The attraction of community psychology was for me its stated principles of openness to and appreciation of diversity, understanding of behaviors from a contextual perspective, and the empowerment of communities to realize their potentials as a medium for health and growth. These continue to be foundational to the community psychology of the 21st century. In my first presidential column, what I have to report are the successes and continuing challenges within our society at realizing these aspirations. This is a report on the work of others, who have brought us to this place. They have worked hard and long over many years to help us to define who we are and how we work.

From the data we have at present, our membership has not only been maintained but it has also grown over the last two years. In a time where nationally, organizations report problems in membership, we are doing well, not just in numbers but in the vibrancy of that membership, with students, and early career members making up significant numbers within that membership and in our governance.

We also come off of a biennial meeting that saw more participants than ever. My understanding is that over 700 people attended. At that biennial, I observed many round table sessions that grew beyond their limits, requiring ever growing circles to hold all their participants. In the ones that I attended, there was excitement over the topic and many desiring to make connections and future plans to work together. Among the meetings were discussions of the violence against and within our communities, the importance of spirituality within our work, and discussions of the “community toolbox” as a resource for community capacity building. There was consideration of the need for dialogue between liberal and conservative viewpoints within the field, and talk of social justice. The opening session was both broad and deep in content, acknowledging the fiftieth year since Swampscott. And there was significant comment from the audience, challenging us all to think of theory, of real life application, of diversity of research methodologies and ways of knowing, and of international perspectives on developments in the field. At least to my estimation, the original Swampscott attendees would have enjoyed the spirit, and at the same time, not recognized the increasing diversity of their original thoughts and applications. I would like to think that they might say, “This is as it should be.”

In other venues within psychology, I note that at the American Psychological Association meetings, one of our members received a Distinguished Achievement Award for his work in Applied Research. This is the second year in which our members have been recognized for their work and achievements. Two of our members received Distinguished Achievement Awards last year. Congratulations go to all these individuals, who come from research, theory and applications in community psychology. This could be seen as recognition of community psychology from the broader field of psychology.

The American Journal of Community Psychology continues to grow and strengthen. There is a new contract with a
new publisher, which will provide stability and will support our goal of a significant presence in the scientific literature within psychology and beyond to allied scientific and application fields.

There was a remarkable passage of legislation in the APA that directed the cessation of psychologist’s presence in intelligence interrogations (http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwoway/2015/08/07/430361597/psychology-group-votes-to-ban-members-from-taking-part-in-interrogations). As well, there were mechanisms put into place, which would establish processes to aid in future deliberations in regards to ethical issues. Our members have been actively involved in this process and among its strongest advocates.

By these measures and others, the division is active and well on a number of levels, and given a number of indices. Yet as a dynamic organization, there continue to be issues and concerns, which will draw our attention. The evolution of the administration of the division continues apace. There are the concerns of effectiveness and efficiency for a division which has an active and growing membership at the council, committee, task force, and working group levels. From a meeting of the chairs of committees and task forces at the biennial arose a recommendation for regular meetings throughout the year. We continue to look for opportunities for our members to be actively involved and represented in the society’s work. Toward these ends, a strategic planning process is ongoing as we speak.

The society is engaged in the world, the discipline and the profession and it continues to evolve and change. The search for balance continues to challenge us: between taking advantage of opportunity and not being overwhelmed with tasks, between establishing our identity and our openness to others, between the wide variety of professionals and the students who make up our membership. Fifty years after Swampscott, and forty-nine years after the application to create a division of Community Psychology, within the APA, we are vital and active, we are facing the new challenges of continuing change and growth. If we were to measure SCRA’s status in terms of membership numbers, its biennial conference attendance, the growing recognition of our members at the national level, its journal, the activities of its members in the important social issues of our times, we would say that things are going well. But as Robert Frost might nudge us, there are “miles to go before we sleep.” It is my honor and privilege to come into the presidency at this time and to report on the successes of a very active and engaged membership and look to ways to encourage the positive trends that have been established and to be open to the new issues and opportunities which will unfold before us in these most interesting of times.
all of the column editors and contributors for providing us with such rich content over the years, and to the SCRA Executive Committees (2012 to present) for their support of our efforts. During our tenure as Editors, we have been part of some significant changes to the TCP, including a redesign to include the SCRA logo, expanding the online PDF archive of past issues on the SCRA website, and the creation of an archive of “Living Community Psychology” columns.

We wish the incoming Editors, Dan Cooper and Tiffany McDowell, the best of luck in taking on their new roles. We know that they will do an excellent job and make TCP even better. We leave you in the strong and capable hands our Publications Committee Chair Meg Bond, the Publications Committee and the SCRA Executive Committee.

Sylvie and Gregor

SPECIAL REPORT

Progress Report: Competencies for Community Research and Action

Written by Brian D. Christens,
Christian M. Connell,
Victoria Faust,
Mason G. Haber,
and the Council of Education Programs

The field of Community Psychology has long recognized the need for a unique orientation to research—one that promotes interdisciplinary, multi-level, ecological and community-based participatory approaches to scholarly work. Within this orientation, scholars have drawn on a wide variety of methods and theoretical perspectives (cf. Levine, Perkins, & Perkins, 2005; Rappaport and Seidman; 2000). Currently, however, there is no commonly referenced framework of community-based research competencies to guide community psychology students and training programs in navigating this rich research tradition. At an institutional level, a clear set of research skills and perspectives promoted by Community Psychology and Community Research and Action programs can enhance the development, retention, and preservation of SCRA affiliated academic programs situated among more traditional psychology departments and in other academic settings. Similarly, such clarity can enhance
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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: Andrew Hostetler
andrew_hostetler@umlu.edu

CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES The Children, Youth & Families Interest Group facilitates the interests of child and adolescent development in high risk contexts, especially the effect of urban poverty and community structures on child and family development.

COMMUNITY ACTION The Community Action Interest Group explores the roles and contributions of people working in applied psychology settings.
Chair: Bradley Olson, bolson@al.edu

COMMUNITY HEALTH The Community Interest Group focuses on community mental health, disease prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the local community.
Co-chairs: Veronica M. Baté-Aburua, criollav@hotmail.com
David Friedman, davidf6@case.edu; David Lounsbury, davidlounsbury@einstein.yu.edu

DISABILITIES The Disabilities 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.

EARLY CAREER The ECIG focuses on developing and enhancing the skills of early career community psychologists (less than seven years of experience post terminal degree) by creating opportunities for mentorship, networking, and leadership within the SCRA organization.
Co-Chairs: Michele Schlehofer, mmschlehofer@salisbury.edu
Ashlee Lien, lienam@oldwestbury.edu

ENVIRONMENT & JUSTICE The Environment & Justice Interest Group is focused on research and action related to global climate change and environmental degradation. With a focus on environmental justice, particularly how environmental change affects and often perpetuates social inequality, this group explores the role community psychology can and should play in understanding these urgent challenges to our ecology.
Chair: Laura Kott Corlew, lkcorlew.uh@gmail.com
Co-Chairs: Kimberly K. Brown, kmcriley@berkeley.edu

INDIGENOUS The Indigenous Interest Group is hosted by the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific branch of the Society for Community Psychology, Research and Action. The aims of this group are interrelated. Firstly, it wants to support SCRA members who are conducting Indigenous research by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, literature and experience. This will assist the Group’s more specific focus which is to utilize our combined resources more effectively to conduct strengths-based praxis towards raising public awareness of the plight of indigenous peoples and addressing the social justice issues they face in oppressive dominant societies.

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, & TRANSGENDER (LGBT) The LGBT Interest Group increases awareness of the need for research and community action and relates issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are either interested in research related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.
Chair: Maria Valente, valente@msu.edu

NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS The mission of New Graduate Programs Group is to support and strengthen new graduate education programs of the SCRA nationally and internationally.
Chair: Tiffany R. Jimenez, tiffany.jimenez@nl.edu

ORGANIZATION STUDIES The Organization Studies Interest Group is a community of scholars who are interested in community psychology themes (e.g., empowerment, ecological analysis, prevention, sense of community) in organizational contexts, and in importing organization studies concepts, methods, models, and theories into community psychology.
Co-Chairs: Kimberly Bess, kimberly.d.bess@vanderbilt.edu; Neil Boyd, neil.boyd@bucknell.edu

PREVENTION & PROMOTION The Prevention & 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: Toshi Sasaos, tsasaos2@gmail.com

RURAL The Rural Interest Group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.
Chair: Susan Helm, helm@hawaii.edu

SCHOOL INTERVENTION The School Intervention Interest Group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.
Co-Chairs: Melissa Maras, marasme@missouri.edu; Joni W. Splett, spllett@mailbox.sc.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: Greg Townley, gltownley@pdx.edu

TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE IN COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH The vision of the Transformative Change in Community Mental Health Interest Group is to strive to establish an alternative paradigm that focuses the promotion of mental health in community settings based upon the values of citizenship, recovery, empowerment, inclusion, and social justice. This includes the articulation of models, the identification of promising practices, and research to demonstrate the value of this alternative paradigm and its exemplars.
Chair: Geoffrey Nelson, gnelson@uw.edu

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4 Fall 2015 The Community Psychologist
In Memoriam of George William Fairweather – Keeping Him in the CP Conversation
Written by Kwesi Craig C. Brookins (craig_brookins@ncsu.edu), North Carolina State University

What follows is a personal reflection on the life of George William (Bill) Fairweather. As you will see, Dr. Fairweather strongly influenced me in multiple ways, and it is a fair encapsulation of his life, there are others who can speak more intimately about him and his contribution. I offer it as one perspective on his community psychology life.

I began writing this my first day at the 2015 Biennial conference for the Society for Community Research and Action. It began with me sitting at an outdoor restaurant patio and noticing the people coming and going. The New England accent, the mostly White faces, and the lost conference trying to find the front of the off-site hotel. It all took me back to the beginning of a life journey I began 35 years ago when I started Community Psychology at Michigan State University. This was the program started by George William Fairweather in 1969 and continued by a host of more than colorful characters, many with whom I am thankfully still connected.

I was a young Black man from the inner city of Chicago in 1981. Despite having attended a predominantly White private university as an undergraduate, I had never formed any real or lasting relationships with a White person. I grew up in the heart of the Black power and Blaxploitation era of the 60s and 70s. It was a time where Black communities were coming to understand and empower themselves in the heart of a racist and highly segregated city. Those experiences introduced me to the power of community, Blackness, and the possibilities of social change.

My orientation to the new life that graduate school was to offer began when I was met by Isidore Flores, a heavily bearded Mexican on a Harley motorcycle, who led me through the city of Lansing in search of an apartment. I, of course, had no greater experiences with Mexican people than I had with Whites, or Harley motorcycles, or bearded men. I would soon, however, come to understand that this was a perfect beginning for this new journey...although I would initially struggle with relating to almost all of these folks.

I had a couple of classes with Bill Fairweather those first two years although what I remember most were the individual or group conversations we had in his office. He was a storyteller and I like stories. Stories provide context and background. He had been a military man in WWII and several of those stories, so powerfully narrated in his 1994 mostly biographical book - Keeping the balance: A psychologist’s story - helped me to understand how the past is prologue for the present and the future. What I remember most, however, was what I would call his 1972 Manifesto, Social change: The challenge to survive. Acknowledging the problematic of what was then most likely called chauvinist language, it nonetheless begins: “Never in the history of man has his survival been so seriously threatened as it is today. Every day, and with increasingly intensity, man is jeopardizing his own existence by mismanaging his environmental and human resources. Unresolved problems emerge and worsen daily. Most of them demean the quality of life itself. Unless man can clearly perceive that he is headed toward ecological and personal disaster and can therefore change his way of life, his future on this planet is in doubt.”

He goes on to write about the power of nonviolence, the ineffectiveness of violence, and the madness of war. He outlines the values that must guide the course of social change and lays out the need for and structure of an empirical science of social change, a model he had previously articulated in his 1967 book Methods for Experimental Social Innovation. While I was familiar with many Black writers and activists who had addressed some these themes, Bill Fairweather was the first White person with whom I had begun to build a relationship who was vocally expressive of these themes. His rhetoric matched what I too saw as necessary to build better communities and a better world. And perhaps most importantly, he connected it to a scholarship that provided a pathway for making it happen. In a very real way I suspect this helped me to push away some of the barriers I had erected towards relationships outside of my cultural comfort zone.

I was later to come to understand that his journey through WWII brought him to question the human experience in ways that paralleled my own as I was coming to terms with the experience of my immediate family and ancestors as they sojourned out of the blatantly racist deep south and into the more subtle but still discriminatory promise land of the north.

Dr. George William Fairweather died on January 24th, 2015. He was greatly responsible for my connection to Community Psychology. But he was mostly absent on the list of acknowledgements and tributes during the 2015 Biennial, although I must acknowledge that I don’t recall him being a prominent presence within the official world of SCRA...but that is certainly how I saw him. He was most directly connected to the community mental health movement and transforming how the mentally ill are treated and can be active participants in the trajectory of their own lives (Fairweather, 1969). Indeed, he has been credited with having given birth to the “patients’ rights” movement and as a father of the “strengths-based” approach to mental health movement and transforming how the mentally ill are treated and can be active participants in the trajectory of their own lives (Fairweather, 1969). Indeed, he has been credited with having given birth to the “patients’ rights” movement and as a father of the “strengths-based” approach to mental illness. And his legacy continues through the work of the Coalition for Community Living that supports and promotes Fairweather Lodges Nationwide. In fact, most of the people I know connected to ECO (our affectionate name for the program) are not particularly connected to SCRA, although there are notable exceptions (Bill Davidson, Jim Emshoff, and others).

So, Bill Fairweather was one of the progenitors of Community Psychology, having participated in the 1965 Swampscott Conference and founder of the MSU program in 1969 (Tornatzky, Fairweather and O’Kelly, 1970; Tornatzky, 1976). For me, however, his legacy is so much broader than that. He helped me on my journey of understanding that the struggle Black people were having in this country was not something for which only Black people were passionate about, nor would that struggle be won by only Black people. I learned from him to never prioritize my profession more than the things that really matter to me. For those of us who came through the ECO program, the directions our “Community Psychology” lives took has a meaningful life was one that made a contribution to the common good. His life was replete with experimental social innovation and dissemination (Fairweather, 1967, Gray, et al., 2003; Hazel and Ongaa, 2003), and that is a worthy legacy to keep in the conversation.

References
efforts to improve the consistency and quality of community research training on a widespread basis by way of efficiently conveying their expected benefits.

Examples abound in other disciplines of competency development and much has been published recently on their benefits to their respective disciplines (Altschuld & Engle, 2015). Generally speaking, competencies help students understand the specific benefits of their training and can help educators understand how to communicate these benefits to students. Further, competencies can provide a means for programs to assess their strengths and weaknesses when planning expansions or improvements to their curricula (e.g., where they support development of expertise as opposed to merely experience or exposure; Dziadkowiec & Jimenez, 2009), identifying possible gaps to address, or alternatively, more clearly delineating areas best left to other training settings (e.g., master’s, doctoral, or post-doctoral level) or other disciplines. Leaders in a field can also use competencies to more clearly describe the unique contributions of training and how to build upon these in advancing their disciplines. Educators in community psychology will recognize the relevance and currency of means for describing benefits of community psychology research training to students or prospective employers whose understanding of community psychology may be limited (Neigher, Ratcliffe, Wolff, Elias & Hakim, 2011) as well as describing gaps in existing community research methods or research methods training (Tolan, Keys, Chertok, & Jason, 1990).

An important question to address at the outset of consideration of research competencies is whether objectives of such competencies might already be captured by the recently formulated practice competencies (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012). Most in our field are not “pure” practitioners or researchers, but integrate or bridge the two. Thus, it is not surprising that the practice competencies include those for “Participatory Community Research”. It is clear from our initial discussions, however, that research training competencies are worthy of focus in their own right, rather than being a subcategory of practice competencies, where they are necessarily limited to a small number of broad statements (e.g., “use qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods appropriate to the context and purposes of the community research”). Further, detailing research competencies was a secondary consideration in practice competencies’ development; in fact, the development of practice competencies was originally envisioned as a counterweight to the predominance of research in community psychology pedagogy, which some felt came at the expense of practice (Dalton & Julian, 2009). Although perhaps not adequate for purposes of advancing research on their own, the practice competencies’ successful development demonstrates the potential for a complementary, similarly detailed (though certainly overlapping) set of research competencies. Therefore, the goal of this process is to yield a set of research competencies that complements the practice competencies and defines the unique and varied approach to research that the field of community psychology brings to bear on community and social issues. It is important to point out that this is not a move toward accreditation of programs. Rather, research competencies are intended to serve in all of the ways detailed above as informational support for program and scholar/practitioner development.

Process to Date

Identification of the need and potential for developing research competencies emerged from discussions in 2014 Council of Education Programs (CEP) meetings on how to strategically support academic programs in the field. Discussions included a review of data collected through the CEP survey of graduate programs in community psychology and related disciplines, conducted in collaboration with the SCRA Practice Council and summarized in a related article in TCP (Connell et al., 2013). Program representatives were asked to assess the extent to which graduate community psychology programs help students to gain “exposure”, “experience”, or “expertise” in each of the practice competency areas, describing perceived strengths and weaknesses of graduate training in community psychology generally as well as in community master’s and doctoral programs (Dziadkowiec & Jimenez, 2009). Findings from the 2013 survey revealed significant variation among programs with respect to which Practice Competency areas received the greatest emphasis in coursework and related training activities. Although several programs mentioned a strong focus on Competency 17, Participatory Community Research, survey responses did not provide sufficient detail to identify what commonalities or differences existed among theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches.

To initiate formal efforts to help achieve the important objectives of competency development for community research training, the CEP is engaging SCRA members in a participatory planning process to identify and codify important competencies for researchers in Community Psychology and
related areas. CEP members began generating potential research competencies based on personal research experience, academic program information, and relevant texts such as such as Rappaport and Seidman’s (2000) *Handbook of Community Psychology* and Jason and Glenwick’s (2012) *Methodological Approaches to Community-based Research*. Members quickly identified a need for engaging a wider audience of scholars, practitioners, and students from SCRA in the generation of research competencies. Given the recent development of the SCRA Practice Competencies in 2012 (see Dalton & Wolfe, 2012), CEP members invited a member of the Practice Council involved in the development of the Practice Competencies to review and discuss the initial development process during a monthly CEP call.

Informed by this discussion, the CEP initiated a similar process. In the spring of 2015, a CEP workgroup charged with generating content for an initial list of competencies decided on an approach of gathering preliminary data from a diverse group of SCRA Fellows through a semi-structured interview approach. In their career, these Fellows straddled academic and non-academic positions and had a wealth of experience and insight on competencies beneficial to the practice of research in different contexts. Each of them had also mentored others during their career preparation and early career training. In developing the interview protocol, the workgroup realized that although ‘competencies’ were a useful shorthand for the phenomena of interest, the tools needed to conduct action-oriented community research were, perhaps, more appropriately labeled as research skills and perspectives. As such, the group developed an interview protocol to capture data on methodological and analytic skills, theoretical perspectives, and the overall process of designing and conducting impactful research. Taking a cue from the practice competencies, the protocol also asked Fellows to identify whether new community psychologists should gain *exposure*, *experience* or *expertise* with the skills and perspectives that they identified. The task group completed 13 interviews. All interviews were thematically coded and categorized by two workgroup members to identify (1) methodological and analytic skills, (2) theoretical perspectives and (3) elements of the overall process of designing and conducting impactful research. Codes were compared and discussed, with little variation arising between them.

The workgroup brought the interview findings back to the CEP, who together generated a draft of the research skills and perspectives based on group discussions, document reviews and interview data. The CEP presented this draft of research skills and perspectives in a roundtable discussion at the SCRA 2015 Biennial.

**Emerging Competencies**

The emerging list of research competencies includes (1) skills for research design, data collection and analysis, (2) perspectives, including theories and conceptual frameworks, and (3) meta-competencies that involve combinations of skills or perspectives or that cut-across more discrete domains of the research process. The skills and perspectives are grouped into categories based on whether interviewees recommended that community psychologists simply have, at a minimum (1) some *exposure* to the concept, (2) some *experience* with it, or (3) *expertise* in it. Of course, no community psychologist has expertise in all of these areas, so the list of competencies is aspirational and should be useful to community researchers throughout their careers. Some interviewees elaborated on this, clarifying that master’s students might have experience with only a few perspectives or methods, while doctoral students should seek to build expertise in a variety of these areas. Methodological breadth was emphasized by many of our interviewees, however, and most suggested that the idea of being narrowly self-defined according to particular methods is not only limiting for community psychologists, but may be inappropriate for researchers in our discipline. Accordingly, the ability to think critically about multiple research perspectives, paradigms, and methodologies was emphasized.

The summary below depicts a preliminary organization of key aspects of these domains and indication regarding the views of interview participants on weight of experience with a given skills or perspective required for competent community-based research. This list is intended only as a summary of key issues raised during this process rather than as a proposed framework for these competency areas. As detailed later, the CEP envisions ongoing effort to refine this list and elicit further comments from the field and from graduate programs to identify additional aspects or domains of competent community-based research and to learn more about how these competencies are reflected in current training models for community psychology and related disciplines.

**Community Research Skills – Research Design Expertise:**

- *Quasi-experimental designs for capturing naturally occurring phenomena in context*
- *Mixed-methods designs combining quantitative and*
qualitative components (e.g., embedded designs; concurrent/sequential designs)
• Participatory research designs (e.g., participatory action research; community-based participatory research)
• Survey and interview protocol designs

**Experience:**
• Evaluation (e.g., needs assessment; cost-benefit analysis; outcome mapping)
• Clinical and prevention trial designs (e.g., field experiments, RCTs)
• Sampling and data collection
• Team science (i.e., multi-disciplinary and multi-method collaborations)

**Exposure:**
• Meta-analysis
• Prevention science
• Policy analysis

**Community Research Skills – Data Collection and Analytic Methods**

**Expertise:**
• Quality data collection and management
• Basic qualitative methods (e.g., interviewing, coding data)
• Descriptive quantitative analyses (e.g., visual displays of data)
• Multivariate inferential methods (e.g., regression, ANOVA)
• Nested/hierarchical data structures (hlm; mlm)

**Experience:**
• Longitudinal analysis (e.g., growth models, time-series)
• Structural equation modeling
• Reflective methods (e.g., member-checking, participatory analysis)
• Variety of qualitative approaches (e.g., grounded theory, narrative analysis)
• Measurement (e.g., psychometrics)
• Focus groups
• Missing data and data reduction techniques

**Exposure:**
• Ethnographic approaches and methods
• Power analysis
• Agent-based and system dynamics modeling
• Network analysis
• Spatial analyses (e.g., GIS)
• Profile analysis (e.g., cluster analysis)
• Econometrics
• Epidemiologic methods
• Multi-level SEM
• Analysis of social media data

**Community Research Perspectives and Theoretical Approaches**

**Expertise:**
• Ecological theories (behavior settings, social regularities, systems thinking, social ecological models)
• Human wellbeing/flourishing (strengths; resilience; sense of community; human diversity)
• Empowerment and power
• Theories of intervention and change
• Critical theory (e.g., feminist and critical race theory; decolonization)

**Experience:**
• Democratic/political theory (e.g., civic engagement; social capital)
• Organizational development
• Ethics (beyond human subjects)
• Other branches of psychology (e.g., social; developmental)

**Exposure:**
• Economics
• Community development theories
• Policies and policy change
• Social determinants of health and health disparities
• Broader social science theories (particularly as they relate to domains under study)

**Community Research Meta-competencies**
• Environmental reconnaissance – ability to understand settings and contexts in multi-layered ways and identify key points of leverage for community research and action
• Framing and asking good questions – thinking critically and analytically about the relationship between evidence and theory
• Connecting research and practice – ability to build and deepen partnerships with practitioners through cyclical processes of research and action
• Dissemination and translation – ability to communicate concepts and findings to a variety of audiences, including community partners, academics from other disciplines, and policy makers

In addition to the above, the roundtable on research competencies that CEP held at the 2015 SCRA Biennial elicited a rich discussion that further helped to flesh out thinking about the nature of these research competencies. Two issues were raised that we agree should be considered in regard to the draft list of competencies presented above. The first is the issue of cultural competence, or cultural competencies. Attendees in our session recognized the importance of the ability to understand and work within and across different cultures when conducting community-based research. Several of the competencies and meta-competencies above have aspects of cultural competency associated with them (e.g., critical theoretical perspectives and ‘environmental reconnaissance’); however, we recognize the need to explicitly incorporate cultural and multi-cultural competencies, perhaps framing as a distinct meta-competency that cuts across other research-related skills and perspectives. Second, we heard
from participants who emphasized the importance of a ‘philosophy of science’ perspective and epistemological concerns. This is also captured in some of the competencies above, but likewise may merit further consideration as a possible stand-alone competency addressing competing claims for what counts as valid or valuable knowledge.

**Next Steps**

Members of the CEP view this emerging list of research competencies as a preliminary step toward developing and publishing a set of guidelines for graduate training to promote more competent community-based research standards. These recommendations are not intended as a prelude to program or individual certifications, any more than the current set of practice competencies represent such a standard. Instead, much like the current practice competencies, they may provide a framework for thinking about graduate and postgraduate training and identifying a unique set of skills and perspectives within the field to promote more vigorous (and rigorous) community research. Such a framework that can promote thoughtful research design is imperative at a time when increasingly complex approaches to addressing social issues now intersect with diverse, sophisticated methodological and analytic options for investigation.

At this stage, the CEP is looking forward to gathering input from a broader range of perspectives, to further flesh out the nature and scope of community-based research competencies. Specific strategies to elicit this input include further qualitative data collection from audiences not represented in the initial sample, including early-career community researchers and graduate students, as well as a survey of SCRA members that parallels the interview of SCRA Fellows. In addition, the CEP will incorporate a set of items for our periodic Survey of Graduate Programs in Community Psychology and Related Disciplines slated for the 2015-2016 academic calendar that address research competencies. This periodic survey will provide an initial glimpse at coverage of preliminary community research skills, perspectives, and competencies across masters and doctoral level training programs in the US and abroad.

At the conclusion of this next phase of information gathering and refinement, targeted at mid-2016, the CEP will publish a refined version of the recommendations for community-based research competencies for further review and elicit more broad-based comments on ways they can be used to foster greater support for research training in graduate and post-graduate study for Community Psychology and related fields. The intent is to create a “living” set of research competencies that can be revisited, monitored, and assessed to ensure that our field keeps an eye toward necessary skills and expertise to conduct rigorous and impactful research, while also incorporating advances in research and analytic design and capacity, as appropriate. It is the hope of the CEP that these competencies will help to guide and support academic programs within the field, serve as a resource to prospective graduate and postgraduate students and trainees, and also inform the greater public about the particular skills and expertise in community research among community psychologists and our related interdisciplinary programs.

Prior to that time, the CEP welcomes input or comments on the process and/or content of these competencies, as well as involvement with the CEP in the next steps of their development. Please direct emails to the authors of this article and we will follow-up to incorporate feedback as appropriate.

**References**


Ten Demandments for Action:
The Community
The Launching of the Wolff and a 27 person international Town Hall Meeting was insightful. The phrase “Ten Demandments” was ‘borrowed’ from a group Black ministers in Boston who were calling for change. This meeting demanded that SCRA honor the word “Action” in its title. One of the attendees’ was Kelly Hazel who, when asked about the meeting noted: “I had been at the 4th biennial meeting where they presented [the ten demandments] and it stuck with me throughout my career.” Another attendee that deemed this meeting crucial was Greg Meissen: “This Town Hall Meeting was insightful and energizing as it validated the action in my work but what surprised me was the push-back of so many other academics who also practiced community psychology.”

Following the meeting, Tom Wolff and a 27 person international task force worked in designing and implementing a vision process at the 10th Biennial at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana in 2005. The title of the workshop was Creating a Vibrant Vision for Community Psychology’s Next Forty Years (Wolff, T., Cheng, S. T., Hazel, K., & Schwer-Ca. Cliff O’Donnell, SCRA President, supported this process and helped the revised SCRA vision and mission that emerged to be endorsed (See TCP Vol. 38(4), pp. 36-49).

The findings from this meeting further solidified the group’s commitment to addressing the concerns of SCRA’s practitioners. Greg, Kelly, Jessica Snell-Johns and Tom met on the last day of the Biennial and decided that although the Visioning was great, no group emerged to carry forward to Vision especially the prominent component of the practice of community psychology. Jessica, who was a student at that time, helped us hear from students who were feeling that their desire to be practitioners (rather than academics) was being met with disdain or just not supported by their mentors/advisors. The students also expressed concern about not getting the skills they thought they needed for practice. Finally, there was a concern about SCRA losing members who do “practice.” At this time, the four decided to take action. They committed to a monthly conference call with each other and others who were interested in practice. During the first conference call in October 2005 they laid out a plan to recruit practitioners, practice oriented academics, and students to join them in a concerted effort to expand the support for Community Psychology practice and practitioners within the SCRA. By the January 2006 conference call, Bill Berkowitz, Vince Francisco, Adrienne Paine-Andrews, Marizaïda Sanchez-Cesareo, David Chavis, David Julian and Raymond Scott had joined the group. One of the first tasks was to establish the vision and mission of the group.

Vision: To promote the visibility, connection and support for Community Psychology practice and Community Psychology practitioners.

Mission: To expand the visibility, reach and impact of community psychology practice through opportunities for connection, support and professional development through the SCRA, academic community research and action graduate programs, other professional organizations and communities (Jan. 20 minutes of Practice Group).

It was important for the group to get the word out about the new efforts being undertaken in support of community practice to the SCRA membership. Consequently, Kelly, Greg, Jessica, and Tom wrote a piece for The Community Psychologist and then solicited commentary (which was published with the article) from a number of prominent Community Psychologists and students.


Additional tasks included planning for “think tanks” on practice issues and “Tool” poster session at the First International Conference on Community Research and Action in Puerto Rico and a pre-conference workshop, which would later be titled the First Ever Community Psychology Practice Summit, at the SCRA Biennial Conference in Pasadena, CA. in 2007.

Julian, R. Scott, D. Chavis, J. Ornelas).


In the minutes of the November 2005 meeting, the group noted “there is not a definition of the practice of community psychology, nor a compendium of tools, skills and practices.” David Julian volunteered to draft a short “starting paper” on a definition of community psychology, Ray Scott volunteered to draft a paper on competencies and skills, and Kelly Hazel would draft a paper on community practice and graduate education. These papers were presented at the conference in Puerto Rico and then revised and published in The Community Psychologist (TCP) prior to the 2007 Pasadena Biennial.

Tom Wolff and David Chavis’ 1992 “10 Demandments” were referenced during the early process of the Council’s founding. Greg had just been asked by SCRA to get the Council of Directors of Graduate Programs reestablished resulting in the Council of Education Programs (CEP) and Kelly had just finished analyzing and presenting data from the most recent survey of graduate programs, so the group felt there was some synergy to these efforts. Greg and Kelly both joined the CEP (Greg was chair, and then Kelly served in that role) and deliberately and intentionally worked to link/synergize “Education” and “Practice.” To this day, the CEP and Practice Council collaborate on multiple projects including jointly carrying out a survey of graduate programs that includes questions related to practice/competencies results of which have been published in TCP.

The early efforts were focused on getting SCRA to better support practitioners, increase the numbers of practitioners who join (we wanted to find them and get them to join) and retain them in SCRA (by creating “supports” such as the “Community Practitioner subsection of TCP and the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice (GJCPP) that would keep them as members), and to get graduate programs to support student desires to become practitioners (not just academics) by encouraging a focus on practice competencies. At this time, the group also urged the creation of The Community Practitioner Column in the TCP with Dave Julian stepping forward to edit.

A few years later these efforts led to the Pasadena Biennial Community Psychology Practice Summit in 2007 (see summary TCP winter 2008 p. 40). First of its kind, summit on Community Psychology practice was a pre-conference meeting that had over 100 participants. This summit was followed by town hall meetings during the conference to report out on the Council’s efforts from the past 2-3 years. Work groups emerge from the Summit focusing on: Graduate Education, Community Practice Publications, Establishing Promoting and Supporting Community Psychology Practice.


A lot of the early effort was also geared toward getting the word out through organizing conference sessions at the 1st International Conference in Puerto Rico (e.g., Spring 2006 TCP Vol 39 no 2 p. 42 Without Community Psychology Where Art Thou Community Psychology by Hazel, Meissen, Snell-Johns, Wolff and commentary by many; Defining Community Psychology Practice with Tom, Kelly, David Julian, Raymond Scott, David Chavis, Jose Ornelas and Putting Practice Back into Graduate Education In Community Psychology: Why And What Are Our Options with Tom, Kelly, P. Garza, D. Julian, R. Scott) and 2nd International Conference at Lisbon (e.g., Tom Wolff’s pre-conference workshop, and two session roundtable Training For Community Practice with an international cast of characters including Tom, Greg, Kelly, T. Shagott, J. Ornelas, D. Miranda, D. Hodgetts, D. Snell, A. Young-Hauser, D. Francescato, H. Gridley, A. Fisher, C. Sonn, L. O’Grady, G. Pretty, M. Elias), and the Pasadena, CA biennial conferences. Furthermore, Summit’s Publications Work Group lead to the creation of the GJCPP with Vince Francisco taking over the editorship.

Other notable publications included 2007 TCP Vol. 40 no 2 articles by Kelly on *Infusing Practice into Community Psychology Graduate Education* - with commentaries by many (this paper was the result of the conference in Puerto Rico); 2008 Fall TCP Survey Results of full SCRA membership on practice; 2009 Fall TCP more research with the CEP from the 2008 data on the skills.


At the Montclair, NJ Biennial in 2009 Tom and Greg visited the CEP meeting and furthered the on going partnership with CEP and focused on the Community Psychology Practice Competencies. In the Fall 2012 issue, Dalton and Wolfe publish the Competencies (See TCP 2012).

Finally, in 2008, after a long ‘battle’ Community Practice Group becomes Community Psychology Practice Council (CPPC) with a voting Representative on the SCRA Executive Committee.

Over the years, the vision and mission of the group has evolved:

**Vision and Mission**

To expand the visibility, reach and impact of community psychology practice through opportunities for connection, support and professional development in the Society for Community Research and Action, academic community research and action graduate programs, other professional organizations and communities.

The Practice Council works to create a legitimate community psychology practice. We do that by helping to:

- define what it means by practice,
- designate the required skills and competencies,
- demonstrate effectiveness of our work,
- increase opportunities to be seen as legitimate and acknowledged,
- increase the visibility of Community Psychology practice and
- provide individual and institutional support.

The CPPC continued to hold its monthly teleconferences. Twelve regular meetings were held in 2014 and a total of 51 different individuals attended; 22 were new members in 2014. Teleconference meeting attendance had an average of 20 members and Practice Council emails, meeting notes, and agendas are regularly sent to 181 individuals. In terms of diversity, the Practice Council has a strong history of welcoming and engaging SCRA student members. Within the Practice Council, students are given full rights and responsibilities to participate and actively take on leadership roles. We have also worked to recruit and accommodate international members by ensuring calls are accessible via Skype, and that they understand our mission and vision. Currently 2 of our international members hold a leadership position. Additionally, the Practice Council’s mission to engage Community Psychology practitioners, and bring them back into the “fold” of division 27, serves to increase the professional diversity of the organization as a whole.

The success of the group can be attributed to the tenacity and vision of the founders. Timing may also have had something to do with it as students wanted to work full time in the practice of Community Psychology with a passion to make their communities better. Just as clearly, there’s much more work to be done, and with the leadership of the new generation of Community Psychologists along with the continued active engagement of the seasoned practitioners who did not give up their vision, the group will continue to grow and provide support to current and future Community Psychologists.
Mission Statement
The ECIG supports SCRA members who have been working as a community psychology researcher; practitioner; activist; or teacher or professor; or in a related field, for no more than ten years. The important aims of this group are to: (1) promote the concerns, interests, and issues unique to early career individuals within SCRA; (2) promote opportunities for early career scholars to make contributions to or hold leadership positions within the SCRA community; and (3) promote formalized opportunities for recognition of professional accomplishments by early career SCRA members. ECIG will accomplish these goals by providing professional development networking, training, information-sharing, social support, and mentoring in order to advance the careers of early career professionals and promote collaboration. Membership is open to all with an interest in the development and support of Early Career Community Psychologists (ECCPs), including graduate students, ECCPs, and those with more established careers.

Leadership
We would like to thank Michèle Schlehofer for her work and dedication as co-chair over the past year, and for her leadership in establishing the ECIG. Our new leadership structure will involve two co-chairs, one representing early career professionals in academic settings and another representing early career professionals in practice settings. Ashlee Lien will continue as a co-chair in the academic position, and Ben Graham will begin as co-chair for the practice position.

Upcoming Initiatives
During the past year, as part of our Mentor Conversation Series we heard from Greg Meissen about strategies for developing relationships with community partners. The ECIG will be continuing this initiative by partnering with the SCRA webinar series to host webinars of interest to early career individuals. Watch for announcements on the SCRA Listserv for upcoming webinars.

This year we will also develop our page on the SCRA website. When it is complete the webpage will provide materials and resources relevant to early career individuals, as well as meeting minutes and other ECIG business documents. We hope to distribute and share resources and promote networking with each other through the website, future columns in The Community Psychologist, and through the early career listserv. We are always looking for ideas or contributions, and welcome your involvement in our upcoming initiatives.

Opportunities for Involvement
If you have not yet joined, please join the early career listserv. The list is open to anyone interested in early career development, regardless of whether or not you are still early career. To join the list, send an e-mail to LISTSERV@LISTS.APA.ORG. Leave the subject area blank, and in your message area type: SUBSCRIBE SCRA-ECP Your first name Your last name (e.g. Fred Smith).

Several individuals have recently stepped forward into leadership roles in the interest group, and we continue to look for motivated individuals to take on leadership or supportive roles. If you are interested in learning more about the ECIG, have ideas for what you’d like to see, or would like to join our planning team, please contact Ashlee (ashlee.lien@gmail.com) or Ben (benjaminegraham@gmail.com). We look forward to hearing from you!

Education Connection
Edited by Carie Forden (cforden@clarion.edu)

We continue the discussion we began in the last Education Connection column on how to provide a deeper level of community psychology training to undergraduate students. The last column focused on three undergraduate Community Psychology programs that offered training beyond the introductory course. The current column, written by a faculty member and two undergraduate students at Winston-Salem State University, focuses on the experience of teaching and taking the introductory community psychology course for the first time. They suggest that the practice competencies of social justice, social change and advocacy, socio-cultural perspectives, and community development be used to frame the design of the introductory course. They argue that the integration of these competencies into the course can better prepare undergraduate students for future careers in community work, for graduate training in community psychology, and for contributing to their own communities.

Voices and Value of an Undergraduate Community Psychology Course
Written by Dawn X. Henderson, Winston-Salem State University; Reginald Hines, Winston-Salem State University; and Lillyanna Sum, Winston-Salem State University

SCRA and its members have developed a list of competencies in graduate education training in community psychology (Connell
et al., 2013; Dalton & Wolfe, 2012). However, the majority of discussion centers on the value of these competencies for graduate education and neglects the opportunity to expand curricula and pedagogy at the undergraduate level. What happens when we take the principle of social justice, competencies of social change and advocacy, socio-cultural perspectives, community development and participation to students at earlier points in the higher education experience? We gain individuals who are thinking and framing social problems and issues like community psychologists. We produce students who have an awareness of a dynamic field of psychology and, for some, increase their persistence in graduate degrees in community psychology. Yes, the breadth and depth of the field may occur in master- and doctoral-level programs but there is value in reaching undergraduate students with these competencies. For one, we expand the scope and knowledge of community psychology at earlier stages of an individual’s educational trajectory. Early exposure leads to awareness and action—undergraduate students would acquire a set of competencies to address problems and challenges in their community. Secondly, increasing students pursuing community psychology at the advanced level could potentially lead to more community psychologist in academia and practice—forging new paradigms in academic departments, curriculum, and within a variety of other contexts.

This article stems from a presentation at the 2014 Southeast Eco Community Psychology conference in South Carolina—Transforming the lens: A demonstration on shaping student “voices” and perspectives of social justice. Each of us served as co-presenters at the conference—a professor and two students. We aim to present converging perspectives from a new undergraduate course in community psychology at a liberal arts university. Accordingly, these reflections weave a common story of how competencies in community psychology transformed a curriculum, learning environment, and students’ sociopolitical orientation (Watts, Griffin, Abdul-Adil, 1999).

The Professor
I came to the university in 2012 after completing my Ph.D. in Psychology with a concentration in Community Psychology. I was intrigued by the offer of developing a new course in community psychology within the department’s psychology paradigm. I had great support from the Department Chair and senior faculty in teaching a pilot course in my first year and using the content to develop a new course that would become a part of the foundational knowledge area, Community, Health and Counseling. I did not find much information for designing an introduction course and used a number of syllabi provided on SCRA’s website under “Teaching Community Psychology” and useful resources on Division 2 (American Psychological Association), Teaching of Psychology.

Although excited about this new endeavor, I often found myself explaining the field of Community Psychology. In my first semester, I taught Introduction to Psychology using a preassigned textbook. The textbook did not mention community psychology outside a blurb on the side of one page that listed careers in psychology. This became the impetus to expose undergraduate students to community psychology and I devoted an entire week to the field. Then, I just wanted to expose the students and let them know “here is another field in psychology and guess what, it is not in your textbook.” I asked the students “why would someone not put an important field of psychology in their textbook?” It served as a great conversation piece in the course in terms of the lack of women and ethnically diverse populations in their psychology textbook. I never knew that some of those students would later sign up for the first Introduction to Community Psychology course.

When designing the initial syllabus I designed the weekly modules around the competencies for graduate education training in community psychology; I wanted to make sure that I was giving students knowledge in some areas at the exposure level and in-depth application of others. I also used this platform as a means to understand how this undergraduate experience in the course would increase students’ awareness of and commitment to social justice (Henderson & Wright, 2015). Students in the course were required to identify issues facing their communities, develop issue briefs about these concepts, and prepare commercials that either advocated or provided information about an agency that addressed populations within the social issue content. They had to go out into their communities and interview individuals who represented dimensions of diversity, complete community service, and engaged in numerous dialogues about oppression, immigration, poverty, homelessness, and domestic violence. Although there were small effects in terms of increasing students’ awareness of and commitment to social justice (most students entered the course with high social justice attitudes), student reflections and responses from an open-ended assessment at the end of the course reflected developmental shifts in their perspectives, personal power, and community engagement.
As one student mentioned, “this course broadened my awareness about cultural diversity and individual differences in values and beliefs. By being exposed to other members in the community it allowed me to deepen my understanding of social justice and the advantages and disadvantages one faces within America.”

Reginald

I am an African American male who grew up in a small rural town in the south. I have lived in the same community for over 15 years and witnessed the depletion of youth activities, leaving many youth without safe options and hanging out in the streets. Prior to taking the Introduction to Community Psychology course, I never knew about community psychology. When I saw the course being offered in the spring semester I decided to take the course—this was my sophomore year in college and I was in the process of finding myself and figuring out my purpose and contribution to the world. The description of the course was appealing and I thought we were going to spend a lot of time in our community. I was looking forward to more hands-on experiences vastly different from other courses I had taken and also thought the course would help me figure out where I fit in.

The course initially sparked my interest in community psychology and I began to envision how I could work with African American youth in the education system. Many ethnically diverse youth need individuals who care about their future and are willing to put forth the effort and programs to create pathways for success. As mentioned earlier, I saw the deterioration of youth programs and youth left in the streets in my neighborhood. From the course, I was able to think through the value of allowing youth to voice their needs, find outlets of expression, and form connections to safe environments.

I found some of that purpose I talked about earlier in the course. The course made me reflect on the issues of my community and realize that I am privileged by the social space I occupy in the university. That is where I stand and where I come from is the missing piece of the puzzle I was trying to understand—I can be the change for my community.

The hands-on experience in the course, completing 20-hours of community service, and working with a non-profit agency to develop a commercial for one of their programs was perfectly aligned to my future goals. Not only did I gain some relevant experience but increased my social network. The course was also challenging in terms of the amount of reading and studies we were required to review, there were times when I felt that we were being directed towards the past and needed to focus on the present. Nevertheless, I learned about community psychology and reflected on social justice. I knew social justice was important, but the course provided an opportunity to think about social justice in practice.

In closing, I think taking the course and learning about principles and methods in community psychology gives me an advantage over most of my peers—especially when thinking about this sense of community. There is great value in offering a community psychology course to undergraduate students because many of us forget about the communities that we come from. What is our community without the human resources to improve them? This course provided many of us with the ability to go back to our communities and make them better.

Lillyanna

I am a Cambodian-American female who grew up in a tightknit community in a large Metropolitan city in the southern region of the United States. I was first introduced to community psychology by Dr. Henderson in my Introduction to Psychological Sciences course. After a number of engaging class discussions, community psychology was unquestionably something I sought to learn more about.

Prior to taking the Introduction to Community Psychology course, I had an idea of how the course would be structured. I knew that much of the content would be connected to what we have personally experienced. I knew not to expect anything less of a rewarding classroom experience. The community psychology course helped me to think beyond the basic issues our society faces and examine root causes. I gained knowledge in how to develop prevention programs, implement and evaluate them. My most valuable experience was learning about participatory action research and a particular project that took place with a group of teenagers. While watching a video, we were able to see how research changed the teenagers’ perspectives and how their research shaped the mindsets of others. Individuals often have a lack of interest in research, but this method gave an alternative approach. This was a new perspective for me and relevant in thinking about my future career interests that fuse organizational effectiveness, youth development, and the arts (music, poetry, photography, etc.). Since middle school, I have been heavily involved in one of the largest organizations on campus, the band. Seeing what music has done for my personal and professional development, I have made it a goal to use music to assist youth with their challenges.

Looking back on my experience in the course, I can honestly say every learning experience was
valuable. At the end of every class, I left more inspired than the class before. No matter how time consuming or seemingly “boring” the assignment may have been, we were all able to see the benefit in each experience. This course not only helped me gain more knowledge of community psychology, but it expanded my perspective of community and its effects on individuals. We were able to see how we can help change systems so that social justice exists for everyone, regardless of their physical, psychological, or economic status. I now have a better sense of my own capacity and the potential I have to impact and inspire others at an organizational and community level. I have no doubt that my undergraduate experience would not have been the same without taking the community psychology course. I believe there is extreme value in offering this course at an undergraduate level for individuals who may share common goals and interests in improving their community, especially at the social and political level. Now, as I enter my last semester in undergrad, I wish there was a more in-depth course that was offered. Unequivocally, I believe it would enhance my skills and solidify my career goals.

Conclusion

There are landscapes we must explore, places we must go to continue to strengthen the presence and practice of community psychology. Our perspectives reflect the principles and competencies of community psychology at an undergraduate level. Merely introducing undergraduate students to community psychology piqued their interest and desire to learn more. Moreover, using competencies of community psychology afforded students the opportunity to frame social issues within dimensions of advocacy and prevention. These students began to reflect an increase in critical awareness, personal power, and even solidify their career vision.

Broadly, our perspectives demonstrate the value of community psychology at the undergraduate level. We provide a glimpse of an undergraduate experience that reflects transformative processes, community participation, and socio-cultural perspectives. We hope our voices challenge SCRA and its members to continue to forge a road of visibility and competencies of community psychology through psychology texts and, more importantly, undergraduate training. As the field of community psychology expands its presence in our broader society, we cannot forget the value of strengthening our presence and voice in undergraduate education.

References


The International Committee transitions its leadership this summer. Outgoing chair Mona Amer (American University: Cairo, Egypt) is succeeded by Toshi Sasao (International Christian University: Tokyo, Japan). Toshi, who was spotlighted in our previous issue, will also maintain the column for TCP, which I enjoyed managing over the past 2 years. Our thanks go out to Mona and the team for their hard work! We also celebrate our growing membership and a strong turnout at this year’s committee meeting at the SCRA Biennial. This issue’s article is written by Agostino Carbone of Naples, Italy. Agostino provides personal reflections on his travel to Greece since 2010, around the time when the economic crisis began to unfold. Since the article’s authorship this past May, major updates have followed. However, the piece provides critical analysis and up close and personal observations from the perspective of a citizen of a neighboring member of the Eurozone, which continue to be important points of reflection. Please submit future submissions to Toshi Sasao (tsasao1@gmail.com).
Traveling to Athens: Some reflections on the crisis in Greece
Written by Agostino Carbone
(agostino.carbone@unina.it)

The second half of the twentieth century was a time that redefined the boundaries between Europe and the rest around it. This process of unification and solidarity among nations led them to what is now known as the European Union. Many policy initiatives were implemented in order to align the democratic features of individual states and reduce their disparities: the free exchange of goods, the free movement of citizens, and in 2002 the monetary union with the birth of EURO. The process of development has not had the same results and the pace in all countries. In particular, the southern European countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece have had more difficulties in reorganizing functioning to align with objectives on a political level (Carbone, 2013). The latter two countries were the cradles of ancient culture respectively, Roman and Greek that both have helped lay the groundwork for the development of ethnic and cultural features of the peoples inhabiting the Mediterranean basin (democracy, philosophy, agriculture, wine, food, etc.). As an inhabitant of Naples, I consider myself Italian, but even before now I could consider myself an inhabitant of a region of the Italian peninsula colonized by the Greeks in VIII B.C. and given the appellative of Μεγάλη Ἑλλάς / Megale Hellas / Magna Graecia / Great Greece. I spent several summers in various blue Greek islands yet had not been able to grasp the socio-politics of Greece. In 2011 the news that Greek banks were taking money from the private accounts of citizens began to circulate. The news provoked panic in Italy. Driven by curiosity, I traveled for the first time to the Greek capital in May 2012, accompanied by a friend, who as bank employee, was afraid to use his credit card in Athens and preferred to withdraw all his money for the trip while in Italy. Upon arrival, from the moment we exited the terminal through taking the subway and then arriving at Syntagma, Parliament Square just half an hour later, we got the sense of being in a well-organized place. We were there for five days, during which we traveled around the city visiting the most famous archaeological sites and their museums. We were overwhelmed by the beauty. On mornings, we woke to the view of the Parthenon through the window and we spent evenings on the terrace of the hotel to better admire it under the spotlight. The Parthenon is the compass for every Athenian, it governs the city from above and from that position allows everyone to orient themselves. The scenario for anyone visiting or living in Athens is the same since the fifth century B.C. when Pericles decided to build a temple to the goddess Athena.

Nevertheless, the feeling is that the crisis was changing the quality of life very quickly. In 2010 the Eurozone countries, European Central Bank (ECB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF), later nicknamed the Troika, began granting a series of bailout loans to rescue the country from sovereign default and cover its financial needs provided a plan of implementation of austerity measures, structural reforms and privatization of government assets. Although the historic center was able to preserve the grandeur of the city, the neighborhoods were the first to suffer the consequences of the austerity measures (Blyth, 2013): pay cuts, mass layoffs, rising taxes. There were entire streets with empty shops (fig.1), as though abandoned hastily. The place had a post-nuclear atmosphere Moving to the port of Piraeus we reached casually in sport area that had been built specifically for the 2004 Olympics (Nissirio, 2012). Today almost all the sports facilities are in a state of abandonment. We were very impressed by their friendliness and hospitality of the citizens towards us. Before returning home we had the opportunity to interview some citizens about the impact of the crisis on quality of life, the perception of the future, their resilience strategies. The following were the main themes 1) major dissatisfaction the recent cuts in salaries of public servants; 2) the pervasive experience of dispossession (Butler & Athanasiou, 2013); and 3) the anger towards politicians considered responsible for the austerity measures and overall uneasiness. The next parliamentary elections (May 15, 2012) would be where citizens could express their dissent for what was happening, and Syntagma Square continues to be a center of protest (Athanasiou, 2014). I have visited Athens ever summer since then: in 2013 for a month, in 2014 for 2 weeks. I have the situation deteriorate year after year the situation, the town more impoverished (fig. 2), the hopes of the Greeks dissolved, and a fascist party to emerge. The austerity continued to do damage, the idea that saving money was the only way to generate cash was supported by the government. Unemployment, cutting health care costs, and the loss of free access to health care for the unemployed, seem to be the biggest problems, the consequences of which can be seen by the increase of infant mortality, suicide, AIDS cases, depression (Economou, Kaitelidou, Kentikelenis, Sissouras, & Maresso, 2014; Kondilis et al., 2013; Carbone, in press).
During those years I tried to get in touch with some Greek colleagues to know their points of view on the matter, and located a chapter written by Triliva and Marvakis (2007) on the evolution of community based initiatives promoted by the Greek psychologists and social movements since the late 80s. I proposed that Triliva publish an article on this topic in a special issue of the *Revista di Psicologia Clinica* (translated “Journal of Clinical Psychology”) about the evolution of mental health system (Triliva & Georga, 2014). We are now in the process of implementing projects to detect the psychological needs of the Greek population in Crete and in Athens.

In January 2015 the radical left party Syriza came to power and promised citizens new agreements with the Troika to release the pressure of creditors. I question the feasibility of a state in deficit due to its own operational arrangements can at the same time repair its own budget and simultaneously payoff its debt in a timely fashion without major reform of its administration.

Does Greece really just need money? Is this the only form of help to be offered?

The organizational culture of a country like Greece is not easy to understand and to analyze if it does not take into account the historical difficulties with which the modern nation was built. The centennial occupation by the Ottoman Empire (1453-1921) and the dictatorship of the colonels (1967-1974) make this nation, a young democracy, inexperienced in sharing power between citizens and the ruling class and politics. It seems no coincidence that the number of wealthy in Greece has increased in 2014. I think that this is the goal of any restructuring plan: the exit from a familistic system of power, not certainly the formula of GRExit which provides the exit of the Greece from monetary union, a choice, if carried out, could necessarily compromise the relationship of alliance with the rest the EU.

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Living Community Psychology
*Edited by Gloria Levin (Glorialevin@verizon.net)*

“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 intent is to personalize Community Psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners. Prior columns are available online, at http://www.scra27.org/publications/
tcp/tcp-past-issues. These past columns contain a wealth of life advice gleaned from over 50 profiled community psychologists, from graduate students to retirees, representing an invaluable resource for community psychologists.

For this installment, I interviewed a person I first met as a graduate student/mentee at an SCRA biennial conference but whose life and career I’ve followed closely over the years, from graduate student mentee, to a repeating biennial conference mentor, to a psychology department chair now. Her strategic planning tips are instructive for those who aim to pursue an academic career.

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Michèle Schlehofer’s last name is Czech in origin, but her feminist mother’s choice of her first name is more interesting – selected to be “different.” Her mother liked the name “Shelly” but felt it did not sound sufficiently serious for the corporate boardroom where she expected her oldest child to land in adulthood. She was named Michèle instead. A corporate boardroom would have been a major step up for the working class parents, neither of whom had gone beyond high school graduation. Her father worked his whole career at the University of Connecticut, first in their creamery plant and later in their agricultural sciences department. Her mother was a licensed practical nurse, having earned certification from a six-week course. (Later, she took correspondence courses that earned her an RN and an associate’s degree in nursing.) Michèle’s two siblings are a brother, 3 years younger (earlier in the Coast Guard and now a fulltime student, earning a MSW), and a sister (13 years younger and a nurse). The Schlehofer parents were both very industrious and lived “bare bones,” banking their savings for years, so they now lead a comfortable lifestyle.

Her parents had high expectations for Michèle: “beginning in kindergarten, my father expected me to earn all A’s.” A self-described “nerd,” Michèle was a serious student with a small circle of “nerdy” friends. However, no one in her extended family had been to college, so their expectations were vague, with no talk about college. While her parents were, and have continued to be, supportive of any choice she made, it was left to Michèle to choose her own path after high school. Michèle’s vision was that she’d graduate high school, marry and raise a family.

Michèle attended a community college, paid for by her parents, commuting from home. She majored in human services where she reveled in her exposure to sociology and feminist theory. At 19, she married her 25-year old boyfriend. Although they had nothing in common, he was supportive of her at the time she most needed it.

After earning her associate’s degree, Michèle attended Eastern Connecticut State University. Always industrious, she financed her education by working fulltime at a grocery store while attending night classes. She graduated (1999) magna cum laude with a major in sociology and applied social relations and a double major in psychology in just two years. Encouraged by her statistics professor, she aimed for a Ph.D., “wanting a career of reading and writing.” However, she was “woefully unprepared” to apply to graduate school. “I didn’t even know what GREs were,” she remembers. Having applied to 12 schools, for M.A. or Ph.D. programs, she accepted the only Ph.D. program that accepted her, at the pricey Claremont Graduate University in California.

Having graduated college with no finances, so the first year of graduate school was paid for with student loans. She eventually obtained an assistantship with Bianca Guzmán, but her graduate education was extended in time by her need to work at outside jobs.

Although married for 7 years, she realized early on that the marriage was a mistake, the two being “polar opposites.” She divorced at age 26 but, after ending another ill-fated relationship, she had a son, Ty. Then a single mother, living across the country from family, she went through a very rough patch financially. She took a number of teaching and research jobs at various local colleges, to support her and Ty, but she was still amassing a significant student debt.

Fortunately, Michèle had two consequential mentors at Claremont. Bianca Guzmán introduced her to community psychology, “I had not realized that social psychology was so experimental. “ She got into applied work, “much more fun,” and from there to community psychology, “meant for me.” The second mentor, Allen Omoto, was sensational, taking the time to transform her from naivety to being fully prepared for an academic career. From her many teaching stints, taken to pay the bills and amounting to five years of experience, she grew to love teaching so focused on a career in college teaching.

Carrying $70,000 in student debt, she was in a state of panic about finances, so Michèle applied broadly for academic jobs, submitting 40
Michèle to remain at Salisbury and assume leadership roles.

At the time of her hire, Salisbury was transitioning from a teaching load of 4 courses per semester to a 3/3 system, where each course earns 4 credits, and out of classroom learning is heavily promoted. (Salisbury does not offer a graduate psychology program so Michèle teaches only undergraduates.) The psychology department was, at that time, sited in a strip mall, and her windowless office was “a broom closet.” (The department has since been moved to the campus, and her office and the classrooms are great.)

Michèle was, from the first day of employment, focused on building and documenting a portfolio that would lead to tenure. “The time goes quicker than one would think at the start. My rule was to be strategic always; every decision was made with respect to its contribution to my promotion and tenure.” This began with total familiarity with the University’s tenure criteria. Salisbury University considers promotion and tenure separately, and some faculty get tenure without being promoted. “Thus, some tenured assistant professors have not been promoted, after six or more years.”

Salisbury’s criteria for tenure are teaching: research (“publications being the bottom line”); and service. Teaching, the most heavily weighted criterion, is defined as effectiveness and growth with respect to content knowledge and responsiveness to student feedback. Key to her building a solid research portfolio was her selection of a research colleague -- Dr. Tina Brown-Reid, in the school of nursing and well connected to the community. Michèle targeted “quick, easily written” research projects (mostly community-based but also some laboratory-based student surveys) and “respectable but mid-range journals” for publishing her work. With respect to the service criterion, Salisbury considers tiers of influence — one’s department, the campus and (lower rated) the community. Michèle covered all tiers (adding membership on a statewide University committee); focused on areas of her interest (professional development and women’s issues); and aimed for leadership positions within the most productive groups. “Key is becoming well known on the basis of your reputation for getting things done.”

She had access to sample packets and a checklist of tenure requirements but had to supplement them with other resources. Building a promotion and tenure-worthy record proved stressful, especially after Michèle learned of a friend’s termination from another university, on grounds of her personality being a “poor fit.” Michèle bemoaned that “you can do all kinds of good stuff over 6 years but lose your teaching contract if someone doesn’t like you. So evidence of collegiality is a necessary, if unwritten, factor.”

At Salisbury, Michèle has the opportunity to educate people like herself — first generation, working college students. “I try to be the mentor that I wish I had in college, and I expose my students to different ways of thinking about the world.” As the only applied social psychology professor in her department (the others are experimentalists), she realizes that she is “all her students have” in exposing them to a wider range of career options, beyond clinical psychology or an academic research career. She teaches comparative methods of doing science, beyond post-positivist approaches. At the same time, she learns from her students — how they experience the world and their facility with social media.

Michèle’s primary professional
This was my first exposure to a community psychology, although her doctorate was in applied social psychology. (“It took me a long time to get over the fact that my degree is not in community psychology.”) She has made a research niche for her community research in providing needs assessments and evaluations for community groups. Claremont provided some basic training in assessment, but she has picked up advanced skills as needed. She started with community outreach research related to breast health projects serving minority migrant women. As her reputation has grown, her name is circulated among other groups who request her research help.

Michèle’s relationship with SCRA began in graduate school when she grew disillusioned with social psychology’s emphasis on theory building. She fell in love with the field at the Atlanta biennial conference, from the very first plenary session. She left the conference exhausted but convinced that she had found her professional home.

Despite not being from a community psychology program and being unknown, she nominated herself for the open position as SCRA’s national student representative. Much to her surprise, she won the election, joining Co-representative Bianca Wilson for the first year of her 2001-3 term. This position involved considerable work, in part from establishing a pre-dissertation research grant program for students, funded by SCRA’s Executive Committee (EC). “This was my first exposure to a leadership position, and I learned a lot about the processes to follow to launch an initiative. Also I got to know established community psychologists on the EC, just from chatting over lunches.”

After completing that term, she looked for other leadership openings for students. “Unlike now, at the time, there were very few opportunities for students to be involved in SCRA.” So she took similar student positions for SPSSI (Division 8) and volunteered for conference planning and review committees. Once she obtained her Ph.D. (2007), she volunteered to become incoming chair of SCRA’s Women’s Committee, thereupon serving as chair (2008-9) and past chair. She worked with Susan Wolfe especially to revive that Committee which has ebbed and flowed over many decades. One outcome of her presidency of the Women’s Committee was the production of a special issue of the American Journal of Community Psychology on feminist community psychology, based on panels organized by the Women’s Committee at the Montclair biennial conference.

At the subsequent, Chicago, biennial conference, Michèle turned her attention to the needs of early career community psychologists, noting the absence in SCRA of an equivalent to SPSSI’s vibrant early scholars committee. SCRA’s EC long realized that many of the field’s recent graduates did not join SCRA. “No services were being provided to this group. The only noticeable difference after graduation was a steep increase in dues.” Michèle, in association with several others, spearheaded the formation of an early career task force which eventually garnered sufficient signatures to petition for recognition as an interest group. Michèle served as chair and then co-chair of the Early Career Interest Group but has recently cycled off, now that a regular rotation of leaders has been established.

Meanwhile, Michèle’s academic career flourished. Not long after she was promoted and tenured, the position of psychology department chair opened; having been supported by her department colleagues, the Dean appointed her to the 3-year position (the expectation is of continuity with a 3-year renewal). “I am considered young for a department chair, but although not the norm, it is not unprecedented around the university.” Michèle views her mandate as including the creation of a supportive work environment, with special attention to tenure-track and tenured but unpromoted faculty. “New faculty are inundated with assignments, delaying them from building an adequate research portfolio.” She endeavors to protect “her” faculty. She has, after one year as Chair, completed the learning curve, now able to be more efficient in administering the department in subsequent years. A power of the chair is that she assigns classes to faculty, so she assigns herself “cool,” community psychology rich classes, along with a reduced teaching load.

While establishing her academic career, Michèle’s life also has been eventful on the family front. Two years after moving to Salisbury, she began dating Donnie Copper, a personal trainer with whom she worked out. They married in 2012, and in 2014, baby Don Jr (DJ) arrived. Big brother Ty’s activities, as a gender nonconforming child, have become a focus of Michèle’s community involvement. “Having seen the intolerance he has faced in our conservative community, I became angry and was determined to affect social change. My role is to support him so he can realize his own leadership potential.” She searched for an existing advocacy group in the area but found only one, a PFLAG chapter in Delaware that is too far away for attending the chapter’s night meetings. Meanwhile, a group of professionals in Salisbury was coalescing around LGBTQ issues. “I got in on the coalition from the very beginning.” After preparing...
training modules for the coalition, she was invited onto the steering committee which has supported her proposal to form and incorporate (as a nonprofit) a local PFLAG chapter. This community group includes human service professionals, but most of the members, like Michèle, have a personal involvement with issues addressed by PFLAG, being family members and allies of LGBTQ people.

When asked what she hopes will be her major contribution, Michèle replies that she hopes to create a steady, consistent stream of positive impacts. She would like to be remembered for her consistent efforts to improve the various communities to which she belongs. Her research and community work is selected based on its personal relevance to her and her family at the time. “Who knows what I might want to do in the future, depending on what life brings me next.”

Erratum Statement: In the Summer 2015 issue, the Living Community Psychology column featured Eliot Levine. The email address was incorrect. Please address correspondence to Eliot Levine, Ph.D., elevine@donahue.umassp.edu.
awarded the 2015 Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology at SCRA at the biennial meeting in Lowell, MA. She lives with her husband and 13-year old son in Lexington, South Carolina. Dr. Wing Yi Chan is an Assistant Professor from the Department of Psychology at Georgia State University. Her research focuses on promoting positive youth development among adolescents and young adults from diverse backgrounds. Her most recent research examines how civic and political participation can prevent problem behaviors and promote successful transition to adulthood. Her work also addresses the development, implementation, and evaluation of school-based interventions (e.g., mentoring, service-learning) designed to promote academic success.

Southeastern ECO 2015 Announcement: Community Psychology Then and Now: From the “Swamp” to the City
UNCC Uptown Center City Campus
Charlotte, NC
October 23-25, 2015
This year marks the 50th anniversary of community psychology. The field grew out of disenchantment with psychology’s historically close focus on the individual to the exclusion of the environmental realities in which individuals are embedded. Community psychology has shifted our collective attention to context and promoted collaborative, research-driven problem solving at the grassroots level. In keeping with this vision, ECO conferences have created de-professionalized spaces, often in rustic settings, for students and faculty to share their research informally. While the field of community psychology has evolved since its birth at Swampscott, its emphasis on contextual factors remains as important as ever, as human ecological settings— including rural, urban, suburban, to exurban, and online spaces— become ever diverse. This year, we maintain the de-professionalized nature of past ECO conferences and celebrate community psychology’s original vision by highlighting the diversity of human ecology and taking conference goers from the rustic roots of the ECO conference to an urban landscape: Charlotte, NC. Please follow our Facebook page for regular updates: https://www.facebook.com/se.eco.2014?fref=ts

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News from the Midwest
Written by Olya Glantsman

An Event Update: Red Lake Tribal Nation Tree Planting Project

On Wednesday, June 17, 2015 several students from Metropolitan State University and Inver Hills Community College participated in a community apple tree planting project with the Red Lake Tribal Nation. The event was sponsored by the Society for Community Research and Action by a generous donation ($300.00) and also co-sponsored by The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation (a non-profit agency that is committed to planting fruit trees around the world). Over 40 apple trees of different varieties (Haralson, Frost Bite, etc.) were planted within
a two acre plot next to the Red Lake Elementary School. With support from the Dept. of Natural Resources, community members, students and faculty participated in the event. A picnic lunch was provided by The Dept. of Natural Resources after the tree planting project was completed. Several of the Red Lake Tribal Nation members commented that they appreciated the efforts of all participants and looked forward to the fruit being made available to all community members within a few years. More trees are planned for next year, and if you are interested please contact August Hoffman at: august.hoffman@metrostate.edu.

**Upcoming events:**

The upcoming 2016 Annual Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA)-Division 27 (SCRA) Affiliated Meeting will be on Friday May 6th. Also, on Friday May 1st at 5pm, after the MPA Presidential Address, come and join other members of Division 27 at a nearby restaurant for dinner and Poster Awards Session. All are welcome to attend! More details on these events will be shared soon.

For more information, or to send in your submission email: MPASCRA2016@gmail.com

Students from DePaul are planning a meeting to discuss how to have a more active role in SCRA regional matters, connect with peers and Regional Coordinators. Among other topics to be discussed are increasing student involvement with SCRA activities and organizing the SCRA MPA 2016. Students from all regional Universities can contact Olya Glantsman (oglantsman@gmail.com) for information about how to get involved. A brief on this meeting will be reported in a future TCP.

Announcements and information for inclusion in future Midwest updates should be sent to Olya Glantsman (oglantsman@gmail.com)

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**Updates from the West**

**Written by Lauren Lichty, Eylin Palamaro Munsell, and Erin Ellison**

There has been a flurry of activity in the West Region. We are in the process of developing a multi-year plan to create space for professional development and networking among students, academics, and community-based scholar-practitioners. Below are some highlights from our efforts:

**All-region Connection**

We have rebranded the regional conference previously known as Northwest ECO to “Community Research and Action in the West” (CRA-W). This re-naming reflects the intention for the conference to serve our entire region. We believe the conference name change will also make it more legible to our non-CP colleagues with the goal of fostering more interdisciplinary participation. Moreover, to increase the accessibility of the regional conference, we plan to rotate the location throughout our expansive region from year to year. We are also committed to offering more student travel awards. We are excited to announce that for 2015, we are dedicating nearly 90% of our SCRA regional funds to student attendance and participation in the regional conference. Finally, we anticipate developing local recurring symposia modeled after the very successful Bay Area symposium to create additional opportunities for regional growth and connection.

If you are in the West Region and would like to join these conversations, please come to the Community Research and Action in the West conference on October 16 or reach out to any and all of the West Regional Coordinators. We would love to hear from you.

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**Bay Area Community Psychology Network**

Bay Area Community Psychology and Intervention Group’s (BACPN) is planning for a Fall Symposium in Berkeley, date TBD.

The BACPN group consists of community psychologists, clinical psychologists, public health researchers, community workers, and colleagues from other fields with interests in community-based research and action. All students, faculty, practitioners, and community members with interests in community-based research and interventions are welcome in this group. We usually have two brief informal presentations, along with time to network, connect and informally check in about issues and ideas from our work. Our next meeting will be in Berkeley in the fall. If you are interested in becoming part of this network, please contact Erin Ellison (eellison@ucsc.edu) and Angela Nguyen (angelanguyen@ucsc.edu).
Association general assembly will be written by Caterina Arcidiacono, caterina.arcidiacono@unina.it Federico II University, Naples, Italy

News from Italy
Written by Caterina Arcidiacono

Strengthening Community Psychology in Europe
Lisboa, November 5-6, 2015

Strengthening community psychology in Europe is the seminar that will be held on November 5-6 in Lisboa by the ECPA community psychologists.

This seminar will delve into some controversial as well as fruitful aspects of our discipline, which is now facing the challenges of our globalized society. At the meeting, we will propose two introductory speeches on emerging problems. This will be coupled with a widespread internal exchange of knowledge and visions concerning Community Psychology’s capabilities. We will then organize a world café discussion on four Community psychology topics: (1) Community Psychology facing neuroscience and research excellence criteria, (2) Community psychologists’ knowledges and competencies, (3) Community psychology training, and (4) Professional roles and job opportunities. A special discussion will be dedicated to the ongoing CP EFPA standing committee’s survey on Community Psychology trainings in Europe. The congress will have an open discussion space for young researchers and students, and a dedicated space for poster presentations to facilitate everyone’s participation. As a reminder, the Association general assembly will be held during these two days. We hope that many concerned people will be able to participate.

Schedule
Nov 5
9:00: Registration
9:30-11: Welcome session with Maria Vargas-Monz, ISPA-IU/ECPA & José Ornelas, ISPA-IU (Welcome Address) and Serdar Değirmencioğlu ECPA President (“Notions of scholarship: Why do we do what we do?”)
11-11:30: Coffee Break
11:30-12:30: Carl Walker, ECPA Task Force on Fiscal Austerity and General Discussion
12:30-13:45: Lunch Break
14:00-17:30: WORLD CAFÉ (part 1): World Zeitgeist for psychology, Introduction: Wolfgang Stark, University of Essen, Germany/ECPA and Competencies and knowledge, Introduction: Caterina Arcidiacono, University of Naples Federico II, Italy/ECPA
15:30-16:00: Coffee Break
16:00-17:30 WORLD CAFÉ (part 2): Training, Introduction: Bruna Zani, University of Bologna, Italy/ECPA and Activities and functions Introduction: Maria Vargas-Monz, ISPA – IU, Portugal/ ECPA
17:30-19:00 ECPA Assembly 1: Facilitator: Wolfgang Stark, Presentation Result of “Report on Community Psychology Competencies” Jacqueline Akhurst, and Bernd Roehrle

Nov 6
8:30-9:30: Poster Presentation
9:30-11:00: Discussion on World Café Results; Community Psychology Competencies Report; Student and young researcher session; Discussant: Donata Francescato
11:00-11:30: Coffee Break
11:30-12:30: Students and young researchers open space
14:00-15:30: General Assembly II - Agenda to be developed by EC; Report of Treasurer; Report of President; Discussion and voting of the reports for the 2015-2017 mandate; Discussion and voting of the Internal Regulations; Presentation of Candidate for next President Elect and Treasurer
15:30-16:00: Coffee Break
16:00-19:00: Agenda to be developed by EC; Election of President Elect; Liz Cunningham, President (2015-2017): Future Plans and Closing Address

Report back of Summer School in Community Psychology – Florence, July 13-17, 2015
Written by Patriza Meringolo -SIPCO PRESIDENT

SIPCO (Italian Society of Community Psychology) and ECPA (European Community Psychology Association) held the First Edition of the Summer School “Methods for community research, action and change” at the Department of Education and Psychology at the University of Florence. The Summer School aimed to provide students with a theoretical foundation of community research methods, and practical tools to conduct community research. It focused on critical knowledge and skills of community research and action; intensive training in designing, implementing, and evaluating research projects; and applying specific participatory research methods to reinforce participants’ autonomy in planning and leading field community research and action.

Some of the most renowned experts and international scholars in Community Research Methods were involved: Caterina Arcidiacono (European Community Psychology Association, past president, University Federico II, Naples), Carolyn Kagan (Metropolitan Manchester University, United Kingdom), Manuel García Ramírez (University of Sevilla, Spain), Terri Mannarini (University of...
Salento, Italy), Raffaello Martini (MartiniAssociati, Italy), and Patrizia Meringolo (SIPCO - Italian Society of Community Psychology, president, University of Florence).

The Summer School was sponsored by SIPCO, ECPA, the Department of Education and Psychology, AIP (Italian Association of Psychology), Trust Saulo Sirigatti, and APA’s (American Psychological Association) Division 27 (Society for Community Research and Action). Two grants were offered to participants, to facilitate: one of them by SIPCO (the winner was Chiara Cifatte, from Italy) and the other by Trust Saulo Sirigatti (the winner was Sara Aguirre Sanchez-Beato, from Spain).

The experts’ contributions were stimulating and appreciated by all. Participants were deeply involved in the proposed activities, produced materials that will be elaborated upon and systematized to obtain a set of tools available for a future network of young researchers in community psychology.

The students who attended were engaged in PhD courses or were early career researchers who identified as community psychologists or as researchers using instruments from community psychology. Attendees were from Italy or abroad, including European and non-European countries (e.g., Spain, Bulgaria, Poland, Colombia and Australia). They contributed different experiences, which was interesting for the whole group. It appeared that the first Summer School in Community Psychology was attractive for young people coming from far away. Promoters and participants want to maintain the link built during these days, broadening the network to those who may be potentially interested, starting from this positive experience toward a next opportunity.

Self Help & Mutual Support
Edited by Greg Townley and Alicia Lucksted

Impressions of Clubs of Treated Alcoholics in Post-socialist Zagreb, Croatia
Written by Thomasina Borkman (tborkman@gmu.edu)
Professor of Sociology Emerita, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA;
Affiliate scientist, Alcohol Research Group, Emeryville, CA

In the spring of 2012 I visited Croatia for two weeks at the invitation of sociologist Ann Dill from Brown University who had a Fulbright fellowship to continue her research on Croatian human service agencies. Ann introduced me to many mutual help groups and their professional supporters whom she had known from her decades of research. The focus of this report will be on the Clubs of Treated Alcoholics; these are after-care programs sanctioned by the professionals in charge of government-based hospital alcoholism treatment programs.

Post-Socialist context of health and human services in Croatia. Croatia in the last 20 years has fought a war of independence and become a democratic and capitalistic nation, a member of the European Union. Some mutual help groups were developed in and after the 1970s, but they were primarily under the aegis of professionals in governmentally based agencies. Dill and Coury (2008) showed that both these older mutual help groups and newer ones for contemporary problems remain dependent upon the state and that few exist except as legally incorporated NGOs or nonprofit organizations. Dill and Coury (2008) used Gidron and Chesler’s (1994, p.3) definition of mutual help which had been devised for international analysis as “the recruitment and mobilization of peers in an informal and non-hierarchical setting, and the sharing of their common experiences.” This definition leaves open the issue of group autonomy. Dill and Coury (2008, p.250) contend “that bracketing the question of group autonomy is essential when working in settings where there has been little independence of action beyond structures provided or condoned by the state.” The Croatian case is important as an exemplar of how the governmental, economic and cultural context of a country affects the kinds and characteristics of mutual help groups that can develop (Dill & Coury 2008).

Methods: Research on the Clubs of Treated Alcoholics included: interviewing two psychiatrists at their hospital offices in Zagreb including Dr. Torres, the director of the Clubs; attending a yearly conference about the Clubs which had slides and/or talks in English about their activities in Croatia; interviewing in English in some depth a social worker, Ana M., who was a paid facilitator of two Clubs in Zagreb; and, briefly interviewing two long term members of a Club. This report conveys some initial impressions of a traveler who specializes in mutual help research (see Borkman 1999). Observing as an outsider not knowing the language, I was reliant on their speaking English or having a translator. My guide and colleague Ann Dill was invaluable in interpreting as well as providing context for what I was learning.

Clubs of Treated Alcoholics in Zagreb: American researchers of mutual help groups were probably introduced to Croatian Clubs of Treated Alcoholics (CTAs) in Humphrey’s extensive overview of addiction groups in Circles
Clubs” need to be legally registered voluntary associations, and include who have been through professional (NGOs); to acquire the NGO status, (Whyte, et al. 2002). “Treated (Humphreys 2004, p. 14). Like Dill Zagreb. The initiator of the Clubs, Croatia now requires professional Clubs in 1964 as a form of after leadership (Dill 2014). The Clubs are organized into a federation of Clubs referred to as the Union which is also an NGO with officers. Each individual Club has officers (i.e., President, Vice-President, and Secretary) and elects someone (often an officer) to represent them at the Union level. Funding from the city of Zagreb pays for the professional “expert help,” among other things. Now the Union applies for funding on behalf of all local Clubs; this has increased the control of the Union over individual Clubs.

The role of the professional in the Clubs: The social worker Ana has a contract with two Clubs. These are part time jobs while she works on a doctoral degree in social work and social policy at the University of Zagreb. She said the professional staff were called “expert workers,” “professional workers,” or “therapists.” Professional workers are required to have an initial sensitization training of four modules. She went through the first module, but was excused from the others since she had learned the material in her basic social work training in college. She considers her role to be that of a non-directive facilitator; “We provide topics to enhance the discussion; we provide ways of them thinking about themselves and what they are doing” (Ana 2012). She indicated that professional workers varied with some being more directive than others—e.g., some phone or visit members who miss Club meetings; “they force discipline upon the members.”

When asked about members helping each other (i.e., mutual aid), the professional worker said the members are always helping each other, but then she referred to members abstinent for five or more years as being special helpers. It was ambiguous as to whether that referred primarily or only to taking special positions such as being an officer of a Club, or also to helping other members in special ways (such as sponsor). Golik-Gruber and others (2001) described a study of CTAs in Croatia among 117 “treated alcoholics”; some with 10 years plus abstinence help the community when alcohol related disturbances occur and some receive additional education to be “co-professional workers—amateur therapists.”

Analysis: Are Clubs of Treated Alcoholics mutual help organizations or support groups with professional facilitators? If Humphrey’s definition is used which is similar to definitions of other American researchers (see Borkman 1999, Katz 1981), then they are support organizations with professional facilitators as there is no member-directed leadership. If Gidron and Chesler’s definition of mutual help organization which Dill and Coury (2008) use is followed, then CTAs could be mutual help organizations. Given the contested definitions and the ambiguity in different societal environments, perhaps we need to be asking different questions. We need to shift our approach from defining groups in simple dichotomies. Instead, consider these groups on a continuum—look at how and under what conditions mutual aid and other outcomes occur in groups owned and controlled in various configurations (as was also suggested by Shepherd and colleagues [1999]). Further, the professional’s orientation to the mutual aid paradigm of helping—(the self-help supporter [Oka and Borkman 2011] versus the...
traditional professional) needs to be considered. Reorient research to compare groups with similar focal problems but different ownership/leadership to see empirically what kinds of results can be obtained with different organizational structures. It is likely that all forms of “support groups” can and do provide some social and emotional support, but what differences, if any, are there in the amount and kinds of support in different types of groups? Beyond support, however, how much of what kinds of mutual aid, advocacy and individual and collective empowerment can develop in various types of groups? Further, what, if any, kinds of major changes such as change of meaning perspective (Borkman 1999) or identity transformation can evolve without group autonomy?

References


Student Issues
Edited by Sarah Callahan and Meagan Sweeney (Studentreps@SCRA27.org)

Culturally Sensitive Mentoring: Reflections from a SCRA Roundtable
By Irene Daboin, Allana Zuckerman, Dominique Thomas, and Robyn Borgman
(Georgia State University)

Mentoring Graduate Students
Mentoring is a fundamental responsibility for most faculty members at research and training universities. As community psychologists, we pride ourselves in promoting the creation and implementation of evidence-based practices, but little is said about what best practices in graduate student mentoring look like. For example, there are no mentoring guidelines on our division’s website. Moreover, even less is said concerning mentoring graduate students from diverse backgrounds. Unfortunately, a broad search of the literature on mentoring reveals that there are well over 50 definitions of mentoring across academia (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). One article by Berk and colleagues (2005) provides a well-constructed definition of graduate mentoring that includes a focus on the professional development of the mentee. While this may be a solid foundation on which to build, previous work has demonstrated that graduate students of color and international students often find themselves with additional needs that go beyond their development as a scholar. For example, findings from the evaluation of a mentoring program specifically for graduate students reveal that the combination of both professional and socio-emotional support was viewed as extremely necessary, especially for students of color (Waitzkin, Yager, Parker & Duran, 2006).

Mentoring Students of Color
Maton and colleagues (2011) found that students of color reported more challenges (both academic and non-academic) related to their ethnicity as well as less meaningful representation than their White peers. Because students of color have to navigate these additional issues, it is even more important for them to have a positive mentoring experience while in graduate school. Two factors that play a role in the support and satisfaction that
graduate students experience are surface-level similarity (mentor and mentee are of the same race or ethnicity) and deep-level similarity (mentor and mentee share similar values). Ortiz-Walters and Gilson (2005) found that graduate students of color who had mentors of color or mentors with similar values received more support and were more satisfied and comfortable. However, while the sample was all graduate students of color, a significant majority (73%) of the graduate mentors were White. Many graduate students of color do not have the opportunity to have a mentor of the same race or ethnicity, leaving them to hope that the mentor they have shares the same values.

While previous work has postulated that White professors can have meaningful and important cross-cultural mentoring relationships with students of color, there are additional obstacles that must be considered (Walker, Wright, & Hanley, 2001). An excellent article on multicultural mentoring by Schlosser and Foley (2008) discussed many of the ethical considerations that arise as a function of mentoring graduate students, particularly those who are from socially oppressed groups. Ethical issues included having multiple relationships with mentors (e.g., both inside and outside of the classroom) and recognition of how the intersection of our multiple personal identities can enhance the power differential between a professor and a graduate student. As a woman of color and a first generation college student, one of this paper’s authors, Allana Zuckerman, finds the socio-emotional aspect of mentoring extremely important because of her multiple intersecting identities. While she has been fortunate to receive some of this support during my graduate training, it is an aspect of mentoring that is oftentimes neglected.

**Mentoring International Students**

Culturally-sensitive mentoring is a significant challenge and, given the increasing influx of international students, is one that is becoming more and more important for our field to navigate properly. In the 2013-14 academic year alone, a total of 886,052 international students were enrolled in universities across the United States. Given this statistic, it is quite surprising (and appalling, really) how little literature our field has on the topic of mentoring international students. According to one article, the most common stressors faced by international students include: second language anxiety, performance expectations, academic system adjustment, culture shock, social isolation, financial concerns, discrimination, and prejudice (Chen, 1999). Another publication revealed that international students are most in need during their initial transition after their arrival to the U.S., and that they experience a number of critical barriers in their attempts to adjust to their new life (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007). The authors of that study argue that institutions of higher education need to constantly evaluate the entire context into which they recruit and educate international students; it is not sufficient to focus on individual level problems. Advisors’ sensitivity to cultural issues and a willingness to learn about their student’s culture is a key element to helping these students (Poyrazli & Grahame, 2007).

In terms of mentoring international students at the graduate level, the literature gets even scarcer. One study examining a mentor-led international doctoral student support group, found that students wanted advice about teaching, conducting research, and preparing for a job, as well as more support and help learning about the local culture (Ku, Lahman, Yeh, & Cheng, 2008). Participants of that study also suggested that advisors needed to be more accessible and care about their students (Ku, Lahman, Yeh, & Cheng, 2008).

An additional complication, and a unique potential challenge of working with international students, is the possibility of having to work with international students while they are facing a home-country crisis. The literature on this is close to non-existent. To our knowledge, there is only one, very recently published phenomenological study, on the experiences of five international students studying in the U.S. while experiencing large-scale crises in their home countries (McCovey, 2015).

Given the nature of international affairs, it is safe to assume that home-country crises are not uncommon for international students. Consider, for example, the prospect that most students come to U.S. initially motivated by the critical state of affairs back home. Another of this paper’s authors, Irene Daboin, is one of those students and was not surprised to read about how students dealing with a home-country crisis often have to find a “new normal” (McVay, 2015). While she has received a lot of support from her program and has no complaints about the mentoring she has received, experiencing a home-country crisis was a difficult personal experience for her, and one that was mostly invisible to everybody else.

**Summary and Reflections from Our SCRA Roundtable**

Like many other universities, Georgia State University’s students come from a diverse range of backgrounds and have a diverse range of needs. However, our mentors sometimes lack formal training on how to address our varied needs. The brief activity
the authors completed during our SCRA Biennial roundtable discussion (Daboin, Zuckerman, & Thomas, 2015) revealed that students from diverse backgrounds have many overlapping needs that often go unnoticed or unmet by their faculty advisors. When asked to write down words that described “mentor” or “mentoring”, the words that participants provided the most included: “support/supportive” (financial and social-emotional) and “facilitate networking.” Additional words included “guidance”, “understanding”, “vision (saw/believed in me when I didn’t)” and “compassion.”

As noted in the previous literature reviews, and echoed by participants’ experiences shared at the roundtable, students desire academic and career opportunities, but also socio-emotional support. Academics are notoriously bad at the latter, although it is equally as important as the former. As discussed above, students of color and international students experience additional adversity in an academic context and may also have family members experiencing hardships, locally and abroad. If faculty mentors are not provided with proper training and tools on how to handle such challenges in a culturally sensitive manner, many students will be left without the vital supports they need to thrive.

**Final Recommendations**

Through various discussions, we realized that many students and mentors are living in a state of confusion and discomfort due to this lack of training and lack of mutual understanding of needs and resources. We suggest that we push for having intentional conversations about mentoring within our graduate programs and continue to ask ourselves: What do we want mentoring to be in Community Psychology? What do we want it to look like for graduate students, particularly graduate students of color and international students? How do we want to consider the additional intersecting identities that we have as people and as professionals and how we can better incorporate them into our model of successful mentoring? What are some concrete ways we, as a field, can do better at ensuring that we retain students of color?

**References**


Transformative Change in Community Mental Health
Interest Group
Edited by Geoffrey Nelson, Wilfrid Laurier University
(gnelson@wlu.ca)

The Practice of Transformative Community Mental Health: Challenges and Perspectives for Change
Written by José Ornelas
Associate Professor at ISPA – University, Lisboa Portugal
(jornelas@ispa.pt / www.ispa.pt),
Co-founder of the Transformative Change in Community Mental Health Interest Group

The SCRA Interest Group on Transformative Change in Community Mental Health was formed by a transnational group of academic, professional and movement leaders who share a common vision around the need to strengthen and transform mental health communities worldwide. Within Community Psychology, over the past 50 years, a substantive body of research has been published, and countless reports of practical experiences have been produced containing major lessons on ecological approaches to community integration, on empowerment, and on the recognition of the value of mutual help groups, user movements, and consumer-run organizations. More recently, it has become increasingly important to consider the applicability of the capabilities approach to mental health services and supports, providing in-depth reflections on the role of organizations in the promotion of the development of the peoples they were designed to support and the communities where they live (Shinn, 2015).

Since 1987, a community-based organization named AEIPS (Associação para o Estudo e Integração Psicossocial) was designed to contribute towards the development of a transformative community mental health paradigm in Portugal. This organization, founded by professionals, consumers and families, emerged in a sociopolitical context of great expansion of civil society initiatives, including the emergence of private media, a diversity of social initiatives addressing child poverty, youth development, and interventions in neighborhoods, as well as in the field of arts and culture, following Portugal joining in 1986 the EEC (European Economic Community), nowadays the EU (European Union). AEIPS established an innovative practice of partnership with the University (ISPA-University Institute), that provided the opportunity to link research and action, and the constant reflection on the challenges of the overall aim of deinstitutionalizing and operationalizing a mission focused on advocacy for human rights and social justice for those who live with the experience of mental illness, and the vision of communities enriched by human diversity.

Transformational change in this context is conceptualized at multiple levels of analysis and matching intervention strategies with the appropriate level of analysis. AEIPS operates as a mediating structure, promoting transformative change across levels that includes influencing public policies, promoting organizational change and development, and providing individual opportunities and networks for social integration. In the realm of public policies, through almost three decades, AEIPS has been involved in several key-moments of building or changing legislation, such as public financing schemes for community-based organizations in mental health, including community centers, housing, employment, and educational programs and supports; establishing national plans for the reform of mental health services, including the substantial reduction of large-scale psychiatric hospitals; and co-founding a national federation of community-based organizations, that at present represents these organizations at the National Council for Mental Health.

At the organizational level, transformative change emphasizes active consumer participation in planning, governance, evaluation, and research, with real voice and power. The emphasis on empowerment and collaboration is relevant to consumer participation. Mutual collaboration between professionals and consumers has become increasingly relevant in terms of support coordination, resource mobilization, and innovation. Such partnerships involve consumer participation in all decision-making, service delivery, and evaluation procedures in AEIPS (see photo of AEIPS below).

The individual level of analysis includes the recognition of the importance of the concepts of recovery, empowerment, advocacy, and mutual help controlled by users. Since 2006, consumers have been
able to expand their influence by forming the National Network of People with Mental Illness, which organizes a nation-wide meeting once a year, promotes awareness, mobilization and representation both at the local and national levels. The advocacy for community integration has lead to the permanent focus on bridging with regular social resources, organizing support networks to facilitate consumers’ access to independent housing, to enroll and graduate in regular schools or universities, and to have opportunities for mainstream employment in the community.

In the housing stream, the support program provides individualized and flexible services to assist people with mental illness to live independently, including the choices concerning location where participants want to live and with whom they wish to live. The generalization of this model and its influence on the mental health systems is inspired by the Housing First approach (Tsemberis, 2010), which is being implemented in several cities in Portugal. Housing First was introduced in Portugal by AEIPS in Portugal in 2009, and represented the country as an innovative initiative in the European Year against Poverty (2010). Based on the premises of supported employment and education, AEIPS has offered since 1990 individualized support to people who want return to school, to undertake or complete any level or degree of education, or achieve employment in mainstream businesses in the community (Ornelas, Duarte, & Monteiro, 2014). The completion of a cycle of model program streams based on individualized housing, education and employment embodies the transformative community mental health mission that emphasizes human rights and social justice. This endeavor requires professionals and consumer leaders who focus on community integration, health and well-being promotion. These change actors are aware that their interventions are an alternative to the reproduction of traditional inward or even community practices associated with occupational or art therapies including painting, work-crafts or other entertaining activities as a replacement for active empowerment, full community participation and leadership. The movement towards a transformative community mental health model is a possibility in all stages of the life cycle, and deinstitutionalization is still a path to complete, as large scale psychiatric institutions persist. Following the National Plan for the Reform of Mental Health Services, the Portuguese Government decided to close Hospital Miguel Bombarda (1848-2011), the oldest psychiatric hospital in the country (see photo above in right column), where Egas Moniz used “patients” for his psychosurgical experiments (e.g., lobotomies).

AEIPS conducted a careful preparation and transition to a community residential facility of the last group of 24 elderly patients, who averaged 71 years of age, and continuous hospitalization for an average of 42 years. This initiative probed to demonstrate that people of all ages and long-term hospitalizations are able to live in and be part of the community if coherent and consistent efforts focus on community integration, empowerment, and recovery.

The SCRA Interest Group on “Transformative Change in Community Mental Health”, following the spirit of the roundtable held during the XIV Biennial Conference in Lowell, Mass., is a privileged space to discuss and share these experiences in a global perspective, to promote innovation, science and change processes in the field of community mental health.

References
Society for Community Research & Action
Membership Application

Membership Contact Information:
First Name: ___________________________  Last Name: ___________________________
Address line 1: ___________________________
Address line 2: ___________________________
Address line 3: ___________________________
City, State, Postal Code: ___________________________  Country: ___________________________
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Academic or Institutional Affiliation: ___________________________

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_____ Disabilities
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What year did you graduate? ___________
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Articles, columns, features, Letters to the Editor, and announcements should be submitted as Word attachments in an e-mail message to Dan Cooper and Tiffany McDowell at TCP@scra27.org or by postal mail to the editors: c/o Institute on Social Exclusion, Adler University, 17 N. Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60602. Authors should adhere to the following guidelines when submitting materials:

- **Length:** Five pages, double-spaced
- **Images:** Images are highly recommended, but please limit to two images per article. Images should be higher than 300 dpi. Photo image files straight from the camera are acceptable. If images need to be scanned, please scan them at 300 dpi and save them as JPEGs. Submit the image(s) as a separate file. Please note that images will be in black and white when published.
- **Margins:** 1” margins on all four sides
- **Text:** Times New Roman, 12-point font
- **Alignment:** All text should be aligned to the left (including titles).
- **Color:** Make sure that all text (including links, e-mails, etc.) are set in standard black.
- **Punctuation Spacing:** Per APA guidelines, make sure that there is only one space after periods, question marks, etc.
- **Graphs & Tables:** These should be in separate Word documents (one for each table/graphs if multiple). Convert all text in the graph into the consistent font and font size.
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- **References:** Follow APA guidelines. These should also be justified to the left with a hanging indent of .25”.
- **Headers/Footer:** Do not use headers and footers.
- **Long quotes:** Follow APA guidelines for quoted materials.
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The Community Psychologist and the American Journal of Community Psychology are mailed to all SCRA members. To join SCRA and receive these publications, send membership dues to SCRA (Div 27), 4440 PGA Blvd., #600, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410. Membership dues are $30 for student members, $75 for United States members, $60 for international members, and $15 for senior members (must be 65 or over, retired, and a member of SCRA/Division 27 for 25 years; senior members will receive TCP but not AJCP). The membership application is in each edition of The Community Psychologist.

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2. 4 to 5 endorsement letters written by current Fellows,

3. Supporting materials, including a vita with refereed publications marked with an “R,” and

4. A nominee’s self-statement setting forth her/his accomplishments that warrant nomination to Fellow Status.

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