and Action. “It brings to life the sanitized descriptions typically found in professional journals by focusing on how we do community research rather than what significant results were found.”

Judy is also proud of her role as a mentor to students. She has been named Teacher of the Year, won a Martin Luther King, Jr. Vision Award, and in 2006, Judy received the Alumni Association’s Distinguished Faculty Award. Fairfield’s student body is primarily made of middle- to upper-middle income Catholics. Her students are well meaning young people who want to do something “to help” but do not yet have the tools to know how to affect meaningful change. Her courses emphasize service learning opportunities for students, placing them in the local community to enhance traditional course material. Judy challenges her students to question why psychology as a science and the United States as a nation have not used psychology’s knowledge to make the world a better place for all people. “Martin Luther King challenged psychologists to use their knowledge to eradicate the devastating social problems caused by poverty, racism, and other social injustices. I want my students to think seriously why, almost 50 years later, these conditions still exist when we have the knowledge to change them.”

Although teaching at a small university was not Judy’s original career goal, she is content in her life choice. “I wanted to be able to take my kids to dance class and volunteer in their school. I saw that some of my professors and colleagues at more high-powered research institutions were not able to do that.” Judy’s family has always been her highest priority, so the death of Jamie at the age of 20, in Judy’s words, “shook me to the very core of my being. . . . The past five years have been a search for meaning, an attempt to find a ‘new normal.’ I have experienced a pain deeper than I ever imagined possible, but I have also found good parts of myself that I never knew existed. I like to think of the discovery of those good parts as Jamie’s gift to me.” Because Jamie was a talented artist, her loved ones established the Jamie A. Hulley Arts Foundation, a non profit organization that provides educational opportunities to young artists and early career professionals through its scholarships and grants. Also, the Jamie A. Hulley Early Learning Center was dedicated in her honor in Bridgeport; it is a Head Start site serving 175 preschoolers. The foundation’s programs are described at <http://www.jamiehulleysfund.org>.

Judy Primavera has long contributed to her community by providing direct services to low income urban children and their families. Through her community relationships, she provides her students with new perspectives on the world. Despite earlier career detours, she has arrived at her natural professional home, community psychology, and she has achieved a successful balance between her professional and family life.
Regional

Edited by Bernadette Sánchez

Community psychology is active around the world! There are a number of new regional coordinators representing SCRA. Please welcome Nicole Porter, PhD in the Midwestern US, LaKesha Garner, PhD and Sudha Wadhwani, PsyD in the Northeastern US, and Scot Evans, PhD in Canada. We also have a new student regional coordinator in the Midwestern, US: Liz Shelleby. Welcome to all of you! There are also recent doctoral degree recipients in Australia who are members of SCRA (congratulations!) and a lot of wonderful events have taken place, such as conferences, presentations, and an AJCP journal club meeting in Canada, Europe, and in the US. Further, there are some interesting conferences that will occur this coming year in community psychology, school-based mental health, and American Indian Studies. So be on the lookout! To learn more about what’s happening around the world in community psychology, please read the regional updates below.

On another note, we still need individuals around the globe to serve as regional coordinators. The following regions are in need of coordinators: Latin America, Asia, Europe/Middle East/Africa, Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific, Southeastern US, and Rocky Mountain/Southwestern US. We also need undergraduate and/or graduate student regional coordinators in those areas as well as in the Northeastern, US. David Fryer has been our coordinator in the Europe/Middle East/Africa region for a number of years and is looking for someone new to take over. We could use a couple of individuals in that area because it’s so big!! Please consider getting more involved in SCRA by becoming a regional coordinator! It won’t take too much of your time. The main responsibilities of regional coordinators are to assist with membership development, activities, and communication. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone, please contact me at <bsanchez@depaul.edu>.

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

The Australian SCRA group continues to be active—both in academic achievements and output and in social activism. During this past semester two of our local SCRA members, Dianne Costello and Alison Browne, have been awarded their doctoral degrees. Both have spent a number of years researching community-based projects and both submitted their doctoral theses in social action domains related to community psychology. In addition, another local member, Dr. Elizabeth Finn, just won the 2007 Robyn Winkler Award. This award was designed to memorialise the pioneering work done by the late Robyn Winkler to recognise excellence in community psychological research and interventions. The award was given for Dr. Finn’s doctoral dissertation and research on mutual help interventions for mental health. Her supervisor, Associate Professor Brian Bishop, was also acknowledged. An inventory of the employment of SCRA members found that, while there is a solid group of academics and those working in education, SCRA members are working across the range of social action domains from electoral lobbying to domestic violence and crime prevention. In addition, it was found that a substantial cohort of Australian SCRA members work in the area of environmental sustainability. SCRA members have a solid reputation of working well with scientists in establishing community consultation and collaboration processes that can lead to successful outcomes. SCRA Australia is particularly committed to the achievement of social change that will support the full human rights of Aboriginal people; the reduction of racism, discrimination and oppression in Australian cultural life; and improving Australia’s human rights record. In late November we will be holding a meeting to review our progress and activism in each of these domains over 2007 and to plan for strategic effectiveness in the year ahead.

Canada
Regional Coordinator:
Scot D. Evans, sevans@wlu.ca
Student Coordinator:
Rachel Fayter, rfayter@bluebottle.com

Plans are underway for the Canadian Community Psychology Biennial Conference to be held in Montreal, Quebec in 2008. It is too early to share details on the date or the theme as plans are still emerging. Liesette Brunson at L’Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) is driving the planning effort and can be reached at <brunson.liesette@uqam.ca>.

Colleen Loomis has stepped down as Canada’s regional coordinator upon her election to SCRA Executive Office as member-at-large. Scot Evans will assume the coordinator role and work with student coordinator, Rachel Fayter, to initiate a quarterly Canadian region teleconference with Canadian CP’ers across the provinces.
This past fall, Isaac Prilleltensky visited Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo Ontario to deliver a talk provocatively entitled Happy but Dead: From Paradox to Paradigm in the Quest for Justice and Well-Being. Isaac is now Dean of the School of Education at the University of Miami but had his first academic post at Wilfrid Laurier University. He met with students and faculty over dinner while in town and re-connected with former Laurier colleagues Geoff Nelson, Mark Pancer, Leslea Peirson, Steve Brown, and Ed Bennett. All are planning winter vacations at Isaac & Ora’s house in Miami, Florida. Get the guest room ready Isaac!

**Europe/Middle East/Africa**

**Regional Coordinator:**  
David Fryer, d.m.fryer@stir.ac.uk

Autumn 2007 has been a busy and exciting time for community psychology in Europe.

The UK Community Psychology Annual Conference took place in York, England on September 13th and 14th, 2007 organized by Jacqui Akhurst and her colleagues.

The conference attracted a wide array of practitioners, academics, students and community representatives from all over the UK. Plenary addresses were given by: Richard Wilkinson of the University of Nottingham Medical School on his epidemiological research on the individual and social consequences of inequality; Julia Unwin, Chief Executive Officer of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (a major UK research funding organisation) on funding opportunities for community psychology; and David Fryer (University of Stirling, Scotland) who critically unpacked the question “what is community psychology?,” focusing on the question rather than on possible answers.

The conference developed the York Community Psychology Statement on Poverty. A draft of this was then discussed on the UK Community Psychology discussion list. The latest version of statement is:

As community and critical psychologists we believe that psychologists have a fundamental responsibility to join with others to end both poverty and societal inequality independent of absolute wealth, which we believe are personally, collectively and socially destructive.

We believe mainstream psychology to be complicit with the prevailing psychologically toxic neo-liberal economic order and believe psychology has allowed itself to be used to hide systemic effects of poverty and inequality and instead position poverty as a consequence of individual psychological dysfunction.

We call for the radical transformation of psychology so that it has the resources necessary to expose the personally, collectively and socially destructive effects of poverty and inequality and the proactive deployment, with allies, of this transformed psychology to end poverty and societal inequality and the exploitation, exclusion, oppression, distress and illness which result from them.

Shortly after the York meeting, a European Community Psychology Association (ECPA) International Seminar on Integrating New Migrants in the new Europe: A Challenge for Community Psychology was held in Seville, Spain September 19th - 21st, 2007.

Keynote addresses were delivered by Fabricio Balcazar (University of Illinois at Chicago), Dina Birman (University of Illinois at Chicago), Robin Goodwin (Brunel University), David Ingleby (University of Utrecht), Isaac Prilleltensky (University of Miami) and Charles Watters (University of Kent). During this meeting Wolfgang Stark University of Essen was elected President of the ECPA to serve 2007-2009, and David Fryer was elected President Elect of the ECPA to serve 2009-2011.

At a plenary session the following statement was agreed unanimously:

Those present at the final plenary session of the II European Community Psychology Association International Seminar Integrating new migrants in the new Europe: A Challenge for Community Psychology held in Seville, Spain September 19th - 21st, 2007 considered the widely circulated request by eminent community psychologist Professor Art Veno for international support in his attempts to ensure that the involvement of psychologists in the practice of torture is condemned by the Australian Psychological Society. Those present at the final plenary session of the II European Community Psychology Association International Seminar in Seville unanimously voted to send a message of support from the meeting to Professor Veno, his colleagues and all those condemning the involvement of psychologists in the practice of torture.

On November 9th and 10th, 2007 Italian Community Psychology celebrated its 30th Anniversary with a conference in Naples, Italy organized by Caterina Arcidiacono.

**Midwest Region, US**

**Regional Coordinators:**  
Debra M. Hernández Jozefowicz-Simbeni, debj-s@wayne.edu  
JoAnn Sobeck, ab1350@wayne.edu  
Nicole Porter, nporter@depaul.edu  

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

On October 9th, 2007, Lenny Jason, PhD from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois visited Wichita State University (WSU) located in Wichita, Kansas and spoke about his research on Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. There were a number of people in attendance from both within and outside the psychology department. Students were well represented at this event. Prior to his presentation he met with staff and graduate students
working at the Center for Community Support and Research (CCSR) at WSU in a roundtable setting. The discussion topics varied and were organically generated during the course of the discussion. Later in the day, Lenny met with graduate students in an informal setting with the discussion covering a broad range of topics, many of which were connected to the curiosities and concerns of graduate students, such as post-graduate careers and the like. This was a great experience for those who have not had exposure to other community psychologists or those who have not previously had the opportunity to meet Lenny.

In addition, the SCRA Council of Education Programs (CEP) members met at CCSR on business in the beginning of November, 2007. During the CEP visit, graduate students had the opportunity to have dinner and speak with the members of the council. This was another great opportunity for students to be exposed to excellent community psychologists.

Northeast Region, US
Regional Coordinators:
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Sudha Wadhwani, wadhwanis@mail.montclair.edu

Currently, the two returning coordinators for the Northeast Region are Chiarasabina, PhD, a Senior Research Associate in the College of Criminal Justice at Northeastern University, and SeemaShah, PhD, a Research Associate at the Annenberg Institute for School Reform. Two additional coordinators have joined the Northeast Regional Coordinator team, both serving as first year coordinators: Sudha Wadhwani, PsyD, Outreach Coordinator and Staff Psychologist at Montclair State University, and LaKeasha Garner, PhD, Staff Psychologist at Columbia University.

This year’s SCRA Northeast Regional conference will be held Friday, March 14th, 2008 at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel in Boston, Massachusetts. The Northeast Regional Coordinators have worked together to develop the 2008 regional SCRA program, which will be held at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association (EPA). The coordinators are in the final stages of confirming the invited keynote speaker. The program will include stimulating symposia, paper presentations, and posters related to applied research in school settings, community programs for survivors of trauma, community residential programs, and programming within a university community. For more information concerning the conference, please visit the EPA website at <http://easternpsychological.org>.

SCRA’s EPA program provides an opportunity for community psychologists, professionals, researchers, and students in the Northeast Region to connect and discuss prevention/intervention efforts, build coalitions, disseminate research, and engage in community advocacy within the context of impacting social change. Information about the EPA Meeting and the NE SCRA Program are available on the SCRA website. For more information please visit <www.scra27.org>.

Southeast Region, US
Regional Coordinators:
JosephBerryhill, jberryhill@unca.edu
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ElaineClantonHarpine, elaineh@usca.edu

Student Coordinators:
LindseyMcGowen, lindseycm@hotmail.com
AngelaCooke, cookeangela@hotmail.com

There are two exciting conferences coming up in the Southeastern region of the US.

First, the University of South Carolina Aiken’s School of Education is pleased to sponsor a two-day conference on school-based mental health group interventions on March 13th and 14th, 2008. This conference is intended for psychologists, counselors, mental health workers, administrators, teachers, after-school coordinators, community leaders, and anyone who works with children, youth, or university students. Separate sections will meet to discuss problems with elementary school children, teenagers, and university students.

School-based mental health is a growing concern in every community. Each participant is asked to bring a problem from their home community or school to work on during the conference. Group sessions will provide hands-on direction to develop group interventions to help resolve the problems. A panel of speakers will also offer research and group methods on such topics as bullying, school violence, at-risk readers, evidence-based group interventions, and the role of the community in school-based mental health.

Second, the 4th Annual Southeast Indian Studies conference will be held April 3rd and 4th, 2008, in Pembroke, NC at the University of North Carolina–Pembroke. It is a unique opportunity to present and/or learn about the American Indian communities indigenous to the southeastern United States. Go to <http://www.uncp.edu/ais/SEConf08.pdf> for more information.

West Region, US
Regional Coordinators:
Emily J.Ozer, eozer@berkeley.edu
EricStewart, jestewart@uw.edu

Student Coordinator:
Marioka Schotland, mss286@nyu.edu

On October 19th, 2007, the network of Bay Area community psychologists and colleagues from other fields with interests in community-based research and intervention met again at the University of California (UC) at Berkeley. Presentations were made by Eddy Jara, doctoral candidate in Public Health at UC–Berkeley, on "Ethnographic study of Latino middle school students' food practices and"
by the V.O.I.C.E.S (Voice Our Independent Choices for Emancipation Support) organization. The latter is a very impressive group of young adults formerly in the foster care system in the Napa Valley who has formed their own center for youth in the foster care system. They discussed a participatory evaluation project they recently undertook and received feedback from the group about next steps and possible future funding. Another symposium is scheduled for the spring semester. The goal of our network is to provide a forum to informally discuss work in progress, network with other community practitioners, and provide an exchange of ideas related to community intervention work. The larger group meets twice a year while encouraging smaller groups to form around particular interests. If you would like to be on the Bay Area community psychology mailing list, please email Marieka Schotland <mss286@nyu.edu> or Emily Ozer <eozer@berkeley.edu>.

The Second Northwest ECO/Community Psychology Conference, held at University of Washington Bothell, was a great success. Next fall the conference returns to Portland State University; exact dates and a call for submissions will be announced soon. Portland State is also hosting an AJCP journal club which meets periodically to discuss an article from a recent issue of AJCP. They recently met and it was a great success! Anyone in the Portland area is welcome to attend. Just contact Katie McDonald for information <kmc-dona@pdx.edu> or (503) 725-3995.

The University of Washington Bothell is currently accepting applications for its new Master of Arts in Cultural Studies program, which has a strong community-based, participatory social change emphasis. If you have interest in applied community practice and in critical theory/cultural analysis, this might be a great option. More information is available online at <www.uwb.edu/IAS/macs/>.

School Intervention—
Edited by Paul Flaspohler & Susana Helm

In anticipation of the upcoming International Community Psychology conference in Lisbon this summer, Paul and I would like to revisit the topics of participatory action research and empowerment in schools/public educational systems. We hope your reading of our overviews of two roundtable discussions (held at the 11th Biennial Conference of SCRA in Pasadena this past summer 2007) will pique your interest in joining us in another session on similar topics in Lisbon. Please contact us to initiate the abstract collaboration: <shelm@hawaii.edu> and <flaspopd@muohio.edu>.

Defining Participatory Action Research in Schools: Stories of Success, Opportunity, and Challenge

~Susana Helm, University of Hawai’i

As the 2007 SCRA biennial wound down on Sunday morning, a group of 14 gathered for a roundtable discussion entitled, Participatory/Action Research Promotes Culture-based School Interventions, facilitated by Brian Bishop of Curtin University, Brian Flay of Oregon State U, and me from University of Hawaii. Considering the early hour, we were pleased with the thoughtful discussion that included a group from Miami University—Paul Flaspohler, Angela Ledgerwood, Raven Cuellar, and Cricket Meehan; and others from the Pacific Rim and continental US—Peta Dzidic, Curtin University; Richard Chenhall, Menzies; Theopia Jackson, Saybrook Graduate School; Sarah Chilenski, Penn State; Gina Langhout, UC Santa Cruz; and Mark Aber, University of Illinois, Urbana–Champaign.

Many important points and fascinating examples were shared during the hour-long conversation. For example, while there are many definitions of participatory action research (PAR), our group was not aimed at clarifying this. However, our collective successes, opportunities, and challenges in working with schools and young people suggest the following. Each community, school, and population is uniquely structured by its culture, including mannerisms in social relationships and language. School structure tends to be hierarchical, spearheaded by administrative decisions that are carried out through teacher authority in the classroom. Yet, the nature of PAR is egalitarian, and our agenda as community psychologists using PAR is to shift power dynamics in ways that restore social justice. Social injustices manifest as educational and health disparities, the two broad interconnected points with which our group was most familiar.

These systems of thought appear to be diametrically opposed, but in fact can be blended if one takes the time; we all agreed it takes frequent interactions, over long spans of time. PAR occurs through relationships, thus it is imperative
to engage in understanding the culture of the school. To oversimplify, culture includes values, beliefs, and practices, and the language to express them. In the school, there are concepts about the nature of thought and knowledge construction, about childhood and the role of children in social structure, and about teaching and learning, for example. Schools also vary in their beliefs about the balance of educational equity and excellence. This impacts policies and practices such as teaching and learning in the classroom or the extent of student support accessible at the school, i.e. mental health services or prevention programs in which community psychologists are engaged.

Our group identified educational practices that may lend themselves to integrating a PAR agenda in a school or with students, such as service-learning or project-based learning. However, there are other more entrenched macro-social injustices that occur at school, and not solely in the classroom microcosm. Two sets of examples were shared in which histories of oppression have disadvantaged specific ethnocultural populations by limiting access to education and concomitant resources. In Australia, this has presented an opportunity for community psychologists to work with Aboriginal communities in ways that became participatory action research. In the US, similar opportunities for university-community collaborations have emerged to redress educational disparities impacting African American students. In these examples, the educational system was the target of change. In the cases of Aboriginal and African American justice, system change occurred with the explicit idea of using external community power to catalyze educational equity from the top down. Running the same course, but on a different tack, some of us have used PAR to facilitate personal change within ourselves and individual students or teachers. In these cases, the implicit expectation was that school system changes would emerge from within our collective shift, from the bottom up.

As stated in the roundtable abstract, US youth prevention has entered an era of local cultural adaptations of “evidenced-based practices” and “model programs.” This presents a dilemma for communities whose purpose is to sustain their culturally-derived prevention and health promotion in their schools and neighborhoods. While our group did not debate the merits of large scale dissemination of evidence-based practices or the extent of participatory action opportunities available in them, we discussed cases in which prevailing prevention science paradigms have incorporated degrees of participatory practices with success.

In one set of cases, two different evidence-based programs have been applied in public schools through school wide action, both of which provide classroom curriculum in addition to systems intervention strategies. In these cases, program outcomes may be somewhat narrow, such as bullying or substance abuse prevention; but the curricula broadly address skills related to risk and protective factors. Each school (administrators, teachers, students, and parents) participates in tailoring curriculum content and intervention strategies in culturally relevant ways. The idea is not to choose cultural adaptation at the expense of program fidelity (or vice versa), but to develop and disseminate programs with this flexible feature built in. The second set of cases did not involve evidence-based practices. Rather, the scientific literature was used as evidence in support of claims regarding discriminatory policies and practices in education in one situation and to demonstrate the need to recognize ethnocultural diversity within the school in a second example. The difference may be subtle but important: the first set of examples represents science-to-practice, while the second set represents practice-to-science.

We recognize that fully engaged participatory action research may not be a possible starting point in collaborative efforts with schools. But our challenges, opportunities, and successes have taught us that movement along this continuum is possible.

Summary
In conclusion, our group seemed aligned in the idea that participatory practices have benefited our work. A basic tenet in PAR is to ground action and knowledge construction in the everyday, lived experience to confront or negotiate the phenomenon of interest as identified and understood in the community. We recognize that fully engaged participatory action research may not be a possible starting point in collaborative efforts with schools. But our challenges, opportunities, and successes have taught us that movement along this continuum is possible. Clearly, this takes time for regular critical dialog and conscious reflection. Community life passes and evolves at a pace that may not match our professional time zones and will take shape and reshape as (our) relationships ebb and flow. Community practice and PAR is grounded in our collective past and histories, and it is about being and becoming pono (Hawaiian Language: in balance, to make right, fair, virtuous, honest). I like to think of this as the tao of community practice: we are where we are, and it is what it is.

The Promise of Empowerment in School Settings: Continuing the Dialogue

Melissa Maras, The Consultation Center, Yale University School of Medicine
Jennifer Elftstrom, Angela Ledgerwood, & Paul Flaspholer, Miami University, Oxford, OH
Peter Drake, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Schools have long been recognized as one of the most vital contexts for child and adolescent development. More recently schools have come into focus as the ideal setting for the delivery of a continuum of integrated health and mental health services. The field of Expanded School Mental Health (ESMH;
Weist, 1997) embraces a public health model to support the healthy development of all youth through prevention and intervention programs, policies, and practices. Researchers are beginning to recognize the significant overlap between the aims of community psychology and current trends in ESMH. Flaspohler et al. (2006) discuss the opportunity to bridge the growing gap between needs and services and the research-to-practice gap in school mental health through community science. Similar to principles of best practice in ESMH, community science promotes stakeholder collaboration and focuses on building the capacity to develop, implement, and evaluate local efforts to promote the healthy development of youth (Flaspohler et al., 2006; Weist et al., 2005). There is a significant opportunity to fully apply community psychology’s value of empowerment to burgeoning models for school-based research and action.

Empowerment is a long-held value within the field of community psychology (D Dalton, Elias, & Wandersman, 2007). As such, the field has followed an ongoing debate about how to conceptualize empowerment and apply it to community practice. “Empowerment” has become a buzz word in the field and schools are no exception. A variety of programs, policies, and practices have developed within the school context that focus on “empowering” various stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, and administrators at the building, district, and state levels (e.g., Bogler & Somech, 2005; Nachsen & Minnes, 2005; Wilson et al., 2006). These recent advances, while exciting, have further complicated the theoretical and definitional challenges associated with empowerment.

At the 11th Biennial Conference for the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA), the authors, with additional panel members Emily Ozer and Ron Crouch, facilitated an innovative roundtable discussion intended to fuel a dialogue about opportunities and challenges for empowerment in schools (Maras et al., 2007). In response to the call for proposals for the biennial, a group of graduate students and faculty at Miami University (Oxford, OH) distributed a prompt through the SCRA listserv. The prompt was intended to gauge interest among SCRA members in facilitating a session at the biennial about issues related to “empowerment in schools.” A number of interested parties replied and a dialogue about “the promise of empowerment in schools” ensued, ultimately resulting in the creation of the roundtable discussion. The intent of the session was to attract and maximize the contributions of a diverse audience of attendees and spark an ongoing conversation related to the successes and challenges of empowerment in schools that could continue beyond the biennial.

A diverse audience participated in the discussion, including individuals from Australia, Japan, Canada, and the US currently working in or thinking about schools. The panel and participants each talked about why they were drawn to the broad topic of empowerment in schools. Many questions, ideas, and challenges surfaced during that conversation and were recorded. They included:

1. How do we function without (or work within the absence of) a common definition of empowerment? Can we function without a common definition?
2. How does empowerment create optimal functioning (idea of flow)? How do you capitalize on flow to support empowerment?
3. How do we determine an organization’s readiness for empowerment/change?
4. How do we do it? How do we create conditions under which empowerment happens?
5. Does empowerment have direct individual effects and/or collateral repair?
6. Is information power in empowerment?
7. How do we benefit from the challenges to (history of) empowerment from the business world?
8. How do we envision shifting systems to empower children?
9. How do you conceptualize empowerment within the “cascades” of power in school governance (e.g., principals, vice principals, teachers, parents, students)?
10. The paradox of empowerment in schools: How to create the space for empowerment without “doing for?” How do you “fight the power” without overwhelming the system? Where do you draw the line?
11. How do we engage young children in shaping school policy through participatory action research?
12. Where should I go to learn how to do this?
13. How do you build capacity in sustainable ways (such as in school systems where turnover is high)?
14. How do you balance the need to be needed in schools against the desire for sustainability?

These questions fueled an animated conversation on the application of empowerment to practice in schools that ranged from abstract and theoretical to concrete and focused. The breadth and depth of this conversation suggests that an ongoing dialogue about many of these issues is warranted.

The group generally agreed that the construct of “empowerment” is complex and lacks definitional clarity. As evidenced by questions 1 - 7 above, there are numerous challenges to conceptualizing empowerment that parallel issues widely addressed within the field. For example, empowerment is widely described as both a process and an outcome (Zimmerman, 2000) that can occur at multiple levels of analysis (Rappaport, 1984). The definitional complexity of empowerment was echoed in the various issues and challenges participants surfaced. Participants talked about organizational readiness for empowerment and debated the merit of action vs. information as tools for empowerment. Several participants suggested that definitional clarity and resolution of broader issues related to empowerment are necessary for a discussion about empowerment in schools to move forward. However, others pointed to a lack of progress within the field at large.

We would like to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution Don Klein made to this presentation during the planning stages and more broadly, to the field of community psychology throughout his distinguished career. His unfortunate and untimely death at the SCRA biennial precluded his participation on the panel of this roundtable. His presence was and continues to be missed.
Several attendees discussed the challenges related to explicit power differentials in schools and variances in perceived and actual control among stakeholder groups. For example, how does one empower youth to make a difference in their school if they do not, in fact, have the ultimate decision-making power to realize their goals? Could efforts to empower youth within this context actually lead to feelings of disempowerment?

The challenge of understanding and defining empowerment is not unique to schools; however, schools are a unique context that possesses distinct facilitators and challenges to empowerment activities. Questions 8 - 11 capture some of the specific issues that were raised about the application of empowerment principles in schools. Several attendees discussed the challenges related to explicit power differentials in schools and variances in perceived and actual control among stakeholder groups. For example, how does one empower youth to make a difference in their school if they do not, in fact, have the ultimate decision-making power to realize their goals? Could efforts to empower youth within this context actually lead to feelings of disempowerment? The unique organizational structure of schools, including intersecting formal and informal power dynamics, was identified as a challenge to conceptualizing and applying empowerment in schools.

Finally, challenges surfaced related to building capacity to develop, implement, evaluate, and sustain empowerment practices in schools (e.g., questions 12 - 14). Although broadly and imprecisely defined, empowerment activities in schools are emerging within local contexts and information-sharing is necessary to support an evolution of community-based practice in this area. While some participants asked how or where they could learn more about empowerment practices in schools, others discussed challenges to sustainability. The school context shares characteristics with communities and community-based organizations and the literature around capacity-building, dissemination, and sustainability across contexts can support the advancement of theory and practice in schools. For example, several participants discussed the utility of best practice processes (e.g., Getting To Outcomes [GTO]; Chinman, Imm, & Wandersman, 1994) and empowerment evaluation (Fetterman, 1993) in schools. However, presenters and participants agreed that schools are a unique context and a more explicit conversation about how these and similar tools can be adapted for use in schools is necessary.

The individuals who planned and participated in this roundtable recognize that this is a complex and multi-faceted conversation that neither began nor could end within the confines of a single discussion. Interdisciplinary collaboration is a core tenet of ESMH and community science, and a variety of fields and specific research areas possess strong potential to contribute to an ongoing dialogue about empowerment in schools. The original plan for this roundtable was that it would result in a list of recommendations, surfaced by roundtable participants, related to how to “do” empowerment in schools. Based on the discussion, it became clear that such a list would be premature and lacking. Instead, the group agreed that many of the questions and issues raised during the roundtable could fuel a productive conversation at a broader level and brainstormed about various venues that could host ongoing dialogues including publications, presentations, and electronic discussion boards. The hope is that additional voices will join this discussion, adding their ideas about the promises of empowerment in the school setting.

References


**SOCIAL POLICY—**

*Edited & written by Steven B. Pokorny
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**An introduction of the new Social Policy Committee Chair: Steven B. Pokorny**

I would like to use this first column as an opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chair of the Social Policy Committee and Nicole Porter <nporter@depaul.edu> as the Chair-Elect who will begin her post in August, 2008. We thank the Past Chair, Joe Ferrari for his stewardship of the committee over the past year. In this column, I want to briefly recap our understanding of the direction of this committee and some of the past efforts, as well as, to solicit input from the SCRA membership regarding future areas for us to explore.

**Mission**

The three-part mission of the Social Policy Committee, presented below, was discussed in a meeting at the June 2003 SCRA biennial in Las Vegas, NV and activities were identified to achieve that mission (Howe, 2004; Woolard, 2006). The first part of the mission is to create opportunities for training and to encourage academicians and others who lack policy experiences to familiarize themselves with the policy process. Activities identified to achieve this aspect of our mission include making regular contributions to this column, developing and offering training opportunities at the SCRA biennial, APA, and regional meetings, and promoting academic policy training and regional workshops. Progress with these activities has occurred through the identification and dissemination of policy-relevant training opportunities, the development of resource materials regarding policy involvement for SCRA members, and the collection of policy-relevant education and training materials that can be integrated into community related courses. Currently, James Dalton, Scot Evans, and Steven Howe are compiling policy training materials and working on a SCRA Training Resource webpage. Jon Miles and Judah Viola have expressed an interest in compiling white papers for SCRA posting. Please contact one of us if you wish to contribute announcements of training opportunities or additional educational/training material for the SCRA Training Resource webpage.

The second part of the mission is to encourage two-way communication between community psychologists and policy makers and encourage collaborative relations with other groups to work on policy activities. Activities identified to achieve this aspect of our mission include disseminating policy-relevant information via SCRA listserv, APA Action Alerts, the SCRA website, and the Public Policy Advocacy Network. Progress with these activities has occurred through policy-relevant postings on listserv and the efforts of Preston Britner (former Committee Chair) to connect with.
APA Division 37 (Children, Youth, and Family Services), the APA Public Policy Office, and the National Council on Family Relations (Britner, 2006). Currently, Brad Olson is working on furthering SCRA involvement in changing APA policy regarding psychologists’ involvement in the interrogation/torture of prisoners.

The third part of the mission is to use the experiential and empirical knowledge base of community psychology to contribute to contemporary policy debates at the state and federal levels. Activities identified to achieve this aspect of our mission include having community psychologists act either as insiders (i.e., Congressional Fellows, consultants, researchers, and other roles where they are engaged by governments and organizations) to assist in setting policy agenda or as outsiders by working more at a grassroots level with advocacy organizations that are not empowered to make policy. Progress with these activities has begun through the establishment of the Award for Special Contributions to Public Policy, which identifies and reinforces community psychologists who are engaged in policy debates.

Additional Efforts

In addition to the activities focused on achieving our mission, the committee has also set a priority to recruit new members and promote diversity among its membership. Former committee chairs have recruited members through solicitations on the SCRA listserv and at regional and national meetings. Recently, Nicole Porter compiled a list of over 30 individuals who participated in policy panels or were referred by others. We plan to continue recruitment efforts and to promote diversity by contacting these individuals, confirming committee membership status, and seeking referrals to others who may be interested in the committee’s agenda.

We are looking forward to serving this committee and are very impressed by all of the important work that has been done to date. Our agenda for the next year is to assess the progress of previous work plans to achieve our mission, continue efforts that have been productive and show potential for further gains, explore different ways to move the committee forward, and identify new opportunities to expand our efforts. Please, forgive any omissions to the past or current activities and contributions listed above as we are just getting up to speed on the important work of this committee. We would welcome any corrections to set the record straight. Finally, we encourage SCRA members to contact us with ideas for new activities that will help this committee achieve its three-part mission.

References


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**Student Issues—**

*Edited & written by Marco A. Hidalgo & Christopher Zambakari*

**Call for Papers—Spring Issue of The Community Student**

Please consider writing a paper for *The Community Student (TCS)! TCS* is published twice yearly and features articles written by students about their experiences, research and insights in relation to psychology as a whole and community psychology in particular. We encourage you to email us articles for the **Spring 2008** edition of *The Community Student*. The deadline for paper submissions is **February 15th, 2008**. *The Community Student* is a great way to share your insights and experiences with other SCRA members. It’s also a great way to add a publication to your curriculum vitae! Articles should be between two and four pages long, single-spaced, and can be submitted electronically to Marco Hidalgo at <mhidalgo@depaul.edu>.

**Seeking Nominations for Incoming Student Representative**

It was just in the last issue that we announced the new incoming **SCRA Student Representative**, Christopher Zambakari, but the time to nominate and elect the next **SCRA Student Representative** is fast approaching as Marco Hidalgo completes the final year of his term. National Student Representatives serve on the Executive Committee and provide student voice to decisions made within SCRA. In addition, serving as National Student Rep. is also a fun and rewarding learning experience. National Student Representatives serve 2-year, overlapping terms (starting at the APA convention in August). If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for the incoming National Student Rep. position, or have additional questions, please contact Christopher Zambakari by email, <czamabaka@mainex1.asu.edu> by **April 15th, 2008**. The only criterion for serving as a representative is that you must be a graduate student for the length of your two-year term. Nominees will be asked to prepare a one-page statement on why they are interested in the position, what topics or issues related to student representation in SCRA concern them, and what (if any) prior leadership or representative service they have held. This leadership experience can include service in student government. In early June, all student members of SCRA will be sent an electronic election ballot and instructions on how to cast their vote online. If you suspect that the email address that is on record with SCRA is outdated, please notify Christopher so that your electronic ballot does not bounce back.

**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 1 undergraduate coordinator. Graduate student coordinators serve 2 years, while undergraduates serve at least 1 year.

We are currently seeking students to complete a 2-year, appointed term as SRCs within the Northeast, Midwest (seek-
SCRA Executive Committee Mid-Winter Meeting

Every 6 months, the SCRA Executive Committee meets to discuss and decide on pivotal issues for our organization. Both National Student Representatives have full voting rights, and are able to bring to the table important ideas that concern student members. At the end of January in 2008, we will be meeting in Washington, DC. If you have any ideas, concerns, or suggestions that you would like the executive committee to hear, or if you would simply like to know more about the proceedings of this body, please email either Marco or Christopher at any time of the year. The executive committee highly values improvement-oriented input from students. Marco and Christopher will publish their notes from the Mid-Winter Meeting in the Spring 2008 issue of TCP.

Second International Conference on Community Psychology June 4th - 6th, 2008—Lisbon, Portugal

The Sociedade Portuguesa de Psicologia Comunitária will be hosting the Second International Conference on Community Psychology at Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, Lisbon, Portugal from June 4th - 6th, 2008 <http://www.2iccp.com/index.html>. According to the website, the main conference theme, Building Participative, Empowering & Diverse Communities —Visioning Community Psychology in a worldwide perspective, will be delivered through key thematic areas including:

- Community Organizing
- Prevention
- Systems Change
- Advocacy
- Policy Change
- Collaboration
- Creating New Settings
- Networking
- Strengthening Relationships
- Training
- Evaluation
- Globalization and North/South Dialogue

Student registration is 150 Euro before January 31rd, 2008, and 200 Euro after February 1st, 2008. Presentation submissions follow several formats that include a panel presentation, organized symposium, roundtable discussions, workshops, innovative sessions, or poster presentations <http://www.2iccp.com/call_papers.htm>. The deadline for submissions is February 28th, 2008.

Updates from 2007 Regional ECO Conferences for Students of Community Research & Action

This past fall the Midwestern (DePaul University; October 5th and 6th), Southeastern (Georgia State University; October 5th - 7th), and Northwestern (University of Washington Bothell & Portland State University; October 12th) regions successfully hosted ecological-community psychology (ECO) conferences. Unlike other professional conferences, ECO conferences are traditionally more informal, student-focused and student-organized. We encouraged students who helped organize these conferences within their regions to update us on highlights of their ECO conferences. This issue features brief updates from our Midwestern and Northwestern regions, and we look forward to updates on ECO developments from our Southeastern region in a subsequent TCP, or on our listservs. For more information about ECO conferences and future conferences related to
Division 27 go to the SCRA website: <http://www.scra27.org/events.html>.

If you would like learn how to attend, or become involved with organizing an ECO Conference in your region, contact your Student Regional Coordinators, or your National Student Representatives (Marco Hidalgo and Christopher Zambakari). No student should be deprived of an ECO Conference!

2007 Midwestern ECO Conference Update

The Community and Clinical-Community graduate and undergraduate students of DePaul University hosted a successful 2007 Midwest Ecological Community Psychology (ECO) Conference on October 5th and 6th, 2007. The conference theme was *Uniting For Change Across Disciplines, Action & Research*. With over 130 people, this year’s conference was among the most well-attended Midwest ECOs in history. From across the public, private, and non-private sectors, conference authors represented 27 different institutions and organizations throughout the Midwest. Two international universities were also represented.

The urban setting of Chicago served as the backdrop for exploring how community work affects social change and action. The keynote panel was comprised of representatives from community-based organizations who participate in social change and action. Incoming SCRA President, G. Anne Bogat, PhD, responded to their work by framing it within the tenets, principles, and vision of our field. Educational workshops led by professionals from various disciplines covered relevant topics: Policy, Human Rights, Evaluation, and Working with Refugee Populations.

Forthcoming, the conference committee hopes to share insights about the collaborative processes we used to organize ECO. We believe that we have important lessons to impart, including useful tips for those developing academic conferences. The conference committee would like to thank everyone who was a part of making the 2007 Midwest ECO a success! We look forward to next year’s conference, hosted by Michigan State University.

Information about the Midwest ECO Conference Podcasts:

Audio highlights from the conference are available in the form of Apple Podcasts. In order for you to listen and download the ECO Conference Podcasts, you need to have the iTunes application installed. iTunes works on both Windows and Mac machines. Start by visiting the website: <http://www.apple.com/education/itunesu/>. After downloading and installing iTunes, go to this site again and click on: Visit iTunes U in the iTunes Store.

This will then launch iTunes. Click on DePaul under “Universities” and under (to be installed) under Liberal Arts and Sciences. Look for a folder called “Eco Conference 2007—DePaul University” and the Keynote and Workshop recordings will be available. Just click on them and enjoy. They can be downloaded to a device just like any other recording. For more information about the Midwest ECO 2007 please contact: Liezl Alcantara <lalcant1@depaul.edu> or <midwest.eco2007@gmail.com>.

2007 Northwestern ECO Conference Update

The 2nd Northwest ECO/Community Psychology Conference was held at the University Washington Bothell campus in October, co-sponsored by Portland State University, and organized this year by Eric Stewart and Elizabeth Thomas at UWB, and Eric Mankowski and Katie McDonald at PSU. The conference also marked the beginning of the second year of UWB’s undergraduate Community Psychology option in the Interdisciplinary Studies Program; it was fitting, then, that the conference had a distinct interdisciplinary flavor, and a very high level (and very high quality) of undergraduate involvement and leadership.

The tone of the conference was set by Tod Sloan’s (Lewis & Clark College) plenary address, *Critical Social Theory and Practice in Community Psychology: What we think about what we do, and why it matters*, and in the active discussion that followed it. Presentations throughout the day carried this note of bringing reflexive thinking to participatory engagement with diverse communities, and to using diverse methodologies.
Next year the conference returns to Portland State, it will this time be organized by graduate students there, and it promises to return more to an original ECO Conference style. Watch TCP for further information and a call for submissions.

Graduate Student Research Grant—Updates from 2006 Recipients

The two recipients of the 2006 Graduate Student Research Grant, Nancy Bothne and Nellie Tran have included brief reports on their research progress. Please read their exciting updates, and If you have any feedback about this year’s review process please contact Marco at <mhidalgo@depaul.edu>. Next fall, we look forward to updates from our 2007 Recipients, Benjamin Graham and Mari Pighini! Congratulations again to our 2006 and 2007 recipients!

A One Year Follow-up on
“A psychological sense of community among torture survivors”

~Nancy Bothne, DePaul University

In the winter of 2006, the Society for Community Research and Action Student Research Grant Funding Committee offered an award to support the research I am doing with torture survivors. My master’s thesis is exploring gender differences in how immigrant torture survivors in the US experience a psychological sense of community.

State-sponsored torture is deliberately used to separate individuals from their communities, isolating them and undermining their ability to trust (CVT, 2005). Research into how immigrant torture survivors describe their relationships with communities may offer additional insight into what is important about a psychological sense of community when individuals’ relationships with communities have been so brutally challenged. Those insights may help us understand how to develop reconciliation strategies that rebuild communities.

As part of this research, I have worked with individual survivors, torture treatment centers, and the Torture Abolition Survivors’ Support Coalition (TASSC) International. A thesis consultation group was also formed, which includes 3 survivors, 2 academic advisors, torture abolition advocates and a facilitator. These groups have helped guide the creation of research methodologies, recruitment of participants, and offered guidance on ethical and practical approaches. To date, I’ve completed 8 interviews and hope to complete another 12 by year-end. The thesis consultation group will begin working with me to analyze the data early next year. I also plan to continue meeting with the treatment centers and TASSC, keeping them up-to-date on findings, and eliciting from them insights about how these data relate to my research question.

The SCRA award has helped to pay for some of the travel expenses required for meetings in Washington, DC. It has offered recognition for the potential contributions that research of this kind might have. I anticipate needing more funds for meetings in Minnesota and DC, and to help pay for the professional interpreters required from one of the treatment centers. The initial investment in this research from SCRA indicates to others the importance of the research among community psychologists.

My ability to conduct this research has benefited from the support of my many professors and classmates. Students and faculty have provided insights into how to negotiate survivors’ vulnerabilities, as well as my own, when experiences of torture are shared. They have helped think through outreach strategies, IRB issues, and the choices to be made among qualitative research methodologies. Many thanks are owed to SCRA and the community of psychologists and students who have contributed to this work.

Reference


A One Year Follow-up on
“What is American Acculturation really?”

~Nellie Tran, University of Illinois at Chicago

An individual is said to “acculturate” when they come from their native culture and into contact with a new host culture (Berry, 1980). US immigrants often undergo this process as they come into contact with the American culture for the first time. Community psychologists have been very cognizant of the impact of the acculturation process on an individual’s psychological well-being in their research (i.e., Gil & Vega, 1996; Liebkind, 1996; Moyerman & Forman, 1992). Researchers have approached the study of acculturation in many ways; however, a consensus has not been reached on the most effective approach. Nor are research findings consistent across research efforts thus far (Rogler, Cortez, & Malgady, 1991).

Inconsistent findings may be the result of different measurement instruments or participant interpretation of items on scales. Without a conceptual understanding of what “American” means to respondents, it is unclear if equivalent scores on acculturation measures that assess acculturation to American culture are conceptually equivalent for diverse groups (Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000). For instance, for one respondent indicating eating American foods may mean to another that they eat fast food and the other steak and potatoes. In another example, when asked about American friends, one individual may consider only whites to be American and another individual all American citizens. Does “American” only include those things that are exclusively not from an individual’s ethnic culture? Since it is so prevalent in the US, would a Mexican immigrant consider Mexican food American food? What about a Vietnamese immigrant? In sum, when measuring acculturation, researchers have not defined what is American.
The SCRA Graduate Student Grant has allowed me to delve into this question and explore the potential similarities and differences in how participants across diverse ethnic/racial groups conceptualize “American.” I used the American Language, Identity, and Behavioral Acculturation scale (LIB-A; Birman, Trickett, & Vinokurov, 2002) in both parts of the project: (1) focus groups and (2) surveys.

Focus group participants discussed possible definitions for each of the 12 American concepts in the LIB-A scale. Definitions derived from the focus groups were then used as response options in Part 2 surveys. Participants reported on their own American Acculturation using the LIB, followed by a multiple choice question about definitions for each American item. Preliminary analyses show no differences across racial/ethnic groups in levels of reported American acculturation with respect to language, identity, or behavior. However, results show differences in how ethnic/racial groups defined several of the items on the scales including American songs, friends, and clubs. Specifically, Asian and white participants differ on their definition of American songs. Asian and Hispanic participants differ from white and Black participants on how they define American friends. Hispanic and white participants differ in how they define American clubs. These results, although preliminary, suggest researchers should be careful when using measures across ethnic/racial categories. There may also be differences across language groups and generational status. Data collection is still in progress and future analyses will also test for generational and native language group differences in how participants defined “American.”

Including a focus group in the research process allowed participants to be involved in the survey development phase of the research process instead of having a survey that is purely derived by the researcher and his/her team. It allowed me to go beyond my assumptions of how constructs are defined by participants and thus a richer understanding of the construct. However, this process also highlighted the limitations of doing survey research. It has been difficult to capture the complexity and multidimensionality of American constructs expressed in the focus groups using the standard survey structure and statistical techniques.

Additionally, building on community psychology’s aim of increasing knowledge about diverse populations, I have been able to show the importance of our research methods and questionnaire construction. It is important that community psychologists continue to test our assumptions about the applicability and utility of different survey instruments and techniques across diverse groups.

References

Sign on to the SCRA Student Listserv!
The SCRA student listserv is a forum to increase discussion and collaboration among students involved and 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>.

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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.
THE COMMUNITY PRACTITIONER—

Edited by David A. Julian

This issue of the “Community Practitioner” includes three papers. Greg Meissen, Kelly Hazel, Bill Berkowitz and Tom Wolff provide a description of what occurred at “The First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice.” This paper defines many of the themes that have driven the recent emphasis on community psychology practice. In particular, Greg, Kelly, Bill and Tom point out that many students interested in practice leave the field. In addition, this paper summarizes a process for addressing several key issues related to community practice. The second and third papers continue our discussion of core competencies necessary to practice community psychology.

Donata Francescato provides a review of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings that guide community psychology training at the University Sapienza in Rome, Italy. Her “theoretically driven core competencies for community psychology” provide an important basis on which to consider practical skills. In the final paper in this issue, Brian Bishop and Peta Dzidic discuss a mode of training that engages students and faculty in joint efforts to learn processes and perspectives essential to effective practice. These papers along with those published in the last several issues of the “Community Practitioner” have provided much for us to consider. Please, join the conversation by authoring an article or commentary about any of these articles or other material published in the “Community Practitioner.”

The Story of the First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice

~Greg Meissen, Wichita State University
Kelly Hazel, Metropolitan State University
Bill Berkowitz, University of Massachusetts, Lowell
& Tom Wolff, Tom Wolff & Associates

It started with a conversation just after the final Vision Report at the last plenary session of the 2005 Biennial Conference in Champaign. The Champaign Biennial was a great success and the “vision process” for the future of community psychology had generated a buzz particularly among students who throughout the conference impressed us with high levels of knowledge, enthusiasm and exemplary values. So, it was troubling when a number of students asked why they kept hearing, in talks by some veteran community psychologists, that community psychology had turned out so disappointing on its 40th anniversary. The students said this was in great contrast to the exciting community psychology they heard in the visioning sessions.

The visioning sessions confirmed what we already knew: half or more of our best and brightest students were not interested in academic careers. Their plans were to work in community settings—to be community practitioners. Unfortunately, many of them also said that they weren’t getting the type of training they needed from their graduate programs in order to be practitioners. This was obviously a problem. What was also disturbing was that we would most likely never see these future community psychologists again at a biennial or as members of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA). Historically, people who do not go into academia either do not join SCRA and/or do not regularly attend biennial conferences (if at all).

We have lost many of our graduates from the field and SCRA as they enter careers that are not tightly linked with academia.

As a result, we have lost many of our graduates from the field and SCRA as they enter careers that are not tightly linked with academia. We all have stories of meeting people who still consider themselves community psychologists at heart, but they don’t let others know; their identity as a community psychologist is virtually a secret. You mention being a community psychologist and they say, “Hey, I’m a community psychologist myself but I never really talk about it or call myself a community psychologist.” Those of us at the table in the waning hours of the biennial agreed to follow-up with a conference call after we returned home. That call began a two year process of strategizing and planning for the “First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice,” which was held as a day long, pre-conference session at the 2007 Pasadena Biennial Conference.

Overall, the purpose of the summit was to: (1) highlight community practice in community psychology; (2) advance and bring legitimacy and focus to the field of community practice; (3) value and learn from the work of community psychology practitioners; and (4) present a change agenda to those with authority such as the leadership of SCRA and directors of graduate programs. We attended to David Chrislip’s three ingredients for successful collaboration in that: (1) we had enough of the right people in the room with (2) good information and (3) a good process for our time together.

The First Ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice drew a hundred community psychologists including many leaders of our field, experienced community psychologists from practice and academic settings, recent graduates and many graduate students. We had the right people. We were guided by our already agreed upon vision to promote the visibility of, connection to and support for community psychology practice and community psychology practitioners. Further, we honored our mission to expand the visibility, reach and impact of community psychology practice through opportunities for collaboration, support and professional development through SCRA, academic community research and action graduate programs, other professional organizations and communities.

We talked about the history behind the summit, presented some results of a survey of community psychologists about community psychology practice, a previously developed definition and a draft list of core competencies for those who practice...
community psychology (outgrowths of our activities at the First International Conference in Puerto Rico). This good information was not only used to frame the discussion but helped us to not get distracted from moving toward action. We also had a good process for the day based on an appreciative inquiry framework focusing on what is right about community psychology and the practice of community psychology in order to generate constructive dialogue focused on forward movement and solutions. We also worked hard to level those discussions so we could clearly hear from those who practice community psychology and students who want to practice.

The focus was on action strategies across three domains that were felt to have the potential to move the practice of community psychology forward, including: (1) graduate education of community psychology practitioners; (2) community practice publications; and (3) establishing, promoting and supporting community psychology practice.

Graduate Education. What is currently taught in our graduate programs in comparison to the ideal curriculum for the practice of community psychology was an obvious focus for the summit and drew over half of the participants as we divided into smaller breakout discussion and action groups. The discussion was robust, wide ranging, passionate and productive leading to three important working goals including:

- Understanding what is currently offered in our graduate programs
- Asking graduate programs to consider a shared definition of community psychology practice
- Creating a set of core competencies to guide programs

Community Practice Publications. With the right people in the room, this group got to business quickly focusing on publications useful to those practicing community psychology with special attention to ways to make it easier for those same community psychologists to publish including:

- Adding a community psychology practice section to the SCRA website that would include suggested readings, links to practitioners homepages and websites with useful information for practice, a community networking capability and reports from the field
- Organizing and submitting a special issue on community psychology practice to the American Journal of Community Psychology
- Continuing to work on editing a volume on Community Psychology Practice

Establishing, Promoting and Supporting Community Psychology Practice. This group wrestled with admittedly, the most abstract and difficult of the three topics, realizing that if Rhonda Lewis’s idea of a reality TV series on “community makeovers” does not happen soon this will be a long-term set of tasks. The focus of the discussion was on:

- Making sure that community practitioners are integral to and active participants in SCRA
- Ensuring that community psychology is “known” by all students of psychology and psychology professionals
- Connecting community practitioners from diverse fields (e.g., social work, public health, community development) through multiple, inter-lapping professional networks that support their work, advertise job openings, provide opportunities for professional development, etc.
- Creating multiple local, regional and national opportunities (which are well attended) for expertise exchange, networking, and professional development and assuring that such opportunities are available (and advertised) to community practitioners (at affordable rates)
- Making community psychology a visible and demanded field of practice in our communities

The SCRA Practice Task Group continues to work on issues related to these domains, developing action steps in order to initiate activities for the 2008 International Community Psychology Conference in Portugal and the 2009 Biennial Conference. Community psychology practice is alive and well, making communities better places to live and there are numerous opportunities for rewarding work. We welcome new members to this ever-changing and ongoing practice task group especially those whose work focuses on community practice and students who wish to pursue this type of work after graduation. For more information or to get involved contact:

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To Give Psychology Away Takes a lot of Theoretical and Practical Training

~Donata Francescato, University Sapienza, Rome, Italy

To become a community psychologist today is not an easy task but the journey is extremely rewarding if one masters two meta-skills. These skills are indispensable to survive and thrive in our field. The first meta-skill requires a mind-expanding first step: developing a socio-political awareness of the interaction between personal, relational and collective well-being in a historical period in which global culture, dominated by commercial mass media, promotes moral disengagement and individualistic values and behaviors. Even Julian Rappaport recognizes courageously, that in spite of his being a college student in the social-change prone sixties, he did not tie his interests in the civil rights movement to his own education until he saw “the connections between social, political, economic and psychological well-being. But this is a connection that took me a long time to make” (Rappaport, 2005, p. 41).

To be socio-politically aware, one has to become conscious of the strong ties between politics and one’s personal life, a relationship that many young people do not perceive today, con-
sidering politics as irrelevant to their life (Caciagli & Corbetta, 2002). Mass media continually tell individual success stories and pursuing individual wealth and visibility are presented as major goals. Moreover, as Nelson & Prilleltensky (2005) argue, our society values liberty over equality and solidarity. In the last decades, we have seen a decline in traditional forms of active political participation, especially among young people, both in Italy and in Europe. There has also been a decrease in interest in politics and trust in political institutions and politicians, as well as an alarming increase in the number of citizens who state they are disgusted with politics (Arcidiacono, 2004; Di Maria, 2002; Caprara, 2003; Mebane, Sorace, & Tomai, 2004). This decline in political interest and participation is particularly worrisome for community psychology (CP), which unites clinical psychology’s traditional concern with the welfare of the individual with an interest in the legislative and political processes that create the conditions in which individuals live.

Most psychology majors in Italy who take an introductory CP course have an opportunity to become more socio-politically aware since all Italian community psychology textbooks (Amerio, 2000; Arcidiacono, Gelli, Patton, & Signani, 1996; De Piccoli & Lavanco 2003; Francescato, Tomai, & Ghirelli, 2002; Francescato, Tomai, & Mebane, 2004; Gelli, 2002; Lavanco, 2001; Lavanco & Novara 2002; Mannarini, 2004; Prezza & Santinello, 2002; Zani & Polmonari, 1996) consider the link between the concern for individual well-being and political struggles which promote collective welfare as a core theoretical foundation of CP. These texts stress the tie between individual empowerment and collective struggles which have been crucial in the past to achieve civic, human and social rights for oppressed groups. These texts also stress that joining collective political struggles is even more important today when they are much less in fashion.

The social world is not given, ontologically placed before the subject, but is a product of human action—culture, norms, rules, inequalities of power and opportunities that mankind has built—that gives each human being different power and access to valuable resources. When there is an individual problem, it is not only the individual that may have to change but also the social setting. When there is a social problem, changing laws and economic conditions may be important but not sufficient. Individuals need to change as well. A tiny minority of political scientists and their personal lives. In fact, many young women are more likely than men to be politically interested, informed or be activists in political parties and movements (Caciagli & Corbetta, 2002). This attitudinal deficit contributes substantially to the gender gap in political activity.

This deficit is largely due to processes of childhood and adult socialization that might lead men and women to draw different conclusions about the relevance of politics to their lives. University training is an adult socialization process that can change attitudes: we can and should provide in our university and professional training more opportunities for young women to understand the relevance of politics to their professional careers and their personal lives. In fact, many young women are very interested in intrapsychic and interpersonal relations and most psychology academic training programs help them to look inwards. In Italy, while our current university psychology majors offer dozens of subjects related to clinical topics, very few

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require students to take subjects such as contemporary history, women’s studies, sociology, political psychology or political science which could offer female students different perspectives. Community psychology textbooks and courses in Italy do not typically address the problems of women and ethnic minorities.

Being a community psychologist increases opportunities to become a member of politically active minorities that can offer passion, belonging and meaning. Pursuing collective goals can be more fun and more fulfilling than merely reaching individual targets. I know from direct experiences in the US and Italy as a member of the feminist movement of the 60s and 70s. This requires the capacity to thrive as a minority which is the second major meta-skill needed to become an empowering community psychologist. In fact, although CP has been growing in the last few decades both in academia and as a professional field, this branch of psychology still has a minority status among psychological disciplines in all countries where it exists (Reich, Riemer, Prilleltensky, & Montero, 2007).

CP master and doctoral students in Italy get plenty of experience being a minority in their universities but sometimes they have disempowering experiences. They not only have to move beyond the worldview of traditional applied psychology which emphasizes individualistic explanations of behavior and individual strategies of change such as psychotherapy but also have to deal with the high status given many psychology departments, neuroscientists and the biomedical framework. Only some students get to attend empowering trainings labs, both online and face-to-face, such as the ones we offer in Rome. These training labs help students become aware of how their values and goals have been shaped by dominant family and cultural narratives and how different branches of psychology are mainly the product of their times and the values and interests of practitioners.

Theoretically Driven Core Competencies for Community Psychology

Elsewhere, Francescato & Tomai (2001), Francescato, Tomai & Ghirelli (2002) and Francescato et al. (2007) have described how European community psychologists has tried to develop some theoretical principles that should guide community psychology interventions. CP interventions should have the following characteristics:

- **Encourage pluralistic interpretations of social problems that integrate objective and subjective knowledge and broaden the viewpoints from which a given situation can be considered.** Pluralistic interpretations should promote interventions and combine tools from different disciplines and activate forms of participation that acknowledge the importance of “local knowledge” (that is, knowledge owned by people involved in social problems).

- **Examine the historical roots of social problems and the unequal distribution of power and access to resources in the social context.** CP should stimulate shared reflections on how dominant narratives legitimate this unequal distribution of resources.

- **Give voice to minority narratives which break the silent consensus with which social actors legitimate the conventional interpretations of power inequalities.**

- **CP should promote the production of new metaphors or new narratives that help “imagine” new scripts and roles for individuals and social groups and create the symbolic base that legitimates change.**

  - **Create ties among people who share a problem.** The goal of CP is to increase social capital since changing narratives is only the first step in overcoming economic, legal, cultural and social barriers.

  - **Identify the points of strengths to obtain change.** CP should identify the problems that can be resolved at the level of the target group and problems that require different levels of interventions (political, legal and economic at the local, state, national and international levels).

  - **Spread psychological knowledge and competencies.** CP should put into practice the principle of “giving psychology away” so that interventions can be performed in ways that allow participants to master “tools.” The CP facilitator should be so successful as to make him/herself obsolete.

References


Learning may entail. We see that the focus should be on developing abilities in real world scenarios. We provide an alternative to a by implying that graduates have the capacity to apply learned textural and innovative. Competencies extend this somewhat risk of falling into a traditional teaching paradigm of creating When considering our teaching environment, we run the rural community development and mental and physical health in decisions to the character of research. PhD student research has found to be a major conceptual benefit for ARCWIS research. In and on the return trip, the long periods in a car or plane offer provide opportunities for discussion about impending projects and city and travel is part of most research. The periods of travel will only be achieved with community participation. Community participation is a fundamental aspect of its work as a social science unit dealing with natural resource management (NRM), issues in water allocation have been a major area of research, the unit has been involved in a variety of activities in the more general areas of natural resource management, social justice and community risk. ARCWIS activities provide some structural opportunities for a model of community psychology. As a social community psychology in Western Australia has been influenced substantially by the work of the Australian Research Centre for Water in Society (ARCWIS) at CSIRO. While social issues in water allocation have been a major area of research, other processes. Contextualism is the main theoretical perspective. This is other processes. The process of learning through doing provides a forum in which the integrated into research as more is discovered about the context and intervention. This process involves substantive theorizing (Wicker & August, 2000) in which conceptual theory is integrated into research as more is discovered about the context and local social dynamics. Given this approach, a set of core conceptual competencies cannot be identified, rather there are a set of core process competencies and these competencies are interdependent and confounded. The abstracted, linear explanation that follows does not do justice to the concepts as they are part of a conceptual whole that like context is not divisible into component parts as each is reciprocally defined. The process of learning through doing provides a forum in which the integration of the core processes can be examined in the context of other processes.

Contextualism is the main theoretical perspective. This is an extension of the ecological model and is based on Pepper’s (1942, 1966) treatment. Essential to this notion is that we do not see people as separate from context but as part of it. Rather than seeing “people in context” (Dalton et al., 2007; Dokecki, 1996), people are viewed as aspects of the context using a transactional perspective (Altman & Rogoff, 1984) where these aspects are defined in relation to the context (Altman & Rogoff, 1984; Bishop, 2007; Bishop, Johnson & Browne; 2006). In Altman & Rogoff’s (1984) words:

The transaction approach assumes an inseparability of context, temporal factors, and physical and psychological phenomena. Unlike interaction approaches [of positivism], where phenomena interact with and are


Western Australian Perspectives on Community Psychology Competencies

~Brian Bishop, Curtin University of Technology & Peta Dzidic, CSIRO

Community psychology in Western Australia has been influenced substantially by the work of the Australian Research Centre for Water in Society (ARCWIS) at CSIRO. While social issues in water allocation have been a major area of research, the unit has been involved in a variety of activities in the more general areas of natural resource management, social justice and community risk. ARCWIS activities provide some structural opportunities for a model of community psychology. As a social science unit dealing with natural resource management (NRM), community participation is a fundamental aspect of its work as there is growing recognition that environmental sustainability will only be achieved with community participation.

A second and important aspect is that Perth is a remote city and travel is part of most research. The periods of travel provide opportunities for discussion about impending projects and on the return trip, the long periods in a car or plane offer opportunities for reflection. The “tyranny of distance” has been found to be a major conceptual benefit for ARCWIS research. In collaboration with Curtin University, the unit has been involved in supervision of PhD students and this has added other dimensions to the character of research. PhD student research has involved a broad range of activities including Aboriginal social justice issues, female eating issues, participation in NRM decision making, survival of victims of torture, self-help, power and empowerment, women’s participation in rural communities, rural community development and mental and physical health in rural communities.

When considering our teaching environment, we run the risk of falling into a traditional teaching paradigm of creating a curriculum based on expected proficiencies. With this comes educational stagnation where curricula fail to be adaptive, contextual and innovative. Competencies extend this somewhat by implying that graduates have the capacity to apply learned abilities in real world scenarios. We provide an alternative to a traditional conceptualization of what competency development may entail. We see that the focus should be on developing an orientation between teacher and student that fosters skill development through a process of learning through doing. Learning through doing is iterative and enables two—way learning where both student and teacher benefit. As such, we are not concerned with competencies, per se, but with an orientation and values base that is applied to any context in which research is done.

The basic principles of the community psychology we practice in both research and application are based on the fundamental values described in most texts such as Dalton, Elias & Wandersman (2007). These values include respect for diversity, ecological perspective, competence enhancement as opposed to a deficit orientation and social justice. We also recognize the importance of the applied work of Lewin; reflective practice; Model II practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Schön, 1983); iterative-generative reflective practice (Bishop, Sonn, Drew, & Contos, 2002); contextualism (Pepper, 1942, 1966); and world view analysis (Sarason, 1981).

Sarason (1981) pointed to the strange conception of history held by mainstream psychology: research is based in history yet is destructive of that history. We use theories and concepts developed during psychology’s history. Unlike many academics, we see the new as not necessarily the best. The current output of psychology is seen more as content while the philosophical and psychological underpinnings of current and past research reflect social processes. It is these processes that allow us to utilize current research output as tools for “understanding” rather than “understandings,” per se.

An essential aspect of PhD training is learning through doing in which both the supervisor and the student tackle functioning in new settings that require scoping, deconstruction and intervention. This process involves substantive theorizing (Wicker & August, 2000) in which conceptual theory is integrated into research as more is discovered about the context and local social dynamics. Given this approach, a set of core conceptual competencies cannot be identified, rather there are a set of core process competencies and these competencies are interdependent and confounded. The abstracted, linear explanation that follows does not do justice to the concepts as they are part of a conceptual whole that like context is not divisible into component parts as each is reciprocally defined. The process of learning through doing provides a forum in which the integration of the core processes can be examined in the context of other processes.

Contextualism is the main theoretical perspective. This is an extension of the ecological model and is based on Pepper’s (1942, 1966) treatment. Essential to this notion is that we do not see people as separate from context but as part of it. Rather than seeing “people in context” (Dalton et al., 2007; Dokecki, 1996), people are viewed as aspects of the context using a transactional perspective (Altman & Rogoff, 1984) where these aspects are defined in relation to the context (Altman & Rogoff, 1984; Bishop, 2007; Bishop, Johnson & Browne; 2006). In Altman & Rogoff’s (1984) words:

The transaction approach assumes an inseparability of context, temporal factors, and physical and psychological phenomena. Unlike interaction approaches [of positivism], where phenomena interact with and are
influenced by contexts, transaction orientations treat context, time, and processes as aspects of an integrated unity. Thus one is not dealing with separate elements of a system. Instead, a transaction approach defines aspects of phenomena in terms of their mutual functioning. Persons, processes, and environments are conceived of as aspects of a whole, not as independent components that combine additively to make up the whole. (p.9)

Our training in traditional psychology is characterized by an individualist and positivistic epistemology and ontology which makes conducting contextualist research more complex. The problems are not just in terms of us being able to recognize our professional socialization into traditional psychology, but that there are political processes of value conflicts with other faculty. On occasion, the orientation of community psychology creates high levels of threat for conservative elements of psychological staff and this can lead to considerable conflict. What community psychology is saying can undermine a lot of mainstream psychology particularly in reframing the notion of psychology as being psychology of the individual to psychology being the psychology of people.

The truism that community psychology should be based in the community sounds obvious but training in traditional psychology often leads to taking an individualistic perspective (Bishop, 2007; Speer et al., 1992). Theorizing about community has not advanced much since Reiff's (1968) call for community psychology to embrace the community. Seeing community as functioning as a whole and people's actions often being a characteristic of context and community requires a mindset that is different from the prevailing capitalistic notions of the discrete, self-contained individual. Drawing on Barker's (1968) work on behavior settings, context and community are seen as functioning through the actions and agency of people.

Empowerment is a core competency but one with some conceptual difficulties. If operationalized at an individual level, it can be seen as reproducing the dominant capitalistic ethic. At a community level, empowerment is more difficult to engender and equally difficult to measure. At both levels, people's sense of control is enhanced as are their opportunities to make decisions. In defining power in terms of the opportunity to make decisions, measuring this becomes difficult as the outcomes of decision making can be diffuse and unpredictable.

Respect for diversity is seen as dealing with people in the terms of how you would expect to be treated. This seems a simple enough approach but it is very complex and requires the opportunity for considerable reflection as we have been socialized into accepting various stereotypes which operate at a preconscious level and the generally dominant ideology and world views that characterize current social oppression and discrimination. The process of learning through doing involves the opportunity to reflect on understanding of the social world and to iteratively and progressively peel back layers of meaning although this is not how the learner experiences it. For the learner, it is more of a series of epiphanies followed by periods of self-doubt and confusion.

ARCWIS is situated within an organization populated by people with a large variation in professional skills and understandings. Community psychologists are situated between the community and policy makers and scientists in roles as active mediators (Throgmorton, 1991). They act as translators and active manipulators of the power differentials between the community and policy makers. This requires that the community psychologist is able to understand both the constraints and language of the community and also that of policy people and scientists. It requires that the community psychologist submerge her/his professional identity to be able to work with both groups and to operate from a social justice perspective. The role then is one of a modest, transdisciplinary professional (Reich & Reich, 2006). The transdisciplinary role requires that the community psychologist be familiar with the knowledge and values of both the community and the scientists and policy people to a level where they can translate effectively and bring about subtle change.

A core competency, on which all others hang, is the ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty. All of the other core processes require an ability to recognize uncertainty and to be able to function in poorly defined or complex settings which we see as the hallmark of a good community psychologist. Communities are necessarily complex and entering one requires an ability to set aside preconceptions and approach people with the assumption that you do not know anything about their lives and the way their community functions. It requires building a knowledge base in incremental steps and being able to invest energy into developing understanding yet not investing ego so that when the community psychologist's model collapses, she/he is able to start afresh. Empowerment is fundamentally a process of dealing with uncertainty, especially as our culture is outcome focused. There may be some certainty about the processes of empowerment but the outcomes are much less predictable and necessarily so.

Identifying the processes of empowerment is more of a professional skill learned by doing, reflecting on doing, and reflecting on the reflection of doing (Schön, 1983). Similarly, dealing with diversity requires resistance to rush to closure, as rapid assumptions about how people need to be treated are likely to be incomplete, stereotypic, paternalistic and often offensive. For example, working with Aboriginal people requires considerable time before they will trust you and accept that your work with them is important. Vicary's (Vicary & Bishop, 2005) research on developing strategies for counseling with Aboriginal people was successful because he had worked with Aboriginal communities in the past as a clinical psychologist, he took considerable time to see and be seen and he used a process of cultural validation in which members of the Aboriginal community vouched for him. All of this required him being able to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty.

Earlier it was suggested that community psychology in Western Australia, especially that associated with ARCWIS needs flexible theory and practice. The issue of tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty is central to maintaining a chaotic view of the world. The social world is complex, and it is largely chaotic and changing (Gergen, 1973). Adopting methods that require the ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty means that the chaotic nature of the world and of community can be recognized and embraced, rather than searching for order and certain-
ty. This means that theories are not seen as immutable. Course structures need to be flexible and able to resist reification and solidification. Professionalism in community psychology means that we accept that the content of our theories and practices will change with each community we work with but that processes by which we work will be based on concepts of uncertainty, change and fluidity.

Our methodology is eclectic but mainly qualitative. Polkinghorne’s (2005) assertion that the second wave of qualitative methods are driven more by questions than by procedural issues is reflected in the iterative-reflective generative (Bishop et al., 2002) methodology in which understanding is developed through iterative and reflective micro research cycles. It is generative (hopefully) in that social change and social justice are the intended outcomes. A fundamental assumption is that social systems are complex and that knowledge will be uncertain and truth(s) will be arrived at through consensus.

Knowledge claims are seen as “assertoric” (Polkinghorne, 1983) and philosophically pragmatist. Peirce’s (1955) method of abduction is the way theory is developed. Peirce asserted that abduction where knowledge claims are seen as speculative and tentative should be the model for scientific inquiry. Abduction is based on philosophical, logical syllogisms where a truth assertion is combined with a less certain claim to give a speculative truth claim. This uncertainty is reflective of the complexity of the social world and allows for local, cultural and temporal differences in truth claims. The ideal interaction between learner and faculty builds on iterative-reflective practice but also models double loop learning (Arghiris & Schon, 1974). The diagram below attempts to illustrate this interaction.

![Diagram of double loop learning](image)

The loops around learner and faculty (point 1) represent our own internal processes. Point 2 connectors represent the link between learner and faculty. The dotted line (point 3) indicates the mutual context that student and teacher share—the teaching by doing environment. Point 4 indicates when “teaching through doing” is achieved—where learner and faculty work beyond competencies developed within the teaching by doing environment. The interaction between faculty and learner should be a continuous process of interchange where our own internal processes (what we bring to the interaction) and the act of interchange between learner and faculty inform each other and oscillate. In early days of “supervision,” these processes are well defined, but over time as rapport and trust builds, it proves difficult to tease these processes apart, again due to these processes being part of a conceptual whole (that is learning through doing). Learner and faculty inspire each other by what each brings to the interaction and how these thoughts merge. The interaction creates a safe environment in which competencies are fostered and explored through fieldwork, reflection, discussion and deconstruction and is an iterative-generative and reflective process (Bishop et al., 2002). Experiences outside of the teaching by doing environment, in turn, inform the relationship between faculty and learner and further develop process competencies. Finally, the experience of developing these competencies is reflected upon by each of us from our relative positions as the learner (Peta) and the faculty (Brian).

What is the process for the learner? Competencies can flourish in institutions or settings where leaning through doing has been the adopted paradigm. “Students” of this orientation are part of a privileged process. We are not students as such. We are peers, we are trusted and we are valued contributors to a process, at times even allies. Students are not “taught” or “supervised” by a teacher or a mentor exactly but guided through a process in which there is the capacity for each of us to learn, be motivated and inspired. As these competencies become ingrained in everyday practice, we only recognize acquired skills in hindsight when we employ them in our workplaces and communities. As students we emerge adaptive, empathic, eager, good story tellers and continual learners. Furthermore, we are motivated to continue the legacy of engaging other “students” in the process of learning through doing.

What is the process for the faculty? For the faculty, the process is one of watching people develop intellectually and master analytic and critical skills and processes. This is achieved through the exchange of ideas. The faculty act, as not only the supervisor of specific students, but as a “clearing house” for the experiences and ideas of other students. The work of other students, both past and present, is passed from student to student through the faculty (who gain unearned status for being clever). We take pride in what we have ironically termed “sophisticated plagiarism” in which the ideas of others, especially past students are used collaboratively with the understanding that current students work will be available to other students in the future.

This approach is not simply managed as this exchange is undertaken in the context of a highly competitive academic climate and resistance to potential harmful effects requires agreements with the students involved. The way a cooperative group can be maintained in the overwhelming and competitive culture of a traditional psychology department is still a work in process. Incidentally, the awareness of the faculty—student group to this paradox was facilitated by two students who have attempted to create a structure that allows the giving nature of the group to be maintained.

There is considerable pressure on the faculty from other, more traditional academics which often emerges at students’ candidacy presentations. Despite this, or maybe because of it, there is a solidarity in the community psychology group and past and present students wear “badges of courage,” for creating change at the local and broader level. This reflects the acquisition of core process competencies. These competencies fit into an action oriented model in which social justice is addressed in the research domain as well as in interpersonal relationships student and faculty have with each other and others.
References

THE COMMUNITY STUDENT—

Edited by Marco A. Hidalgo & Christopher Zambakari

Our last issue of The Community Psychologist (TCP) did not include our normal fall feature of TCS, which is focused on offering an informed student perspective on an issue of relevance to community practice, research and/or action. Consequently, Christopher and I put out a call for submissions for our Winter edition of TCP, and were very pleased to receive such an excellent and diverse array of submissions from students across our division. We find it unfortunate to only have the space to publish one of these stellar submissions in this issue, but we look forward to publishing more submissions concurrently in future issues of TCS.

We extend hearty congratulations to this issue’s featured writers, Christopher J. Reiger, Melissa A. Maras, and Paul D. Flaspohler, of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. The featured article below embodies what are such excellent qualities about community research-practioners. Namely, the high value we place on stakeholder collaboration, ethics, and our penchant for continually applying a critical eye to the methods of our field. We hope you enjoy this piece as much as we did. You may read more about the authors in the brief section immediately following this article.

Children as Stakeholders and “Unheard Voices:” Informing Participants of Evaluation Results

~ Christopher J. Reiger, Melissa A. Maras, & Paul D. Flaspohler, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

Community psychology values collaborative approaches to research and contends that investigative efforts conducted with community members can bear insights and products unobtainable in a laboratory. Research efforts in which control is shared among researchers and community members possess the potential to yield richer data and outcomes compared with traditional methods and may offer valuable information to both parties (Dalton, Elias, & Wandersman, 2007).

In order to realize the benefits of abandoning the laboratory for community-based efforts, researchers must take great care in how they operate. A common metaphor used to describe the delicate relationship that exists between the researcher and community members is that of guest and host (Robinson, 1990):

Research is conducted by guests in a host community; among the good manners that might be expected of such guests are full disclosure of their intent and methods, seeking permission for their activities, respect for host wishes and views, and meaningful thanks for hospitality. (Dalton et al., 2007, p. 77)

Community-based researchers argue that demonstrating good manners is not only an important ethical value that prevents exploitation of host populations, but can also maximize community research potential.
The purpose of this article is to discuss how a group of graduate students enrolled in a community psychology seminar made an effort to “mind their manners” upon joining a group of community stakeholders who had assembled to address an identified community need. This article will describe how the intersection of several community psychology values resulted in an innovative product for members of the community with which they collaborated. Implications for future research and practice in evaluation are discussed.

Community Psychology Values

Community psychology is rooted in values that promote community involvement in research decisions that occur throughout the investigative process. In addition, this brand of research emphasizes that research conducted with communities should yield a product or products that will benefit the community engaged in that research (Wandersman et al., 2005). Thus, in contrast to some types of research that act on communities, community-based research seeks to work with communities. This strategy has been adopted not only because community-based researchers hold this as an ethical imperative, but also because this approach enhances the quality of the research.

Another important value of community psychology is citizen participation, which supports a democratic process of community involvement in which all members have a meaningful role (Wandersman, 2003). In practice, this means attending to possible “unheard voices,” particularly those of disenfranchised populations (Balcazar et al., 2004). Research participants should be deemed social participants, “with a voice, ability to decide, reflect, and capacity to participate fully in the research process” (Balcazar et al., 2004, p.22). While this value has been widely accepted for adult participants, appropriate parallels may be extended to younger participants who could be considered disempowered.

Berman (2003) contends that Western ideology historically has cast children as “presocial, passive, and dependent beings, as members of a private, domestic sphere that is beyond the realm of social or cultural analysis” (p.102). She argues that because the dominant culture has typically understood childhood as a temporary state, one in which the primary goal is to learn how to behave like an adult, the perspectives of children have only been of marginal interest to researchers. This argument is echoed by Cousins and Milner (2007) who note that in social work research children’s voices have often been suppressed or excluded.

Increasingly, however, the tendency among researchers, service providers, and policy makers is to recognize children as “active beings” in all facets of their lives (Balen et al., 2006, p. 29). Consistent with this trend, Mayall (1996) proposes that researchers alter traditional approaches to working with children. He recommends making three procedural modifications to ensure adequate protection of children’s rights and representation: consider children to be competent and recognize their ability to report their own experiences, offer them a voice and take their perspective seriously, and aspire to serve rather than utilize them in an effort to better their social surroundings. Thus, Mayall (1996) and Balen et al. (2006) offer a definition of children as “active beings” that parallels the concept of “social actor” put forth by Balcazar et al. (2004). In sum, including children as valuable stakeholders in every part of the research process is simply an elaboration on a long-held value within the field of community psychology.

Linking theory to practice is a common goal for coursework designed to help students better understand foundational values within a particular field and appreciate the nuances of applying concepts and ideas in real world settings. Community-based researchers often embrace an action-research approach when working with communities and transport these practices into the classroom by fostering experiential learning opportunities.

The values described above intersected through engagement of students as consultant-evaluators to a community-based intervention. The intervention was a five-day camp providing children (ages 6-12) with the opportunity to engage in structured, positive activities during their spring vacation from school. The program was held in a community of approximately 6,000 people that spans 2.5 square miles on the west side of a large Midwestern city and is comprised of a subsidized housing complex, a land fill, and industrial/commercial businesses. A public school, a community recreation center, a medical and health center, several churches, and a very small grocery store are the only non-residential establishments within the community. According to a range of public records, this community is challenged by a number of risk factors including high teenage birth rates and high unemployment. Four hundred students, almost all of whom are African American and classified as economically disadvantaged, attend the local school. Due to high rates of crime and violence in the neighborhood, organizers of the intervention surmised that an alternative spring vacation option would be beneficial for children.

Program and Evaluation Planning

The evaluation team attended each planning committee meeting prior to the program’s implementation in order to assist them with program development and evaluation. More specifically, the graduate students assisted in defining program goals and linking actions to those goals, assisting the planning committee outline evaluation questions for the evaluation team, and articulating measurable outcomes. The evaluation team’s primary goals were to encourage the planning committee to be thoughtful about why it chose the programmatic components it did and support them in their efforts to engage in continuous quality improvement practices.

Conception of the Child Report

As the evaluation team was preparing the report for the planning committee, they discussed how to maximize the utility of the evaluation findings. During this discussion, it occurred to the team that an opportunity existed not only to assist the planning team in its efforts to understand the program’s impact but to practice “good manners” with the children who had provided data for the evaluation. They agreed that neglecting to provide feedback to the children and their families was inconsistent with the community psychology values they had read about and discussed earlier in the semester. The children and their families were both the recipients of the program and were active participants in the evaluation process. As a result, they were entitled to receive information about what their participation yielded.
**Content**

The report (see Figure 1) included a summary of the week’s activities; a collection of comments the students had made about various activities; information on how many children had participated in both individual activities and the program as a whole, as well as how many children were planning on attending the following year; and brief reviews of some of the content that was presented throughout the week. The report was decorated with colorful graphics and the children’s artwork.

**Questions about the Value of a Child Report**

It is widely accepted that the evaluation process itself has an impact on communities and their members. Serrano García (1990) describes research and action as “inseparable and simultaneous” processes (p. 172). Field-based research efforts impact the communities in which they occur in multiple ways. The process of collecting data from community members, for example, requires that they offer their time to complete interviews or fill out questionnaires, encouraging at least some contemplation about the community under examination and potentially impacting one’s perspective about it (Balcazar et al., 2004). Therefore, it can be assumed that collecting data from the children and families encouraged them to articulate their thoughts and feelings about the program’s various components.

During its development, the graduate students reflected on other potential benefits of the unique report. They debated whether or not it possessed some capability both to serve as an “ongoing intervention” by reinforcing concepts the children learned in the program and introduce those concepts to the families of the children who attended. The team also discussed its potential to demonstrate community psychology values to all of the stakeholders, including the program’s planning committee. Future research will need to be conducted to determine if and how an evaluation report for children impacts and informs those who contribute to its development and those who receive it. At this point, the child report’s value can only be speculated; however, it not only makes for “good manners” but also makes good sense.

**Benefits of the Child Report**

Increasingly, evaluation is favoring stakeholder involvement throughout the evaluation process. However, while children are often recipients of programs being evaluated and should therefore be considered key stakeholders in the evaluation process, they rarely, if ever, receive any type of report on the evaluation’s findings.

The authors argue here that although they conducted an evaluation and provided the participating children with their own version of its findings, the implications of exhibiting “good manners” extends to non-evaluative research efforts. Historically, children have been viewed by professionals across multiple fields of science and psychology as needing protection from research and treatment abuses. This stems from the perspective that “children may not be able to protect their own interests” (Etzel & The Ambulatory Pediatric Association, 2005). To this aim, decisions about research participation and various types of treatment for children are most often determined by adults charged with making informed choices for the children in their care.

Professional organizations such as the Ambulatory Pediatric Association and the American Psychological Association (APA) have established ethical codes emphasizing the special duty of professionals in protecting the welfare of individuals who may not be able to make decisions for themselves (Etzel & The Ambulatory Pediatric Association, 2005; Principle E: Respect for People’s Rights and Dignities, APA Code of Ethics, 2002). As Hurley and Underwood (2002) summarize, “ethical decisions about children’s research participation seem influenced by perceptions of children as weak and vulnerable” (p. 133). The general, and laudable, intention of all the codes and principles is to protect children from exploitation.

While a general goal of protecting those who cannot protect themselves seems entirely defendable, this perspective has come under some recent scrutiny as being over-protective and undermining of the actual ability children and adolescents have to make decisions about their participation in research and/or treatment in some instances. As Balen et al. (2006) suggest, “a clear trend within literature, service provision, legislation and international conventions recognizes . . . children’s capacity as ‘active beings.’ However, this principle sits uneasily with accepted conventions for research involving children” (p. 29). Balen et al. (2006) go on to argue that traditional approaches to informed consent for research and treatment involvement underestimate the ability of children in making some important decisions for themselves. While the field of psychology, among others, has tried to communicate and acknowledge a respect for children’s agency through suggestions that researchers and treatment providers attempt to gain assent from children when possible, a more in-depth discourse on these topics may be warranted.

Arguably, if children should be considered “active beings” during decisions about their participation in research and/or treatment, then perhaps their interests concerning dissemination of research findings and/or evaluation reports should be appreciated. Typically, research participants are informed of the purpose of the research project either during the informed
Although widely held among community psychologists, the “good manners” mindset often fails to extend to children who collaborate with evaluators and researchers. Both evaluation and research efforts—even those based in a community psychology tradition—have neglected children when identifying products that may be of use to the communities from which data was drawn.

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Paul Flaspohler is a clinical-community psychologist in the Department of Psychology at Miami University where he teaches courses in Community Psychology, Consultation, and Program Evaluation. He is also Director of Program Development and Evaluation for the Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs. He has a PhD from the University of South Carolina.

References

Conclusion
Although widely held among community psychologists, the “good manners” mindset often fails to extend to children who collaborate with evaluators and researchers. Both evaluation and research efforts—even those based in a community psychology tradition—have neglected children when identifying products that may be of use to the communities from which data was drawn. This article described how the intersection of several community psychology values resulted in both a unique learning experience for graduate students being introduced to the field and the creation of an innovative product.

This discussion is neither a genesis nor a conclusion in terms of identifying practices community psychologists could and should adopt with children who are involved in evaluator/researcher-community relationships. It is merely an extension of community psychology values to a subpopulation of individuals who, although commonly involved in community-based research efforts, typically are informed less often or less directly when the findings that their participation has yielded is “given back” to the community from which it came.


Although widely held among community psychologists, the “good manners” mindset often fails to extend to children who collaborate with evaluators and researchers. Both evaluation and research efforts—even those based in a community psychology tradition—have neglected children when identifying products that may be of use to the communities from which data was drawn.

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References


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**SCRA’s International Consciousness: an Introduction to the Internationalization Task Force**

*Roderick J. Watts*  
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*David Chavis* (US)  
*Serder M. Degirmencioğlu* (Turkey and chair, SCRA International Committee)  
*Donata Francescato* (Italy)  
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*Anthony Naidoo* (South Africa)  
*Stephanie Reich* (US)  
*Neville Robertson* (New Zealand)  
*Carolyn Swift, ex officio* (US and Past President, SCRA)

SCRA seemed brazen if not arrogant in promoting its vision as the basis of a global standard. Was this more US hegemony similar to “spreading ‘democracy’ around the world?”

**What started it all?**
Although no one event accounts for the creation of the Internationalization Task Force (ITF), much of its momentum came from a controversy over a paragraph in the Statement of Society of Community Research and Action: Core Principles: The SCRA Core Principles for community psychology, when adopted, will be communicated to the current membership and disseminated to students, colleagues, and community members at large. *It will also be circulated to international community psychology groups in hopes of their adoption and appropriate modification* [emphasis added].

The italicized text was a last-minute revision that survived as a part of the Core Principles for less than a year before being revised, but it revitalized concerns that many of us had had about SCRA’s proper role in international community psychology. SCRA seemed brazen if not arrogant in promoting its vision as the basis of a global standard. Was this more US hegemony similar to “spreading ‘democracy’ around the world?” If not, it certainly brought this to mind. Happily, the revised version of the Core Principles seemed to emphasize a very different and more positive value stance:

To promote an international field of inquiry and action that respects cultural differences, honors human rights, seeks out and incorporates contributions from all corners of the world, and is not dominated by any one nation or group.

Nonetheless, the questions of international community psychology and the role of the US in it were potent ones, and in the wake of the highly successful first international conference on
community psychology, it was time to give the matter greater attention in SCRA.

The Purpose of the Internationalization Task Force

The revised version of the Core Principles was a change for the better, but did they reflect the actions of SCRA and its members? In the summer of 2007 the Internationalization Task Force (ITF) was born, on the strength of then-president Carolyn Swift’s interest in pushing SCRA to take the “Action” in its name seriously on matters of international affairs. She appointed Rod Watts as chair, and together with the task force’s initial members the ITF charge evolved:

Promote an international consciousness in SCRA by:

a) Educating our US membership on international community psychology

b) Recommending changes in SCRA policies and practices that will help to internationalize the society’s publications, conferences, leadership, practice, and research activities

c) Building linkages between SCRA and kindred organizations based in other countries

d) Promoting relationships and collaborative work among community psychologists in different countries

We chose the name Internationalization Task Force to emphasize that reducing US-centric thinking (point [a]) in SCRA is an early step in achieving a much more important goal: creating a context in which the practices and concepts of community psychology from different parts of the world can grow, express themselves, and be known to community psychologists in every part of the world.

As community psychologists, we also understood the need to change settings as well as individuals, so we also targeted the policies and practices of SCRA in point [b]. For example, policies and practices in the society’s publications, conferences, leadership and authority, graduate training, and US-centric understanding of the field’s history. All this requires a change in worldview as well as policy, which in turn requires power and influence. For such changes we need the support and engagement of SCRA members like you. We need members to put international affairs higher on their list of priorities. We welcome people open to expanding their international consciousness and also their energy and commitment to contribute to the work.

Why so much emphasis on (critical) consciousness? In the words of a US member of the ITF:

Many of our colleagues in the US, as represented in a recent listserv discussion, believe that SCRA is THE international community psychology organization and that the US paradigm for community psychology (I don’t believe there is a single paradigm in the US either) is the generally accepted view in the world. This international consciousness is the first step for a predominantly US organization to institutionally find out what is going on in the rest of the world and to come up with some recommendations about what to do about it in a respectful and equitable manner.

There’s no doubt: an international consciousness for SCRA requires a critical perspective on the larger role of the US in the world and its relentless drive to export products and ideas throughout the world. For many of us, the offending phrase in the old version of the Core Principles was yet another reminder of this.

Another new phrase in the principles, “respects cultural differences, honors human rights, seeks out and incorporates contributions from all corners of the world,” brings us to point [c] in the ITF charge—building egalitarian international relationships among community psychologists. While the US exports its worldview aggressively, cultural imports and worldviews from other nations are much less visible. US members:

- Can you name a hit TV show from outside of the G8 that was also produced by that country?
- Have you ever seen one here in the US?
- If you have viewed one, was it in a language you could understand?
- When was the last time you cited or used ideas from community psychologists outside of the US?

Cultural exchange (pop culture or otherwise) is not a two-way street here in the US. Thus, community psychologists in the United States have much to gain in their journey toward international consciousness by building personal and professional relationships with colleagues outside of their home country. A discussion in the ITF about the power of (and power dynamics in) intercultural, international relationships led to some poignant stories from those on both sides of a history of domination:

Here in Aotearoa, [New Zealand] Pākehā (white folk) who engage in the struggle of Māori for self-determination get similar “goodies”—we get to learn about solidarity of collectives, experience the inclusiveness of whanau (extended family) type groups, learn to laugh and sing in different ways, develop new appreciations of the nuances of relationships.

It seems to me that US-born community psychologists may have similar things to gain from engagement with community psychology from the rest of the world. Dominant group members grow personally, politically, and professionally as they learn more about the perspectives of non-dominant groups. Doing justice to the dynamics of “dominance” requires more than a short-term project for a task force (!), but as Carolyn Swift noted in her comments on an early version of this essay: “If the issue of dominance isn’t faced head-on it will pop up to bite you every step of the way.” How we frame such interactions from a historical, political, cultural, global, and theoretical perspective is critical if our work across and within borders is to be understood in context and more than just feel-good encounters with the “other.”

One concern that came from a US member is the quality of graduate education in community psychology. Does it contribute to an informed international consciousness? On this point another member of the ITF speaks:

Perhaps it is because of my developmental roots that I think lasting change will come from the next generation. I would like our task force to address the issue of intellectual ethnocentric colonization that occurs when 1) international scholars are educated in US (Canadian and UK) universities, and 2) there is a lack of resources for US students to learn about what is happening (theory and practice) in other countries (due to the cannon selected by programs here, lack of international collaborations, and the paucity of international journals, websites, translations of international work, etc.).

In a similar vein, how many community psychology courses in the US have actively engaged in using texts and articles locating the lens of community psychology from the vantage point
of a developing country such as South Africa or Mexico? A recent community psychology text published in South Africa (Duncan, Bowman, Naidoo, Pillay & Roos, 2007) and a new book on international community psychology (Reich, Riemer, Prilleltensky & Montero, 2007) both offer a global vision of community psychology (members of the ITF have been involved in both). These differing vantage points help to illuminate international diversity in community psychology theory, praxis and emphasis.

How you can get involved

Our provisional action plan, based on points a – c in our charge, will be the basis of our work from now until the next biennial SCRA conference. We will be working closely with SCRA’s standing International Committee, chaired by Serdar, which is open to all SCRA members. All of the ideas below require the energy and interest of members like you. What we actually do depends on your feedback and the person-power we can bring to this ambitious agenda. At the very least, we are interested in your reactions. Contact us and make your voice heard!

Provisional Action Plan

a. **International Consciousness**
   i) Promote greater exposure to and incorporation of CP from outside the US; identify and make linkages with repositories of information relevant to international community psychology.
   ii) Re-vision our setting: Locate and discuss exemplars of internationalism from US organizations primarily composed of US-born members.

b. **Changes to SCRA policy and practices**
   i) Increase access, visibility, support and contributions to CP knowledge by its non-US members (print, electronic, governance, and conferences, for example).
   ii) Locate and discuss exemplars of internationalism in US community-psychology training as a starting point for policy on the internationalization of US community psychology education.
   iii) Increase visibility of and recognition for excellence in international community psychology and international collaborations.

c. **Promote international friendships and working relationships**
   i) Create a matching system that brings together community psychologists in different countries who have shared interests.
   ii) Devise a means of consultation and education in the matching system that promotes egalitarian international relationships.

d. **Raise Awareness of Social Justice concerns**
   i) Bring attention to human right concerns and social justice issues highlighted in particular contexts.
   ii) Advocate for international intervention in crisis situations. We want to hear from you! Write us at <scra.itf@gmail.com> and we will send you details on our work plan.

References


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**COMMUNITY NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS—**

**Call for Papers**

**Special Issue: American Journal of Media Psychology**

“Media Psychology and International Public Diplomacy”

There was a time when much of international public diplomacy took place among diplomats and opinion leaders of various countries. Today, international public diplomacy entails explicit and implicit messages sent by a government in one country to members of a general public in another country for the purpose of shaping their attitudes toward some aspect of the sending country. What processes can best describe attitude formation and/or attitude change as it relates to international public diplomacy in a global media environment? What role, if any, do the international media networks (news and entertainment, traditional and Web-based) play in this context?

Researchers with interests in such areas as attitude formation and change, media psychology, social psychology, cross-cultural communication, political communication, public opinion, international communication, news exposure, international relations, media effects, and related topics are invited to submit papers to the *American Journal of Media Psychology* for a special issue that focuses on explaining attitude formation and attitude change as related to international public diplomacy within a global media environment.

Submissions sought are ones that tackle this topic by either focusing exclusively on applying psychology and/or communication theories to this topic area, and/or conducting comprehensive literature reviews of studies that have findings that are applicable to this topic area, and/or carrying out theory-driven empirical investigations that focus on this topic.

**Currently, we are still accepting manuscripts.**

The *American Journal of Media Psychology* is a peer-reviewed scientific journal that publishes theoretical and empirical papers, essays, and book reviews that advance an understanding of media effects and processes on individuals in society. Submissions should have a psychological focus, which means the level of analysis should focus on individuals and their interaction with or relationship to mass media content and institutions. All theoretical and methodological perspectives are welcomed. For instructions on submitting a manuscript, please point your browser to <http://www.marquettejournals.org/mediapsychology.html>.

Questions about this call for manuscripts can be directed to Dr. Michael Elasmar, Editor, *American Journal of Media Psychology* at <elasmar@bu.edu>.
SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH & ACTION

An invitation to membership . . .

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 and 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 and 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: _______________________________________
____________________________________
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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:
☐ 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:
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Your race/ethnicity? ____________________________
Do you identify as a sexual minority? ______________
Do you identify as disabled? ______________
How did you hear about SCRA membership?

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☐ 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:
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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 (SCRA). A fifth “Membership Directory” issue is published
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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: Spring 2008–February 29, 2008; Summer 2008–May 31, 2008; Fall 2008–August 31,
2008; Winter 2009–November 30, 2008

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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
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members should also send changes to the APA Central Office, Data Processing Manager for revision of the APA mailing lists,
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