Promoting Community Conversations that Lead to Action and Resistance

The events that have transpired in this country during the last 16 months under the current political and social environment are troubling to say the least. The national issues we are experiencing as a country such as the immigration crisis; school shootings and lack of gun control policies; the dismantling of environmental policies; the withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord; the proposed cuts to health, housing and other assistance that support families of low and moderate resources; cuts in SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program); cuts in housing and energy assistance; proposal to cancel housing vouchers (see Parrott, Aron-Dine, Rosenbaum, Rice, Floyd, & Roming); increases in racial profiling and acts of discrimination against Latinos and Blacks; and the list goes on and on, will negatively impact many American families including children, seniors and people with disabilities. As a community researcher who works with people with disabilities and Latino families, I am appalled, like others are, at the proposed cuts in disability benefits. These reductions include cutting Social Security Disability Insurance, as well as Supplemental Security Income. These and other cuts will put an additional hardship on individuals who need supports the most. Basically, these are blunt attacks on middle class and lower income hard-working Americans. I did not mean to write a bleak last column as president of SCRA, however our current environment is dismal, and it calls for action.

Current times call for extraordinary acts of courage, civic engagement, and community activism. I think community psychologists can play a critical and pivotal role during these troubling times. We have much to contribute to the current national discourse and we can also learn from other groups of individuals. For instance, young people, like the Parkland School students, are paving the way for transformation and displaying strong advocacy and organizing skills. Young folks are rallying communities and moving the conversation on gun control from the local to the state and national levels.

During difficult times like this, it is important to bring the national issues we care about, to conversations at the community and local levels. One way in which change is happening gradually is via community conversations. Community conversations involve residents and other stakeholders coming together in small groups to engage in constructive dialogue. This is a process intended to promote critical awareness and consideration of steps that community members could take to address the issues at the local level. As community psychologists there is much we can do to support local change and gather communities for conversations about local issues and support a process of critical dialogue and potential transformation. At the core of having these conversations is engaging with the community at the local level on issues that matter to them. Community conversations are also a way to promote civic engagement, community collective action, and local efficacy (Collins, Watling Neal, & Neal, 2014).

Conversations may take the form of listening sessions at community agencies, faith-based organizations, local libraries, or any other public spaces that provide opportunities for community residents to come together and share their experience and views on critical issues. There are several tools available to engage communities in conversations about local issues. See the community conversations toolkit by the CDC (https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/nationalconversation/docs/Toolkit_3instructions.pdf); the community conversations toolkit on immigration, (https://www.scribd.com/document/144886635/Community-Conversations-Immigration-Toolkit); the community conversations about mental health (https://www.samhsa.gov/community-conversations); and other tools to support community conversation on public issues (https://www.publicagenda.org/pages/community-conversations). Community psychologists have an important role to play in these community conversations. We could become the conveners, organizers, encourage others to participate, disseminate efforts, reach out to marginalized communities to engage in conversations, brainstorm with residents on how to follow the community conversation with a civic engagement project, and other forms of activism. Given our expert knowledge on community engagement, capacity building, civic engagement, empowerment settings, community conversations are a perfect fit and in fact, we have been having community conversations all along.

Several entities are sponsoring community conversations...
At another community conversation we were having with immigrant Latino families, we gathered the families to meet with a state representative, and created a brief walk to promote safety, created information cards with safety tips to distribute to residents, we engaged with the community on several civic engagement actions such as a community intervention we designed with the community. As a result of the community conversation, we have been taken away by immigration authorities. This conversation prompted an action by the group to identify resources in the community on rights, support systems, distribution of preparedness materials, and identification of mental health supports for children and families.

Community conversations can also empower settings and residents to take action (see Maton, 2008) and provide opportunities for participants to share their knowledge, ideas, experiences, and values on issues they care about and come together to cope with stressful times; feeling less isolated. Community conversations can also lead to local advocacy. Ken Maton and his students are part of an APA grant awarded to four divisions, including SCRA, to gather and create a set of tools on local advocacy. Such tools will be available to all SCRA members by 2019. We also have access to the Community Tool Box (https://ctb.ku.edu/en), which has a great list of actions that communities can take to pursue change.

Another important contribution of community psychologists includes the writing and dissemination of policy statements such as the statement on the effects of deportation and forced separation on immigrants, their families, and communities (see Langhout, Buckingham, Oberoi, Chavez, Rush, Esposito, & Suarez-Balcazar, available at http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/policy/policy-position-statements/effects-deportation-families/). The statement prepared by the Immigrant Justice Interest Group on the incarceration of undocumented migrant families (Chicco, Esparza, Lykes, Balcazar, & Ferrera, available at http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/policy/policy-position-statements/family-incarceration/), among several other statements on crucial issues.

Moving forward, I encourage all of us to engage in community conversations and find out what are communities thinking in terms of current issues, how are they coping, and how they can build on their resources and assets to resist and still thrive in the face of uncertainty and stress. We also welcome more policy statements and rapid responses that call attention to issues as well as attention to action.

Reflecting on my last TCP column as President

Writing this last TCP column as president of SCRA, reminded me of the incredibly talented and committed SCRA staff, Executive Committee members and the many of you who have volunteered endless hours to this organization. We are, as you know, a volunteer organization and count on the many wonderful members who are truly committed to advancing the field of community psychology and SCRA here in this country and around the world. We couldn't do it without you. I invite you all to be involved and continue to volunteer and engage in community conversations about current events. Provide support to communities in distress, putting our community psychology values and principles into action.

References


From the Editors
Written by Susan M. Wolfe, Susan Wolfe and Associates, and Dominique Thomas, Georgia State University

To start, all we can say is WOW! This is our third issue as editors and we are amazed and overwhelmed with the volume and quality of content we are receiving.

Special Feature
Early this year there was a string of emails on the listserv that discussed how community psychology (CP) has evolved (or has it?), what differentiates the field from others, and then asks why we are still explaining what CP is. These were interesting questions and interesting viewpoints were shared. To continue the dialogue, we invited someone to edit a special feature on this, and Geraldine Palmer stepped up. She invited several community psychologists to share their perspectives and some accepted while others declined. She was able to put together a collection of contributions representing diverse viewpoints on the topic (although certainly not the complete range of views among SCRA members). Jessica Siham Fernandez calls on CP to be the “political activists, agents of social change, and participant conceptualizers” that the early attendees at the Boston Conference on the Education of Psychologists for Community Mental Health described. Leonard Jason and Jack O’Brien highlight CP’s potential to provide its unique perspective to understand behavior in context in a “theoretically meaningful way.” Geraldine Palmer calls on the field to change its “flat tire” and adapt to issues confronting communities; issues rooted in oppression and inequality. She suggests we intentionally frame what we are and protest all forms of oppression and inequity in ways that are visible. Michèle Schlehofer differentiates between social psychology, sociology and CP and presents a call for more interdisciplinary training. Daniela Miranda suggests we should be sharing CP with other fields and points out CP’s key strengths – that we share our tools and shift the power dynamics that are prevalent in other psychology branches. She also cautions CP’s to be careful with our tools, that we are “transformative and not unknowingly ameliorative.” The special feature ends with commentary by Geraldine Palmer and Bradley Olson. They point out the strengths in the articles and issue a call to action to academics and practitioners to continue to facilitate CP’s evolution.

Relative to this special feature, a paper submitted by SCRA member Tarell C. Kyles discusses Black Power as a generative sociopsychological construct. Through this article it becomes clear that many concepts from different communities and movements...
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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,
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Community Health
The Community Health Interest Group focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the community.

Chair-

Co-Chairs:

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.

Chair:
Naoko Yura Yasui,
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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.

Chair:
Mera Boulos,
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Latriece Clarke,
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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 roles of community psychology as well as Village Psychology can and should play in understanding these urgent changes to our world.

Chair:
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Allison Eady,
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Immigrant Justice
The Immigrant Justice Interest Group focuses on helping immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to advocate for the rights of immigrants and refugees at the local level, to educate SCRA members about opportunities to collaborate with local agencies/organizations in support of immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees, to provide information and tools that could be shared with local agencies/organizations to help immigrants and refugees.

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Indigenous
The Indigenous Interest Group is hosted by the Australian, New Zealand and Pacific branches of the Society for Community Research and Action. The aims of this group are to be engaged in research and action related to issues that impact First Nations people, and to serve as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are interested in research/service/policy related to First Nations people and communities, and/ or who identify as Indigenous.

Chair:
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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, and theories into community psychology.

Chair:
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Neil Boyd, neil.boyd@ bucknell.edu

Prevention & promotion
The Prevention & Promotion interest group seeks to enhance the skills of early career community psychologists in understanding in these urgent changes to our world.

Chair:
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School Intervention
The School Intervention Interest Group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and promotion health in school.

Chair:
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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:
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Transformative 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 based 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:
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Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings
The Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings interest group addresses issues that impact the delivery of community psychology services in educational settings.

Chair:
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Last updated 02/13/18
often are ignored, even though they align so well with CP values. Given CP’s focus on empowerment and social change, it becomes important to understand how this looks from the perspective of marginalized groups. The very concepts we study and the perspectives we value send a message of which groups we value and if CP is consistent in its own values. If CP makes the claim of a respect for diversity, what type of transformative field do we really have when most of the canonical theories and frameworks are mostly developed by White (mostly male) CP’s? Additionally, how well can these constructs map onto diverse populations? Do we risk perpetuating the very oppressive structures we seek to dismantle?

Take Action!

Some of our columns prompt community psychologists to take action while providing excellent tools and information to help us to do so. The issue begins with SCRA President Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar’s final column. She continues to inspire us to act by suggesting that we engage in community listening sessions. She shares links to resources to help us with them. Cassandra Bailey, Amanda Venta and The Immigrant Justice group share eight ways for community psychologists to advocate for immigrant justice based on information shared in a 2018 article in the APA Monitor. The information they present should serve as a call for action for SCRA members to find a way to engage in advocacy for any issue, not just immigrant justice. Robin Jenkins makes an excellent case for how community psychologists – with our values and competencies – are well suited to inform policy dialogue, ensure violence prevention is actualized in policies, and inform policies in The Public Policy column.

Learning About SCRA Members and Their Work

This issue also offers us ways to learn more about our colleagues, and the work they are doing. The Criminal Justice Interest Group column shares Jordan Lankford and Christopher Beasley’s work to create and implement CBPAR Advisory Board for Post-Prison Education Research. So many CP’s work with populations experiencing poverty, homelessness, joblessness, and other social problems. If we look more closely, many individuals in these populations likely have some history of involvement with the criminal justice system, including prison sentences. Even after serving their time and working to turn their lives around they undeservedly face challenges with education, employment, and housing. It is encouraging to see SCRA members turning their attention to and seeking solutions to this problem.

In the Council of Education column Dawn Henderson shares the work that was funded by the SCRA Council of Education’s Mini-Grant Initiative and we can see the impact some members are able to make with a small amount of funding. The Rural Issues column shares knowledge gained from J. Dennis Murray and Peter A. Keller’s 40 years of experience serving rural communities. It describes the challenges that are confronted by communities lacking the resources that can be found in more urban areas, and the strengths that help them to continue to overcome them. They also share case examples of successful partnerships and the value their CP training and perspective added to their work.

Learning About Mutual Support for Vulnerable Populations

The Self-Help / Mutual Aid column shares information about a peer support network specifically for those who hear voices. This article highlights the need for the availability of mutual support opportunities for individuals who feel socially separated.

Improving CP Education

Some of the columns offer valuable information about how we can improve CP education. The CP Practice in Undergraduate Settings editors share an article on undergraduate research and mentoring. Two teams, one at SUNY Old Westbury and one from Rhodes College, share their experiences, including challenges and recommendations, with developing undergraduate research and mentoring programs. This article is especially interesting because it was co-written by the students and faculty and presents both perspectives. It will be especially useful for faculty who are grappling with incorporating undergraduate opportunities to participate in research in their programs.

In the Council of Education’s column, Mason Haber, Laura Kohn-Wood, and the Members of the SCRA Council on Education share the findings from the 2016 Survey of Graduate Programs in Community Psychology and what was learned from them. They conclude by expressing hope that these findings, and the first set presented in TCP in 2017 are used to advance CP graduate training quality.

SCRA News

In the Regional Network News column Scot Evans shares what is going on around the country within each region. We can see just how much SCRA members from each of the regions are engaging with the regional psychological associations, presenting and sharing community psychology, and sharing information about new programs that are emerging.

The Student Issues column presents the announcement of the 2018 National Student Representative Research Grant Recipients and the work they plan for their dissertations and masters’ theses. Congratulations to Ana Genkova, Francesca Esposito, Lauren Munro, Zahra Murtaza, Colby Kipp, and Tiyondah Fante-Coleman!

We are also excited to congratulate Christiane Sadeler, the recipient of the 2018 SCRA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology, and Irma Serrano-Garcia, the recipient of the 2018 SCRA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research in Community Psychology. Be sure to read about the amazing contributions both have made to the field.

And, finally, the call is out for proposals for a host for the 2021 SCRA Biennial Conference. We suggest some unlikely organizations consider applying (e.g., undergraduate programs, practice focused organizations, a collaboration of CPs in the same city). While hosting a large conference presents challenges, it also presents opportunities for recognition and visibility for your organization. Most of all, if you are hosting you won’t have to find money to cover the plane ticket, hotel, or conference fees and you get to pick the food. Does it get any better?

If you have comments about this issue, please feel free to contact the editors at tcp@scra27.org.
Special Feature
Reflections and Narratives on the Past, Present and Future of Community Psychology
Edited by Geraldine (Geri) Palmer, Adler University

Introduction
Not too long ago, a conversation took place on an email thread that was originally sent to solicit feedback on whether the field of community psychology should engage in college/university program credentialing---in efforts to sustain and foster interest in the discipline. Responses came pretty quickly, some agreeing, but most, not so much. One response led to another and eventually a question emerged, “How has community psychology evolved?” Susan Wolfe, editor of The Community Psychologist, and I thought the question was interesting and worth pursuing in a special feature column in The Community Psychologist. Thus, we formulated a strategy: I would serve as guest editor, and we would invite a number of community psychologists representing pillars of the discipline, newcomers, and students to contribute articles focusing on the question. Other related questions surfaced in the email thread also, including how is community psychology unique from other fields, and why are we still engaged in explaining what community psychology is? These questions were added to the call for papers.

The following excerpt is taken from the original email chain, and the remaining articles and papers all capture and give voice to the thoughts and reflections of seasoned community psychologists and allies, in academia and practice. It is our hope that the submissions in this issue engage your own thoughts and reflections on where you believe community psychology unique is as a discipline, as well as the roles each of us must play to strengthen, advance and sustain it. Here’s to moving forward.

Geraldine (Geri) Palmer, Adler University

On My Mind
“...what distinguishes community psychology from other fields has been on my mind the last couple of days. To push back a bit on that concern, I would argue that being distinctive is not always the best goal to shoot for. For example, the football team at my undergraduate institution distinguished itself in the 1980s with the longest losing streak in the history of college football (I believe another institution has since wrested that distinction from my alma mater, but that’s another conversation....

There are definitely things we can do better. As a field that calls itself community psychology, it is striking that the study of communities per se occupies such a small portion of our field’s work. As a field devoted to an ecological perspective, it is striking that most of our interventions still focus on the individual level. At the same time, community psychologists are making important and prominent contributions to prevention science, public health, evaluation, education, policy, community development and other fields, not just because we duplicate the kind of work other disciplines are doing, but because we bring a perspective that adds value to the work in those areas...” - Gabriel P. Kuperminc

Reflections on Community Psychology
Written by Jesica Siham Fernández,
Santa Clara University

As a community-based researcher, trained community psychologist, and budding teacher-scholar-activist, I have often found myself at home and estranged from community psychology. My multidisciplinary formation as a social scientist, engaged in the intersectional study of race, age, gender and citizenship regimes, has led me to feel both suffocated and freed by the discipline. I have found community psychology ethics, methodologies, and values to be central to my scholarship. Yet, theoretically we are behind other social justice-oriented disciplines, like Ethnic Studies and Women and Gender Studies. In my experience, community psychology theorizing has remained insufficient, as it has not been allowed to fully articulate the assemblages of racialized neocolonial capitalism that disenfranchise communities at the intersections of multiple oppressions. I embrace these tensions with integrity, toward what I characterize as “tensegrity;” tension with integrity.

Community psychology had its birth in the tensions and contradictions I describe. The discipline was born out of the frustrations with the field of psychology, particularly its approach to mental health and wellbeing, as well as its modest engagement in civil rights issues. Hence, in 1965 several psychologists and allies gathered at the Swampscott Conference to discuss the significance of engaging with and understanding community experiences as a means to address individual and community mental health concerns, and more broadly social justice issues. This was the beginning of community psychology in the United States.

Five decades later, the field of community psychology grapples with similar questions, and the paradox of our disciplinary identity – who we are, against the backdrop of what we are not. In my view, we are a disciplinary hybrid that fuses research, theory action and practice with epistemologies “from within.” Epistemologies from within communities who are at the margins, from below and outside the status quo. Since its early formations as a discipline, community psychology has called upon community psychologists “to be political activists, agents of social change, and participant-conceptualizers” (Bennett et al., 1966); to be dissenters and transgressors in pursuit of liberation and empowerment for communities. This is the community psychology that speaks to me, and which with I do identify.

What Is Unique to Our Field?
Written by Leonard A. Jason and Jack O’Brien,
DePaul University

We recently participated in a lively discussion on the SCRA listserve with the goals of defining Community Psychology and specifying what might be unique to our field. Beginning at the Swampscott Conference in 1965, our discipline has focused on going beyond the medical, individualized conceptualizations of problems by incorporating both individual and ecological contextual factors in the examination of health and well-being (Kelly, 1968, 1984). This seminal Swampscott conference emphasized the importance of examining how social factors influence mental illness through multidisciplinary collaboration...
between psychologists and other related professionals committed to examining and improving community welfare. Community Psychology’s ideological framework and methods has expanded since then to adventurously and creatively address issues such as social justice, public policy, empowerment, diversity, and harm reduction through action-oriented, participatory research (Jason & Glenwick, 2016).

We believe that community psychologists adopt a contextual examination of individuals’ transactional relationships through a more systems-based perspective. This is in accordance with SCRA’s (2017) booklet titled: What is Community Psychology, which states that our field “goes beyond an individual focus and integrates social, cultural, political, environmental, and international influences to promote positive change, health, and empowerment at individual and systemic levels”. Early on, Kelly (1968) offered our field the Ecological Theory, which proposes that interdependence, cycling of resources, adaptation, and succession can be used to examine settings and behavior in how people effectively adapt to social environments. Kelly’s theory on community’s resource management in relation to environmental adaptability has been widely used by community psychologists in understanding behavior in social and cultural contexts. As an example, Kelly’s (1979) study of boys transitioning to new schools found that boys, with high exploratory behaviors, scored higher on adaptation measures and, in turn, the school that experienced more fluctuation in enrollment throughout the schoolyear facilitated more exploratory behavior in these students. These findings demonstrate the significance of the Ecological Theory by demonstrating the significance of individual-environment interactions, the consistency of adaptation and change, and how differences in individuals and setting contribute to fluctuation in the scores. As we continued to reflect on defining Community Psychology as a discipline, we received the following email from Dr. John Light as part of the larger SCRA discussion about what is unique to our field:

...such efforts are important today because of forces that tend to de-contextualize human behavior. These include stuff like the medicalization of addiction, and the psychologization of social problems. Laudable advances in neuroscience and neuro-psychopharmacology can lead to a sense that understanding how humans function as individuals automatically addresses how they function as collectivities. But the latter is a separate and apparently equally complex problem (J. Light, Personal Communication, Dec. 30, 2017).

John Light is a sociologist at Oregon Research Institute. We have had the privilege of collaborating with him over the past seven years in a multidisciplinary group that includes a clinical-community psychologist (Len Jason), a community psychologist (Ed Stevens at DePaul University), a social worker (Nate Doogan from Ohio State University), and many graduate and undergraduate students (Jack O'Brien). We began thinking about whether there are unique perspectives that these individuals trained in different disciplines (i.e., Community Psychology, Sociology, Social Work) bring to our research team. In other words, as John Light and Nate Doogan represent two very different disciplines from Community Psychology, this exercise could provide us with a way of better understanding the unique contributions of our fields, but first let me provide some contextual issues regarding our work.

Our team came together with an interest in a research area involving addiction, and in particular the efforts to help re-integrate individuals with substance use problems, who also have high rates of past criminal justice involvement, homelessness, and psychiatric comorbidity, into community-based settings known as recovery homes (Jason, Light, Stevens, & Beers, 2014). John Light brought to our research group a sociological approach to critiquing knowledge which helps us understand power, oppression, and action (Strauss, 1997). He also brought us methodologic perspectives that allow us to use dynamic social networks (using a Stochastic Actor-Oriented Model) to investigate how we both influence and are influenced by others, with ongoing and interactive feedback loops that more closely approximate the complexities occurring within the real world.

John Light appreciates the action-oriented and participatory approach of Community Psychology that always involves context, whether it involves working with judicial systems to reduce not-in-my-backyard polices or bringing the perspectives and active participation of the recovery community members and leaders into the agenda-setting arena. The same appreciation for this unique way of doing research has been expressed by colleagues from other disciplines who collaborate on different research teams at our center, including economists, physicians, psychiatrists, nurses, immunologists, and statistical/computer specialists in data mining and bioinformatics.

Nate Doogan is another critical member of our addictions research team, and more recently he has brought to our group advanced methodological tools such as agent-based modeling and tools used to describe, visualize, model, and make inferences from social networks. He has been working with us in developing a comprehensive simulation tool (including not only identified mechanisms for success, but also how these mechanisms relate and affect system evolution) that can have important, real world, policy implications for housing best practices as well as patient-centered decision-making. Yet, his discipline is social work, which might be more difficult to differentiate from our field (and others within this genre might include public health, criminal justice, or community psychiatry).

As we further pondered what makes our field unique, we looked over Moritsugu, Vera, Wong, and Duffy’s (2016) Community Psychology textbook, which defines our field as having the following fundamental principles: a respect for diversity, the importance of context and environment, empowerment, the ecological perspective/multiple levels of intervention, prevention rather than therapy, social justice, emphasis on strengths and competencies, social change and action research, interdisciplinary perspectives, and a psychological sense of community. Our guess is that Jane Addams, the founder of the field of Social Work, and a pioneering activist reformer in the United States, would subscribe to many if not most of these principles, even though subsequent work within the field of social work sometimes retreated from Addams’ more comprehensive and action-oriented vision. Given the similar value frameworks between Community Psychology and Social Work, our field’s action-oriented research, through a contextual, theoretically sound, systems-based approach, can distinguish our field.

Many people reacted to these ideas on the SCRA listserv, and one of the responses was from psychologist David Glenwick, who framed our field in the following way:

(a) The study of the transactions between individuals and their contexts (e.g., systems, communities, organizations)—and the modification of these transactions in order to help individuals become more competent and healthier—provides the subject matter (the WHAT) of our discipline. The exploration of such relationships (and the development of theories to help explain them)—is the science of our field, which complements and provides the bedrock for the service/social action activities of our field. This, perhaps, differentiates us from such primarily
“engineering” fields as social work and public health. (b) Values (e.g., empowerment, promotion of social justice, appreciation of diversity) provide the WHY (i.e., to what ends?) of our discipline. (c) Methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods) provide the HOW of our discipline.

We think this nicely summarizes our field. We also believe many of the core principles of our field are shared by many other disciplines, including Nate Doogan’s field of Social Work.

But we continue to believe that our field has the possibility of providing unique features regarding understanding behavior in the context of individual, family, peer, and community influences in a theoretically meaningful way. It is not necessary to have Community Psychology coalesce around one theory, as these complex systems comprise multiple mechanisms of change. We are fortunate to have several promising theories (e.g., from Jim Kelly to Seymour Sarason), which began at the descriptive level to understand the transactions between persons and community-based structures, and this type of sound theory can accomplish in a scientifically rigorous way the empowerment and participatory goals of Community Psychology. A systems theory contextual perspective (Jason, Stevens, Ram, Miller, Beasley, & Gleason 2016) may one day help capture our entire collaborative enterprise, and thus identify what specific aspects of context influence what specific aspects of individuals, and by which specific mechanisms this occurs, and this type of precision could ultimately provide us the unique explanatory capability to differentiate our field from others as we work toward improving peoples’ lives, especially those who suffer most from system level forces. Ideally, a contextual perspective developed through system-based theory allows a thorough examination of how specific individual and contextual factors operate, which in turn provides unique explanatory capability for addressing system level forces and fulfilling our primary purpose of improving people’s health and well-being.

Are We There Yet? No, but Changing the Flat Tire Should Move Community Psychology Forward
Written by Geraldine Palmer,
Adler University

“My father always said, if you see a good fight, get in it.”
— Vernor Johns

Coming into the field of community psychology in 2009 (which I am considered a newcomer), our classroom historical sweep of community psychology influences included the social, civic and community mental health movements, and of course, the Swamscott conference in 1965 (Moritsugu, Vera, Wong & Duffy, 2014). Since this time, pioneers of the field advanced the discipline, establishing academic training at the graduate level, theories were set forth and built on (a psychological sense of community, empowerment, ecological levels of analysis), and values were defined (Kloos et al., 2012). Research and action took place, and the field grew. The literature supports the evolution of community psychology (Kaufman, 2016; Sonn, 2016; Trickett, 1996; Sarason, 1974; McMillian & Chavis, 1986; Rappaport, 1977; Jason, 1998; Prilleltensky, I., 1997a). Yet, what some may be feeling, is community psychology seems to be experiencing a “flat tire” (time of stagnation). Camera (2013) aptly noted that: “Community psychology is a transformative field because it is one which is consistently changing to adapt to evolving issues people face in communities” (para. 3). It is my argument that it is time to change the “flat tire” and adapt to the evolving issues people are facing in our communities. But, we must look through a much sharper and critical lens than ever before. Why? Because much of the issues facing our communities today have the same roots of yesterday, oppression and inequality, covered by words that seem like progress, such as “diversity”, “tolerance,” and “inclusion”. However, once the covers are peeled back, the same root is exposed.

Therefore, just how should the discipline adapt to evolving issues people face? At the very least, we must engage in “intentional framing” in our discourse of who and what we endorse, stand for, won’t stand for, and work to achieve, internally and externally. The American Psychological Association (APA) stated that, “the way information is presented or ‘framed’ when people are confronted with a situation can influence decision making” (para. 1). Further, Critical Media Review (2017) put forward that “…a frame refers to the way media and media gatekeepers organize and present the events and issues they cover, and the way audiences interpret what they are provided. Frames are abstract notions that serve to organize or structure social meanings…” (para.1).

How does information that is intentionally “framed” make a difference? The following example may seem counterintuitive, but upon taking a closer look, I believe you will see how powerful framing can be. Take the case of groups standing for, or indifference to inequality in housing. Pfeiffer (2011) argues that inequality is enacted, legitimized and sustained by conversations manipulated and controlled over the spaces of ideological production. In the case of the demolition of Cabrini Green public housing development, stakeholders were able to disseminate discriminatory texts and replace people of color with lower-incomes from their homes because of their unequal media access (Pfeiffer, 2011). Rather than use their position to promote debate and search for equitable solutions to the lack of affordable housing, investors adopted dominant underclass public housing discourses. As a result, vulnerable populations were further stripped of any power they may have had (van Dijk, 1993). Pfeiffer further explained that a contributing factor to the displacement of tenants in the former Cabrini Green development may have been the result of bad management, but more so they were displaced circuitously by the public in renaming their community.

The announcements of a new community naming such as “Old Town Square” was followed by installing fixtures such as light post banners and stone markers with the new community name inscribed on them. Subsequent brochures distributed to the public brought the new communities to the forefront, while the old Cabrini Green recessed into obscurity. The perceptions of new residents thrust the area into the long-time label of a community based on race and class. In Pfeiffer’s (2011) study, when White/European Americans were asked what the name of the community was, they replied, “Old Town” where Black/African American pedestrians replied, “Cabrini Green.” The description of Old Town was, quaint, close to downtown, exciting, and connected to everything; while the older characteristics were, ugly, depressing, and isolated. In the brochures, language used promoted Cabrini Green area as a community composed of name-brand stores such as Crate and Barrel and Whole Foods. They omitted any older Cabrini-Green mom-and-pop stores or replaced them with slick renderings of low-rise town homes. Further, just as private developers erased the historical identity of Cabrini-Green by renaming the community “Old Town,” they also generated public support for redevelopment where there may have been none, by describing Cabrini Green and its former residents in the
public’s mind as inhabitants with “tropes of disease and decay” (Conquergood, 1992, p. 97; Bennett and Reed; 1999; Popkins, et al., 2005).

I share this example of intentional framing and results (albeit, harmful in this case) as a viable mechanism in influencing public perception. We must use this same tactic, for good, in our public discourse and through media. The conversations we have, the words and language used, the positions we take for, or against, the evolving issues people are facing in our communities today, is critical for our discipline to move forward. Our historical roots, the work put in to evolve community psychology in academia and practice well-positions us and compels us to do so. We can change our “flat tire” by intentionally framing who we are which include protesting all forms of oppression and inequity and agreeing on other issues, in ways that are visible to the public. Evolving issues today include the onslaught of Black/African Americans being murdered nationwide by police, the deportation of those in the DACA program, the homelessness of men, women and children, poor leadership, and the list goes on. A closer look—and we can easily see the same old structural systems of oppression and inequality. We should have a list of statements denouncing every one of these issues, and more, – and another list, for example, commending the actions of students telling the world, “We don’t want to die!”

We can no longer be silent, colleagues and allies, indicating to the public “we are not taking seriously our own tenets and values” but instead use our strong historical foundation, human capital, tools, visionary academics, advocates, and activists to make real and lasting change. It’s why we signed up for the ride.

**Social Psychology, Sociology, and Community Psychology: Linkages and Divergences**

*Written by Michèle M. Schlehofer, Salisbury University*

My path to the field of community psychology has been a circuitous one. As an undergraduate, I double-majored in applied sociology and psychology. Upon graduating from college, I desired a graduate degree in an area of study that bridged my two majors. I ended up entering an applied social psychology program at Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. My graduate program trained me in applying traditional social psychological theories to addressing social issues and community problems. Of my many formative experiences at Claremont was the fortune of being mentored by Dr. Bianca Guzmán, then a member of the Psychology Department faculty, who introduced me to the world of community psychology and took me to my first SCRA biennial (2001, in Atlanta, Georgia). Trained in the Lewinian tradition of action-research, much of my work draws upon social psychology theories, but incorporates community psychology principles and methodological practices. My exposure to community psychology has led me to adopt a more ecological perspective and approach to my research, as well as helped foster that bridge between sociology and psychology that I was seeking as an undergraduate. At Salisbury University, I developed and teach the “Community and Applied Social Psychology” undergraduate course in our department, and I am the only community-oriented psychologist among our faculty of 18.

**Differentiating Between Social Psychology, Sociology, and Community Psychology**

From its inception, community psychology has drawn theoretical and methodological inspiration from other disciplines, both in and outside of psychology (Kloos & Johnson, 2017). Although close cousins, community psychology has a perspective that is distinct and differentiated from social psychology. Both fields were heavily influenced by Kurt Lewin’s action-research approach, both seek to address social problems through the application of psychological science, and the fields have a similar trajectory of development. However, despite these commonalities, social psychology is a discipline which remains clearly rooted in the individual-level perspective that dominates the field of psychology as a whole. Even when studying microsystems such as the family or group processes, social psychologists tend to approach these topics from an individual-level perspective; studying, for example, how the discrepancy between people’s current relationship and the “ideal” one they envision impacts relationship satisfaction (e.g., see Sternberg and Barnes, 1985), factors that influence individuals’ decision to intervene in emergency situations (e.g., see Fischer, Krueger, and Greitemeyer’s 2011 meta-analysis on the bystander effect), or the role of implicit bias in racial discrimination (e.g., see Greenwald and Krieger’s 2006 review). Higher-level ecological factors, such as historical or political context or other exosystemic or macrosystemic factors, are only incorporated into theory or research insofar as they are considered “background noise” which impacts individual-level responses on measures.

In addition, the field, despite its focus on addressing social issues and problems, continues to be dominated by traditional experimental methodology conducted from a postpositive perspective of science; a research approach which community psychologists have actively denounced as “experimental colonialism” (Chavis, Stucky, & Wandersman, 1983). While community psychology actively embraces participatory action research (PAR), PAR approaches are largely absent from social psychology. Although perhaps implied in the discipline’s topics of study, social psychology does not actively embrace values of social justice and social change, and social psychological research aims for objectivity; yet another way in which the field differentiates itself from community psychology. While perhaps most social psychologists would identify themselves as applied social psychologists, given that their topics of study are relevant to social and community problems, the bulk of social psychologists who conduct applied research engage in traditional postpositive experimental work from an individual level of analysis.

Sociology, on the other hand, emphasizes macrosystemic facets of society and, while including psychology to some extent, deemphasizes an individual-level perspective in favor of exploring how social and cultural groups are influenced by various social forces, including history, economics, and global influence. Sociologists tend to downplay the role of individual characteristics, cognitions, mood states, and dispositions in understanding the person – societal relationship. Like community psychology, sociology contains a strong social justice orientation and commitment to social change; yet, emphasis is placed on changing social forces and social structures, not individuals. While psychological sociologists might focus on individual-level factors such as personality, affect, and cognition, they approach these topics in ways that substantially differ from social psychologists. Whereas a social psychologist would explore the interactive impact of social influence and intra-individual factors on human behavior and cognitive processes, a psychological sociologist would instead
study how individual-level factors are developed, changed, or otherwise influenced by cultural forces and social structures.

Community psychology has an approach and orientation which is nicely nested, at least theoretically, between these two allied disciplines. I view community psychology as encompassing all the potential and promise of applied social psychology—with its emphasis on the practicality of applying psychological theory to addressing social problems and use of rigorous psychological scientific methodology—with the macrosystemic perspective and explicit emphasis on social justice and social change which sociology offers. Indeed, sociological thinking has influenced the development of community psychology, and several concepts integral to the discipline (e.g., empowerment, social capital, and citizen participation, to name a few) draw heavily from sociology (see Perkins & Schensul, 2017, for a review). Community psychology overlaps with sociological thinking about how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence not only the individual, but also the way in which we frame social problems, and the solutions we generate for them. Community psychology, that is, has the potential to be a nice middle-ground discipline, encompassing the “best of both worlds” of social psychology and sociology.

One criticism of community psychology, however, has been its failure as a field to live up to its commitment to full use of the ecological model as a guiding theoretical and methodological framework. Community psychologists have been criticized as having the tendency to primarily study individual-level variables and to approach social problems from an individual-level perspective, rather than higher order levels of the ecological model (Riger, 1993; also see Shinn, 1996). Although the development of multi-level modeling techniques has facilitated better utilization of the ecological model, the field tends to under-emphasize the role of macrosystems and fails to fully incorporate macroanalytic factors into research (Angelique & Culley, 2007). Community psychology, it seems, has not grown far from its roots in the individual-level discipline which is mainstream psychology. This is problematic for a few reasons. First, an over-emphasis on the individual stymies theoretical and methodological growth of the field (see Shinn, 1996). Second, an overemphasis on individual-level factors can work to further oppress and mollify people by implicitly suggesting people are the cause—and solution—of their own oppression, thereby working contrary to the field’s stated value of social change (Preterious-Heuchert & Ahmed, 2001).

Is it Time for Joint Sociology-Community Psychology Training?

Community psychologists have called for the field to become interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary via alliance with other disciplines of study (Boyd & Angelique, 2002; Perkins & Schensul, 2017), and the field’s ecological focus facilitates such alliances (Angelique & Culley 2007). Perkins and Schensul (2017) suggest that strategic alliances with particular fields—such as political science and economics—could enhance and expand community psychology by helping to inform underdeveloped areas of the discipline. While a handful of interdisciplinary community-oriented programs exist, these programs tend to take a public health approach. This is not surprising, given the fact that community psychology’s model of prevention and promotion developed from adaptation of a public health perspective. However, to address the under-emphasis and under-study of macroanalytic factors in community psychology, I suggest the intentional development of joint sociology-community psychology graduate training programs.

What might a training program of this nature look like? I see an interdisciplinary sociology-community psychology program as embodying the “best of both worlds:” it would couple strong training in community psychology methodology, theory, and practice with the ecological perspective, analysis, and methodologies of the sociologist. It would provide training in program design and evaluation which encompasses multilevel modeling and assessment approaches that place appropriately significant weight on exosystemic and macrosystemic factors. It would help move the field of community psychology to a better understanding of how socio-cultural forces influence and interact with the individual. It would facilitate moving the discipline of community psychology towards embracing an advocacy and liberation perspective. And, it would strengthen the social change focus of our work by providing sound pathways by which we could affect second order social change, helping the field fulfill its promise.

Community Psychology: Something more

Written by Daniela E. Miranda,
CESPYD-Universidad de Sevilla

When I was invited to be a part of this special issue, my dissertation director and mentor, Manuel Garcia-Ramirez, asked me to discuss myself and my fellow students’ experiences with community psychology with his graduate students. I would like to thank my peers for sharing their experiences so that I can construct our emerging narrative around community psychology.

In my time as a Ph.D. student, Manuel invited myself and my peers to his classes to share the work our research team is doing and give us each a space to share the development of our dissertations. He presented us with a brief introduction and then always, without fail, put us on the spot to tell our story—to narrate how we arrived at our findings and why we are doing a dissertation in community psychology. Until now I thought he was helping me improve some practical public speaking skills by pushing me off the deep-end; however, after discussion and reflection with the group of graduate students, I realized that telling my story is very emblematic of our field. Most of all community psychologists I have encountered come from an array of backgrounds, choices, and trainings that somehow, sometimes unknowingly, led us into this relatively new field in psychology. We arrived at community psychology not necessarily through traditional training but through an innate tendency that comes when we see injustices that exist around us and want to defend human rights. Many times, we come across the idea that community psychology is value-driven, which is absolutely true; however, it goes beyond a set of values. It is a way of thinking. It is an attitude and an approach. Community psychology is not exclusive to the field of psychology and should not be exclusive. It is something we can and should share with other fields.

The horizontality with which we guide our work is what allows us to share the table and not be the sole experts. We engage with communities and give them the opportunity to be the real experts of their realities, shifting the power dynamics that transgresses traditional psychology branches. Our responsibility is to share and provide the tools to make their expertise visible and facilitate their role as community psychologists who engage in critical dialogue, reflection, and collective action (Balcazar et. al., 2004). Community psychology distinguishes itself from other fields because it simply asks those who were never asked in the first place, “What do you need, what do you think, and what can we do?”
Our interaction with ourselves, each other, and the communities we partner with in constructing our own narratives is what makes community psychology dynamic, challenging, and difficult to define. This can be seen as debilitating; however, I think that our active definition provides us with the ability to exist across many settings, which right now, in our current polarized world, our presence and call to defend human rights seems more relevant than ever. I have categorized both my own and the group’s reflections into a set of assertions that can accessibly explain community psychology to others and serve as a reminder to ourselves.

**We are always community psychologists.**

Last year I had the opportunity to spend three months in Chicago with Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar and Fabricio Balcazar, an experience that helped me consolidate many ideas around being a student in community psychology. There is one fundamental lesson I learned from my time there: you can never divorce yourself from the community psychologist identity. Whether we are with peers, students, professors, communities, family or friends, this way of thinking, feeling and being is not something that can be shut down at the end of a workday. It accompanies you wherever you go—that is: we cannot fragment reality. In this sense, a valuable lesson Yolanda taught me is that we should always engage, bring purpose and meaning to our day-to-day, and bring a social justice agenda into everything we do. As she writes, “embrace your moral compass” (Suarez-Balcazar, 2014). I think this is important to consider when we are thinking of developing a curriculum in community psychology. We must constantly immerse ourselves in what we do, wherever we are, seven days a week. This means that a community psychology curriculum must be more than a set of tools we can learn in a classroom. It must be a praxis we carry with us.

**We must start difficult conversations.**

Yes, Chicago rush-hour traffic is horrific, but I must admit that it was one of my favorite moments of the day with Yolanda and Fabricio. The drive into the city is interesting for anyone with a community psychologist lens because in Chicago, daily injustices are set across the landscape of a beautiful city. The conversations we had in our long car rides around those injustices and our work is what propelled me to have difficult conversations with myself. Fundamental questions around interests, power, privilege, and oppression that energize our work continue to be challenging concepts to have dialogue around. Having these difficult conversations is essential to community psychology that we should constantly reassess as both newcomers and veterans.

Fabricio once pointed out to me how we are usually taught to avoid difficult conversations. However, Fabricio taught me that we should be having those conversations about religion and politics at the dinner table! It is safe to say that being polite at the dinner table, or our lack of constructive dialogue, has had some serious consequences across the globe. Learning to have difficult conversations, where we listen, exchange ideas, and create a new social order is an essential aspect of the community psychology praxis. We cannot be passive or avoid important issues that are a part of our collective wellbeing and we should learn to feel comfortable being uncomfortable in a shift in power dynamics (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002).

**Let’s dismantle our own narratives.**

During our discussion, many students pointed out the difficulty they experienced working with communities because their reality was far from the community’s reality. How can we share our willingness and the availability of our tools with our communities? As the daughter of Latino immigrants who was born in the United States and now working with Roma communities in Sevilla—I have come to learn that everyone has a complex identity that is ultimately the product of generations existing within a larger, complex system. The idea of cultural humility or mindful activism that is resonating across our new vocabulary is incredibly important to consider (Norsworthy, 2017). The transparency we must bring to the table regarding our interiorized privilege or oppression is a liberating experience and a chance to build new, collective knowledge and to develop innovative solutions to problems. Reflection and close work with communities that may be far from our own identity are what makes community psychology exciting for all those involved.

**Be careful with the toolset.**

As community psychologists, we tend to champion and bend the rules to adapt many social research methods for our action-research purposes. During the discussion with my peers, many of us brought up the fact that we should be careful with our set of tools that we bring to communities. It is a delicate task as our efforts must strive to be transformative and not unknowingly ameliorative (Prilleltensky, 2014). What is most dangerous is when oppressive mechanisms are disguised as liberating efforts. The word “transformative” is heavily charged with its own set of implications. Therefore, we must be more rigorous in evaluating and adapting the work we are doing. For example, policy and intervention efforts to reduce social inequities between Roma and non-Roma communities has failed. Why is this happening? Recently, our team and I have partnered with different Roma communities and have been invited to experience their most intimate social niches. In these spaces, Roma communities are committed, active, engaged and fully immersed. We identified certain elements of these spaces as participative, safe, constructive, and respectful. We should translate these elements in all the work we do to ensure transformation.

I want to thank Manuel, all of Manuel’s graduate students, CESPYD, Yolanda, Fabricio, and other community psychology colleagues for letting me sit at the table to learn from them, so that we can continue building and navigating the world of community psychology.

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**Commentary: It’s Time for Action**

*Written by Geri Palmer and Bradley Olson*

The excerpts, reflections, and articles, as shared in the introduction, represent a wide range of perspectives, thoughts and opinions of community psychologists and allies, in different stages of their careers, academic training, and practice. That’s just one aspect of what makes them worth the read! This wide range of perspectives and ideologies, and how they get interpreted, is what makes the discipline of community psychology transformative. As a transformative field, community psychology’s historical tenets secure a consistent shift in viewpoints, all of which is needed if we are to progress. One area in serious need of a shift included academic and other training that was too restricted to individualistic, Eurocentric psychological paradigms (Parham, 2002). Thus, the nature of community psychology has served “as the social justice arm of psychology” (K. McKay, personal communication, February 2, 2018), and rightfully so. To this end, the work of social justice is dynamic in nature and necessarily evolutionary. Yet it has likely only become more difficult for the field to do what it was designed to do, largely because the dire need in our myriad communities have grown, requiring us to be more action-oriented than ever before. Research must lead to action that strengthens and builds resiliency and takes on the banner of hard
work, helping others restore their status from being marginalized by structural systems of oppression and inequality.

We must embrace this work even when we were not necessarily socialized that way. We need to respect positions that cross our very core and embrace methodologies that may diverge from the status-quo. We must also not forget that some of greatest transformation in social and racial justice was accomplished by civil disobedience, particularly peaceful forms of political protest. To this end, the articles and reflections that make up this special issue serve as a sort of protest and action. Community psychology and allies must attend to this action, to move the discipline forward. Let us share here, that forward cannot mean, the way it has always been. Speaking of action, we find it necessary to highlight a collective message provided by several authors: “action is necessary in some facet” if community psychology is to not only survive but thrive.

- In his email, Gabriel Kuperminc shared that “There are definitely things we can do better. As a field that calls itself community psychology, it is striking that the study of communities per se occupies such a small portion of our field’s work...”

- Jessica Siham Fernández in her poignant reflection, remarked that “In my experience, community psychology theorizing has remained insufficient, as it has not been allowed to fully articulate the assemblages of racialized neocolonial capitalism that disenfranchise communities at the intersections of multiple oppressions”

- Michelle Schlehofer, an applied social psychologist, incorporating principles and values of community psychology in her work, gave us her perspective through an intersectional lens. Schlehofer points out, “One criticism of community psychology, however, has been its failure as a field to live up to its commitment to full use of the ecological model as a guiding theoretical and methodological framework”.

- Palmer, whose writings are analogous to taking a “road trip” similar to her work in Viola and Glantsman, Diverse Careers in Community Psychology, opines that community psychology has indeed evolved, but “…what some may be feeling, is community psychology seems to be experiencing a “flat tire” (time of stagnation)... it is time to change the “flat tire” and adapt to the evolving issues people are facing in our communities. But, we must look through a much sharper and critical lens than ever before”.

We look forward to future discourse on community psychology and issue a call to action for those in academia and practice. Change does not take place unless we are willing to invest our time, talents, and voices. Let’s stand on the shoulders of our pillars in this discipline that met our needs, and one that can continue to do so. Community psychology has not arrived. It is still evolving. But, that’s a good thing. We have opportunities to chart its future.

References


Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings
Edited by Lauren F. Lichty, Ph.D.,
Co-chair, Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings Interest Group;
University of Washington Bothell

Undergraduate Research and Mentoring: Lessons Learned from Two Teams

On April 13, 2018, the Community Psychology Practice in Undergraduate Settings Interest Group hosted its inaugural Undergraduate Mentoring and Research Webinar with two teams of undergraduate students and their faculty mentors, one from SUNY Old Westbury and one from Rhodes College. Below, each team summarizes their context and practices. The teams then jointly present shared challenges and recommendations for developing meaningful community psychology undergraduate research and mentoring opportunities. The webinar can be viewed in full on the SCRA website. If you are interested in sharing your research and mentoring practices alongside your students, please contact Interest Group Co-chairs, Lauren Lichty (llichty@uw.edu) or Jen Wallin-Ruschman (jwallinruschman@collegeofidaho.edu).

CASE 1: Approaches to Mentoring at SUNY Old Westbury

Written by Oluwandara Ogunbo, Rhayna Prado, Magi Aziz, and Ashlee Lien, Ph.D.

As an assistant professor in psychology at SUNY Old Westbury, my role as a mentor has varied to fit within my institutional context, address student needs, and fit my personality. SUNY Old Westbury is one of the most diverse liberal arts college in the United States, has a sizable number of first-generation college students, and varies significantly in student economic backgrounds. There are three primary contexts where I mentor students: facilitating a formal mentoring program, informal mentoring through class and advising, and mentoring in research. In each, I provide opportunities for leadership, support for independent decision-making, and a safe environment for students.

Formal Mentoring: Research Aligned Mentorship Program

I am the assistant coordinator for the innovative Research Aligned Mentorship (RAM) Program, funded by the Department of Education’s Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education Grant. Each year we accept a new cohort of 100 students who receive mentoring, targeted advising, workshops, and applied learning experiences. Serving in this role allows me to support campus practice and cultivate a culture of undergraduate research and learning aligned with community psychology values. The mentoring component of the program has received positive reviews from both mentors and students.

Student experience

My experience with RAM is beyond amazing. Coming into college I was scared: no one in my family went to college so I basically had to figure it out on my own. Through the RAM program I was required to meet with my mentor, Gina. In the beginning, I was confused and a little nervous. My mentor and I would talk about everything that confused and scared me, and...
She helped me adjust to college in so many different ways. She helped me with my classes, picking professors and even sometimes understanding assignments. The mental and emotional support I got can’t be explained in words, but without the help and support I got from her and the coordinators of the RAM Program, I would not have made it this far.

**Informal Mentoring: Class Projects**

Faculty mentors can encourage students to pursue their interests and apply social change principles through informal mentoring opportunities. Each of my classes has an applied learning component where students are asked to identify an issue of importance and do something to make a change. Students may select any topic that is important to them, and my role is to assist in identifying opportunities and processes to make small changes.

**Student experience**

With my community psychology classmates (all freshmen), we hosted an open mic event for our final project. The event was created after the results of the U.S. presidential election were announced. In class, we were able to discuss the election. I heard a lot of fear and worry and saw tears in some of my classmates’ faces. When I saw that I knew something had to be done and I discussed my idea with my professor. The entire class decided to work on one project of creating a safe space for people to discuss their fears and trying to bridge the divide we saw emerge on campus.

At our open mic event, people came in to discuss their point of view and their worries. Several of the administrators even came to show support for the students and want to work with us to continue the project more than a year later. My project motivated me to do more and to take leadership on campus. For once I felt like I could help and change something for the better. From that moment, I knew all it took to make a change is just one person pushing for change.

**Mentoring through Research: First Generation College Student Research Team**

The First-Generation College Student (FGCS) Research Team conducts qualitative research exploring what may contribute to academic success among FGCS. Students engage in collaborative thematic data analysis multiple times each week, both face-to-face and virtually, and meet bi-weekly as a whole team to review emerging findings. Mentoring students in research can be challenging, but I use it to encourage teamwork, independence, and provide guidance as needed.

**Student experience learning about research**

Before joining the FGCS Research Team I had little to no idea of what being on a research team entailed or if I would have the required skill set. Being on the team, I learned that I love qualitative research and had misconceptions about being on a research team as an undergraduate. I learned that anyone can be on a research team as long as there is genuine interest in the research and dedication from the team member.

There were opportunities to work on different projects within the research team. One research member presented on motivators and barriers that FGCS face in college, and I presented on the experience of doing research as an undergraduate student and what it was like to attend the SCRA Biennial. We helped each other through phone calls and text messages, providing reassurance and opinions on how to make our projects more cohesive. The research team has definitely changed the direction of my future plans because it gave me insight into a different side of psychology and made me realize that I would like to work in community psychology.

**Student experience with teamwork**

I think research is a fundamental part of learning. My research experience with the FGCS team has been very beneficial, and I have learned several tools that will help me as I further my educational career. In particular, I learned how to work effectively in a group even when schedule conflicts became an issue. While this was the case with my research team, we overcame this barrier by implementing the use of technology with Skype or Facetime calls. This small change made a big difference as we were able to work better and get a lot more work done. A typical research meeting consisted of at least three team members meeting virtually or in person, where we read through and themed transcripts of previously recorded interviews.

At times, my personal bias influenced my decision when theming. However, my team members helped me resolve this issue by informing me when they believed my personal biases played a role in my decision. I am grateful for my experiences as a researcher on the FGCS team. As a group, I believe we worked together effectively. Our mentor directly worked with us, ensuring that we were on the right track and provided any assistance we needed.

**CASE 2: The Community Narrative Research Project at Rhodes College**

*Written by Anna Baker-Olson,*

*Junior Political Science and Psychology Major;*

*Bianca Branch, Senior Psychology Major;*

*Karina Henderson,*

*Senior Bonner Scholar and English Major;*

*Anna Manoogian, Senior Psychology Major;*

*Remi Parker, Sophomore Bonner Scholar and Psychology Major;*

*and Elizabeth Thomas, Ph.D., Plough Chair of Urban Studies & Associate Professor of Psychology*

The Community Narrative Research Project (CNRP) is an undergraduate action research initiative focused on undergraduate students’ experiences of community engagement over time. CNRP goals include contributing to scholarship in the field of community psychology, as well as advancing organizational learning and institutional change in our local context, Rhodes College.

Rhodes is a national liberal arts college located in Memphis. It is largely residential, with 75% of its 2,000 students living on campus. The majority of students are traditional-aged college students, and approximately 30% are students of color. Rhodes carries the Carnegie Community Engagement Designation, and many of our students are engaged in community service. While we are known for our service, we are still working to strengthen our models of service and to better integrate engaged learning with our academic program.

At the center of our research project is the collection and analysis of narratives written by Bonner Scholars at Rhodes College over their four years working in Memphis communities as part of their scholarship. The Bonner Scholars Program aims to provide college access to students with a passion for service and social justice. Fifteen students are admitted each year; 85% of each class must have an EFC at or below $6,000 and twice as many students of color are in each Bonner class compared to the Rhodes class as a whole. Bonner scholars have a service requirement of 10 hours per week during the school year and two full summers of service.

We have chosen a narrative approach to our research with the Bonner Scholars, as it enables authors to tell their own stories and
position themselves within relationships and communities. Twice a year at Bonner retreats, we have asked students to write and share narratives in response to prompts (i.e., please write about a situation related to your community service that felt particularly meaningful to you, or a situation that felt particularly awkward). After four years of data collection, we have multiple stories from approximately 120 Bonners.

Our team works as a community of practice that meets weekly for tea and roundtable discussions. During these weekly meetings, team members propose potential research questions that have emerged through close reading and analysis of the stories. The questions that have emerged in our community of practice represent multiple interpretations of our data set and originate from a variety of theoretical backgrounds.

By creating the space for collaborative work and power-sharing, professors engage in authentic mentoring. Additionally, an emphasis on mentoring relationships between 2nd and 4th year students provides a sense of continuity as the direction of the research project adapts to the ever-shifting makeup of the team. Individual student projects are often influenced by earlier student projects. Student researchers on the team participate in a research practicum in the Psychology department, which brings together students from a variety of labs. Often, researchers from the CNRP represent the only projects that use qualitative, longitudinal, and interdisciplinary methods. Our ongoing work as a community of practice has led to greater support and understanding for the role of qualitative research within the Psychology department.

Our data analysis is done within that community of practice, as well. We first read the stories individually, and see what themes or patterns stand out to us. We then reconvene and discuss the stories that we’ve read, going over the points that seemed important to each of us. By analyzing our data in this way, we take advantage of our different experiences and forms of expertise. Our current project dealing with agency and power was developed through this process: each of us had noticed something slightly different in the stories, but they all seemed to follow a theme of what the authors felt they were able, competent, or allowed to do in some way.

Confidentiality is something we take very seriously when we do this work. The identities of the authors are confidential. Stories are stripped of the author's name and assigned a number instead. Additionally, students on the research team read the stories on a time delay, so that the stories we are reading are not written by students currently on campus with us.

The greatest aspect of the CNRP is the diversity of the team. It is important to have Bonner Scholars on the research team, especially Bonners who hold positions in leadership, such as the Bonner senior interns. Not only do Bonners provide nuanced insight into the program, but they use the CNRP data to inform how they make steps to improve the Bonner Scholars program as a whole. Since the Bonner program at Rhodes recently hired a new director, collaboration with the CNRP will give the new director a sturdy foundation.

Collaboration in the future will stress the importance of maintaining relationships with Rhodes’s community partners. Patterns in data have already indicated that there are common themes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within specific service sites. Support from the CNRP data on service sites has, and may continue to, improve the Bonner Scholars program’s relationships with its partners. Finally, through the support of the CNRP, the college has evidence of the importance of the Bonner Scholars to the campus and the greater Memphis community.

**Challenges and Recommendations**

**Challenges**

- **Sustaining undergraduate research can be a challenge, as undergraduate students are often introduced to research or find their own interests in research as juniors or seniors. To faculty and students alike, it can feel like just as we get going, it is time for graduation. We are challenged to make sure that knowledge and skills that are developed in the team are passed down through peer mentoring and training.**

- **In the CNRP, for example, students on the team develop nuanced understandings around coding written narratives, and they come to make expert judgments around reliability issues. This expertise must be passed down in structured and regular practice between students to be a sustainable model for research. Equally important is the rapport between team members. In the FGCS Team, rapport is paramount for challenging biases that may impact judgments made by team members and must be maintained even when team members change.**

- **Strong undergraduate research teams also require early and broad recruitment, and we are still working on ways to do this well. We are still learning about dissemination of our practice: how do students find out about research opportunities related to social justice, and the value of research for setting and social change? How can we make research more visible in the curriculum, so it isn’t just a chance conversation with an advisor that makes research opportunities known? We know that undergraduate research is a high impact practice and one of the best ways for professors and students to learn together. We are challenged to make this opportunity more visible and accessible.**

- **Larger institutional barriers to undergraduate action research exist as well. Colleges and universities are hierarchical, and our work through research or informal class projects may present challenges to existing structures. As community psychologists, we work in ways that include power sharing between professors and students and encourage collaboration over individual competition. There are challenges at times when we turn the lens of our action research on our own campus. At Old Westbury, class projects intended to promote campus change can quickly encounter institutional barriers and resistance to change. It is important to acknowledge the barriers while providing solutions in order to empower students to make ongoing changes. In the CNRP, even as we generate insights that are deemed useful by stakeholders on the campus, there are role tensions when evaluating and offering recommendations. In our psychology departments, faculty have not always been familiar with action research models or qualitative research more generally. It has been a challenge at times for students and faculty to communicate the value and practice of our work.**

**Recommendations based on Lessons Learned**

There are certainly ongoing challenges and barriers to address. Yet we are rewarded in our research and mentoring practice as students and faculty, and we are committed to sustaining and building this work for the future. We offer the following recommendations:

- **Build community and connection.** Research and mentoring teams serve as sites for individual and community development and change. Rituals that include tea or shared meals are valuable. Interdisciplinary perspectives enhance insights.

- **Use informal mentoring to introduce opportunities.** Though classes and advising, find ways to engage students in their areas of interest, leading to discussions about applied research opportunities and empowering students to become agents of change on campus.

- **Be intentional about strategies for peer support.** Find ways for students to pass down knowledge, skills, and expertise
to new members of the team, building a new generation of leaders with each academic year.

- Reflect on how you are sharing power and the limits of power sharing in the undergraduate curriculum and college environment.
- Adapt over time. Adaptability in the research practice will strengthen your model. Follow the data and team interests. Expect to end up in a different place than you started.
- Document your work. Appoint minute takers for meetings, documentarians, archivists, and data managers. This is critically important for sustaining the team and generating useful products from your research.
- For students, from students: Be honest about your needs and goals; ask for help when you need it; no one expects you to know all the answers; be open minded and expect to learn. Remember that your professors will be giving advice on what field and research to pursue based on their experiences, so keep an open mind and look for all opportunities.
- For faculty, from faculty: Find your own style of leading and mentoring; there is no one best way! Characterize your work so it meets multiple expectations for your position and simultaneously “counts” as faculty work in teaching, research, and service. Finally, collaborate across campus units, developing “bridging” opportunities for student-involved projects.

Conclusion

We see the conversation around undergraduate research and mentoring as an exciting innovation in community psychology, and we are grateful to contribute to the dialogue. It is exciting to recognize undergraduate students in community psychology as knowledge producers, change agents, and leaders on campus, in communities, and in the field.

The Criminal Justice Interest Group

Edited by Jessica Shaw,
Boston College School of Social Work

The Criminal Justice Interest Group Column features recent and ongoing work of our members. We encourage readers to reach out to the authors if they are interested in learning more or exploring potential opportunities for collaboration. We also invite readers to join one of our upcoming Learning Community Series presentations in which Criminal Justice Interest Group members share their work virtually to foster a learning community. More information, and recording of prior presentations, can be viewed at http://scra27.org/who-we-are/interest-groups/criminal-justice-interest-group/.

Action Research Infrastructure: A Process for Creating and Implementing CBPAR Advisory Board Post-Prison Education Research

Written by Jordan Lankford (lankfj@uw.edu) and Christopher R. Beasley (beasley2@uw.edu), University of Washington Tacoma

The U.S. incarceration rate eclipses all other countries in the world (The Sentencing Project, 2016). This hyper-incarceration disproportionately affects ethnic minority citizens, who are incarcerated at 2-6 times the rate of White citizens. In addition to racial inequity, educational inequity is apparent—about 11% of people in prison have completed at least some postsecondary education compared to 59% of the population (U.S. Department of Justice, 2003; U.S. Census American Survey, 2015). However, 36% of people in prison have a diploma or GED, suggesting opportunities to address this educational disparity. Although prison postsecondary education is one solution, there are considerable barriers such as restrictions on Pell eligibility and public policy limitations on the use of state funding for prison higher education programing (Ubah, 2004). Even though these barriers do not exist for post-prison higher education, little research has examined this transition process. In fact, our research team has found fewer than 10 studies on this. Therefore, a firmer empirical foundation is needed for post-prison higher education research. This article discusses initial steps taken by the Post-Prison Education Research Lab (PERL) to develop a line of such inquiry using a participatory process.

Given the paucity of research on post-prison higher education, there is an opportunity for the scope of this inquiry to be driven by a broad array of stakeholders who are most central to these educational transitions. One inclusive empirical approach that can be used is community-based participatory action research (CBPAR). This approach is widely used within a variety of contexts, and its usage continues to increase (Wenger, Hawkins, & Seifer, 2012). Using techniques from other forms of research, such as community research, participatory research, and action research, CBPAR elevates and expands the capacities of each individual research method on its own. It is a way to work within a community to enact a plan of action with the goal of assisting a population of individuals. To develop a long- and short-term strategy for better understanding factors that may facilitate efforts to address this inequity, PERL has been developing a CBPAR Community Advisory Board (CAB).

One of the initial steps of conducting CBPAR is the formation of a CAB. The CAB serves as the middleman and messenger between the researchers and the community (Manda-Taylor, 2013). Community members voice their concerns to members of the CAB who then communicate these issues to the researcher and the rest of the board. Enrolling the assistance of a CAB allows researchers to identify and work with key stakeholders within a community. These stakeholders are important to the process, as they will provide necessary insight on issues within the community, assist researchers in formulating research questions, and help researchers identify the foci and approaches of their research.

Including stakeholders in these methodologies serves two main purposes. First, it allows everyone to feel valued and equal, and addresses the issue of reciprocity that frequently arises in CBPAR. (Maiter, Simich, Jacobson, & Wise, 2008). When we ensure the
interests and insights of the CAB are top priority, stakeholders feel valued and feel like collaborators with the researchers rather than experiencing a power struggle between the two. Second, when stakeholders are involved in the entire research process, the external validity increases.

PERL first mapped the state, county, and local resources for post-prison higher education. We then identified key stakeholder groups and stakeholders associated with each of these resources. We subsequently developed relationships with each of the key stakeholders, with an emphasis on contributions to their work. We later identified stakeholder groups and stakeholders to include in the advisory board. Stakeholders included a formerly incarcerated Assistant Professor, two Reentry Navigators who assist recently incarcerated people with their transitions from prison to college, an education strategist, a community advocate connected with a wide array of social services, the Executive Director of a prison higher education program, a Policy Associate from the State Board of Community & Technical Colleges, the Director of Research for the Washington Student Achievement Council, and the CEO of a workforce development organization. PERL also developed a post-prison higher education advisory council of formerly incarcerated students and graduates to inform both this research and the development of a program to support students transitioning from prison to a local university.

Once a CAB was formed, researchers ensured that members would be able to work together by having them participate in team building activities and events (Manda-Taylor, 2013). Board members frequently interact with one another, so it was important that those involved felt comfortable sharing ideas and being able to express agreeing and dissenting opinions on others’ ideas. To do so, team-building exercises, strategy-building, and skill-building were done for all parties to become comfortable in this exchange of information. Sharing knowledge with one another and developing skill sets alongside each other allowed the board to see one another as partners and feel more comfortable voicing their opinions and concerns with each other. The board members should feel like a team, and a hierarchy of power should not exist (Newman et al., 2011). Therefore, PERL hired a formerly incarcerated person to serve as the Project Director and provided this person with group facilitation training. This person was tasked with coordinating the project and serving as a neutral meeting facilitator.

After identifying and recruiting key stakeholders to join this Community Advisory Board (CAB), PERL developed a process for long-term strategic planning, initial research planning, and solicitation of funds. To date, this project is still in an initial relationship building and broad idea generation phase, with the CAB’s first meeting dedicated to relationship building and beginning a process of idea generation. PERL will then host a day-long strategic planning retreat to develop the vision, mission, and values for the lab as well as a long- and short-term strategy for post-prison higher education research. This will be followed by a day-long capacity building retreat centered on tools or addressing pressing questions that have emerged. After these two retreats, PERL will host a series of meetings over the course of 6 months to develop an initial research plan, revise the initial research plan, collaboratively develop a concept paper, generate and evaluate ideas for funding this research, review a funding proposal written by PERL.

One important characteristic of CBPAR is that it is iterative and builds upon former renditions of itself (Israel et al., 1998). This process is most often used within action research, and allows researchers to edit their process along the way. In this type of research, there are research cycles that consist of planning, action, observation, and reflection of the research. A cycle can happen within various amounts of time, from weeks, to months, to even years. When a cycle is complete, researchers will ask participants to reflect on the work they have collaborated on and will use the feedback to further inform future iterations of the project. From here, the next cycle begins, and researchers are better able to implement the most effective and informative measures as each cycle continues (Lewin, 1946).

Near the end of a research cycle, the CAB plays a vital part in the reflection of the process. This process helps both researchers and board members identify what could be improved in the next cycle (Waddingham et al., 2016). The process also helps inform future directions of the research and helps researchers reassess the methodologies they are using. Given that this post-prison higher education CAB is a new entity, the first cycle will end with proposal submission. The board will then reflect on and document the process as well as discuss next steps. However, we expect a similar reflective process once research is conducted, disseminated, and results integrated with existing programming.

CBPAR serves as a way to better represent a community and listen to the concerns and questions that community members have. This process can be time-consuming but provides results that provide the maximum impact to a community. In a world where statistical significance seems to be of utmost importance, it is important to look at methods that work for communities as well, as these methodologies directly include the community and their concerns. The Post-Prison Education Research Lab has taken a long-term approach to first developing collective community infrastructure, collaboratively generating goals and objectives aligned with applied work, and conducting use-based inquiry.

References

The Education Connection
Edited by Laura Kohn-Wood, University of Miami

Council of Education: Sharing Our Work from the Mini-grant Initiative
Written by Dawn X. Henderson, North Carolina A&T State University

What happens when you devote funding to education initiatives? Well, you can support creative pedagogy, international collaborations, and so much more. Since 2015, after initiating its first call for proposals, the Council of Education (COE) Mini-
Understanding the Perceived Health of Graduate Community Psychology Programs and its Relationships with Indicators of Sustainability, Diversity, and Rigor: Findings from the 2016 Survey of Graduate Programs in Community Psychology

Written by Mason G. Haber, Judge Baker Children’s Center, Harvard Medical School; Laura Kohn-Wood, Department of Education & Psychological Studies, School of Education and Human Development, University of Miami; and Members of the SCRA Council on Education

Introduction
This is the second report of findings related to Community Psychology (CP) training from the 2016 Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) Council of Education (CoE) Survey of Graduate Programs in Community Psychology. Our previous report (see Haber et al., 2017a) presented findings related to training in Competencies for Community Psychology Practice (“Practice Competencies”; Connell et al., 2013) and Competencies for Community Research (“Research Competencies”; Christens et al., 2015) and examined the challenges, breadth, and levels of training available in these competency areas. In this report, we focus on a broader range of indicators reflecting the “health” of CP graduate training and CP training programs, including program directors’ perceptions of overall health, indicators of programs’ sustainability, and indicators of the diversity of opportunities available across programs in both research and practice. A secondary focus is to provide additional context for findings from the first report related to the levels of training or rigor of training available in Research and Practice Competencies. Specifically, rather than comparing data of master’s- versus doctoral-level training programs as in the prior report, we compare training rigor by the nature of programs’ institutional setting (e.g. Carnegie classification of the university), and perceived career outcomes of students (research versus practice). The report also integrates results of the two reports by considering relationships between the indicators of rigor from the first and those for sustainability and diversity in the current report. We believe that considering overall health perceptions in the context of all three types of health indicators in the two reports – sustainability, diversity, and rigor – provides a relatively comprehensive account of the health of training programs based on the 2016 survey data. As we subsequently describe, there is some indication that these types of indicators are not always associated with one another or program health overall, so all need to be considered. The overlapping but separable contributions made by sustainability, diversity, and rigor in understanding health of training programs are depicted in Figure 1.

Grant initiative provided support to more than ten national and international initiatives. The COE mini-grant provides funding (up to $1,250) to support cross-program collaboration, development of a joint educational program or initiative, and recruitment. Funding aims to support opportunities for universities and programs to share educational resources and enhance training and programming. While the amount is not large, creativity among SCRA members is evident in the initiatives proposed within the past two years to include international collaboration between universities, curriculum development, and training of undergraduate and graduate students in participatory research. In this article, we share some of the initiatives and anticipate this work will inspire other SCRA members to apply for mini-grants and generate knowledge that enhances undergraduate and graduate education in community psychology. While this list is not exhaustive and does not include all of the awardees, we highlight some of the work:

- **Recruitment and Marketing**: Dr. Shawn M. Badiako at the University of Maryland Baltimore County developed a digital brochure to recruit students from undergraduate and master’s programs.

- **Enhanced Learning Communities**: Dr. Nikke Harre and colleagues at Auckland University in New Zealand organized a Theories of Change Hui/Conference for activists and community groups. The event was offered free and additional sponsorship from Auckland City Council, Fulton Hogan Ltd, Envision NZ Ltd and the University of Auckland helped to support the development of a similar workshop in Ontario, Canada and virtually. To learn more about this work visit the website below: www.theoriesofchange.org

- **International Collaboration**: Dr. David Livert with Pennsylvania State University and Dr. Ronni Greenwood with the University of Limerick in Ireland formed a collaboration using an online platform to examine local problem/issues. This project included secondary analyses of data and interviews with individuals involved in addressing the problem in their community and sharing these findings through an international forum.

- **Undergraduate Education**: Dr. Jesica Siham Fernandez and colleagues used funding to support an undergraduate course project designed to increase sociopolitical development and knowledge regarding sociocultural learning. Faculty and students designed a “healing justice” workshop and completed a photovoice (photo + narrative) project that examined self-preservation in the context of political activism.

With support from the Executive Council, SCRA, and Council of Education members and reviewers the mini-grants would not be successful. We thank those SCRA members who continue to share their ideas and are working to enhance undergraduates and graduate education. The mini-grant provides numerous ways for SCRA members to become involved in our work, whether that involves creative recruitment strategies or finding ways to collaborate across universities. We want to encourage all members to see the mini-grant as an opportunity to support excellence and visibility in education in community research and action.

Read more at http://www.scra27.org/what-we-do/education/about-cep/#PsbW8QkaT51HDjXu.99
**Figure 1. Three Possible Components of the Health of Graduate Training in Community Psychology**

We hope our findings provide insights into the overall health of CP training programs as perceived by their program directors in the 2016 Survey, the variability in perceived health among programs, and possible indicators of specific types of program health. We also will suggest possible uses of these indicators for tracking and improving the health and quality of CP training programs in the future. Findings may also help to advance recent discussions on the listserv regarding critical sustainability issues (e.g., the pros and cons of ranking programs for improving the status of CP programs within their academic institutions), and on increasing external awareness of CP, an issue that was also addressed in multiple ways by the most recent SCRA Strategic Plan.

**Method**

**Program Sample**

For specific information regarding the sample, procedure, and survey items, see Haber et al., 2017a. Briefly, the sampling frame included graduate programs in community psychology identified by several means (formal SCRA affiliation, listserv requests, and program listings in the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data [IPED] system [cf. https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/]). To ensure inclusion criteria were met, a short screener was used to determine the extent to which training emphasized community psychology versus other types of disciplinary perspectives. The sampling process identified 56 programs from which a contact person (typically the program director) was invited to participate. Recruitment efforts yielded 52 programs with completed survey data assessing research and practice competencies and challenges (a 93% response rate), 50 of which also provided all data on the indicators summarized in the current report (89%).

**Health Indicators**

The 2016 survey assessed overall health by asking respondents to provide an overall “grade” of their programs’ performance (i.e., “A” through “F”). For purposes of correlational analyses, the reported grade was transformed into a numeric code with a range truncated at “C” due to the small number of programs giving themselves grades of D or F (i.e., “C” through “F” was 1; “B”= 2; “A” = 3). Survey indicators of sustainability, defined as the capacity of programs to continue to offer their currently available training in community psychology, included the number of reported “difficulties” from the prior three years from a set identified by the survey (e.g., difficulties retaining faculty; see Figure 2 for complete list); and indicators of program size, competitiveness, and level of funding available to students. Diversity of training opportunities was examined by asking program directors to rank five possible career destinations in order of their likelihood among their students (“Academic”, “Professional Research”, “Community Practice”, and “Clinical” professions) and, as a proxy for level of focus on as well as resources for research, Carnegie Classification (cf. http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/). Rigor was assessed through reports on levels of training in sets of “Specific Research” and “Specific Practice” competencies from the Research and Practice Competencies (e.g., for Specific Practice, “Program Development, Implementation, and Management”; for Specific Research, “Mixed Methods Designs”). Each competency area was rated on a scale from 1 to 4 (i.e., 1=none, 2=exposure, 3=experience, and 4=expertise. Crucially, as we will discuss later, “Experience” was defined as meaning “most students gain a basic ability to use” the competency. Definitions and Descriptive data for the competencies are shared in our first report (Haber et al., 2017a); the current report considers their relationships with other indicators.

**Findings**

Descriptive statistics on indicators for the current report are provided below. Given that these were not distributed normally, Spearman’s rho was used to assess their interrelationships (i.e., of program grades with difficulties, and of grades and difficulties with indicators of sustainability, diversity, and rigor).

**Perceived health, Difficulties and Competencies**

Findings show a relatively flat distribution of reports by participants across the commonly reported overall grades (“A” through “C”; see Figure 2), suggesting that there is no “average” program. Roughly equal numbers of directors graded their programs as excelling (“A”), adequate (“B”) or struggling or failing (“C” and “D”).

Of the 68% of programs identifying at least one difficulty, there was substantial variation in the number and types of difficulties reported (these data are summarized in detail in our first report). Number of difficulties was moderately to strongly associated with the overall grade ($r_s = .39, p < .01$). The difficulty with the strongest association with grades was programs’ status “in the larger, department, college, or university”. Program grades were not associated with rigor of training in competencies ($r_s$ for Specific Practice and Specific Research Competencies = -.20, and .04, respectively; $ns$), though as reported previously in Haber et al. (2017), difficulties were associated with rigor in Specific Practice.
Objective Indicators and Relationships with Perceived Health and Competencies

Over the academic years 2014 through 2016, findings indicated that most programs (61.70%) were relatively small, admitting five students each year or less, and had relatively competitive admissions (M = 18.92%, Mdn = 14.63%). However, a minority were much larger, and/or had less competitive admissions, with roughly a fifth reporting admissions rates of 40% or higher (22.22%) and a fifth reporting enrolling over 10 students a year on average (20.83%). At the opposite extreme, a small but significant number of programs (27.66%) had no admissions in at least one of the last three years.

Table 1. Applications, Admissions, and Enrollment for Academic Years 2014-2016 (N = 50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>2014-2015 M (SD)</th>
<th>2015-2016 M (SD)</th>
<th>Average/Total M (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>40.96 (46.56)</td>
<td>41.09 (45.486)</td>
<td>41.07 (45.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollments</td>
<td>7.04 (12.281)</td>
<td>7.98 (14.246)</td>
<td>8.11 (13.064)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission Rate a</td>
<td>17.99%</td>
<td>19.42%</td>
<td>19.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Enrollment</td>
<td>27.06</td>
<td>(29.425)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aFor calculating admission rate, N = 38. Programs were excluded from the admission rate calculation in a variety of cases, including, instances in which they had, in at least one of the three academic years assessed: a) an equal number of or more admissions than applications; b) no applications; c) no admissions; d) no admission dates.

Related to student funding, the distribution of the percentage of students with some funding was bimodal; specifically, most programs (n = 37, or 74%) reported covering at least some tuition and stipend costs for most (i.e., 75% or more) of their students, but the remaining schools (n = 13, or 26%) reported that fewer than 30% of their students were funded. None of these indicators were related to overall program grades or perceived difficulties.

Objective descriptive information about training programs is shown in Table 2, and relationships between these and other indicators are shown in Table 3.

Diversity Indicators and Relationships with Grades, Difficulties, and Competencies

Carnegie Classification and Relationships. While research-intensive or “Very High Research” status was the modal Carnegie classification for graduate community psychology training programs, almost half (46.3%) fell into other categories. Notably, programs at “Very High Research” institutions tended to report fewer difficulties and higher grades (r = -.39, p < .01 and .38, p < .05; see Table 3). “Very High” research intensive status was not significantly related to rigor of training in Practice and Research Competencies (r = -.26 and .10, ns).

Levels of Priority Attached to Student Characteristics. In evaluating students, program directors were mostly likely to rate as “High” or “Very High” the importance of academic performance (88%), or interests in social change (80.0%). Of the remaining qualities, those most likely to be rated “High” or “Very High” were research experience (66% of directors) and fit with faculty interests (68% of directors). Program directors were split on the importance of GRE scores, with 24% of program directors rating their importance highly or very highly, 46% of program directors rating their importance highly or very highly, 36% of “Somewhat High,” and 16% as “Somewhat Low” or “Very Low”. Clinical work was consistently given low priority, with only 8% of directors rating it “High” or “Somewhat High.”

Student Professional Trajectories. Most respondents (51.9%) indicated that academic settings were one of the top two of the four post-training outcomes for students, with almost all (84%) reporting academic settings as being among the top three. Approximately half of respondents (50.0%) reported “professional research” in the top two half (53.8%) “community practice”. Programs reporting “community practice” in the top two generally ranked it first, whereas programs rating “professional research” in the top two were split in ranking it first or second among the professional trajectories. Relatively few respondents (N = 9, or 17.3%) reported both professional research and practice as being in the top two outcomes for their students. (Even broadening the definition of a “research” career to include the “Academic” category, this figure only rises to 44%). Programs highly ranking post-graduation research trajectories tended to rate the rigor of their training in Research Competencies more highly; those more highly ranking practice trajectories gave higher ratings to their training in the Practice Competencies. Although not related to program grades, rankings were related to the number of difficulties reported, with programs ranking community practice in the top two reporting more difficulties, consistent with findings in our first report. Note that the coefficient in the current report is non-parametric and
Implications
What do findings say about the overall health of community psychology training?

Overall, our results suggest that characterizing the health of programs in a general fashion is a challenge and perhaps misguided. Findings make clear that there is no “typical” community psychology program either with respect to broad perceptions of health (the overall letter grade) or indicators of specific dimensions of health. Thus, other than providing some reassurance that “good” community psychology training is available, these results may have limited implications for assessing the health of programs in a general way. Instead, it would seem more helpful to use these findings to characterize problems faced by some types of programs (e.g., practice-focused programs), or apply this knowledge to target and tailor intervention to particular “troubled” programs that may be showing signs of difficulty on a variety of indicators.

Relationships between Sustainability, Rigor, and Overall Health

Overall health (i.e., grades) was related to some sustainability indicators but not others. Specifically, grades related to the overall count of difficulties reported by programs, and difficulties with status of programs in their respective departments, colleges, and universities. However, neither grades nor difficulties related to objective indicators more typically employed in program surveys as proxies for sustainability or rigor (e.g., competitive admissions). Thus, it appears that the impressions of the specific types of problems concerning difficulties may better reflect overall perceived health than such objective indicators. Indicators of subjective difficulties should continue to be assessed in subsequent iterations of the survey to continue to assess the types of issues that may drive program directors to have relatively negative impressions of their programs. One objective indicator that did appear to predict overall impressions was Carnegie Classification. The richer resources that may be present in “Very High Research” settings due to their prestige, external grant funding, etc. may help to ensure a certain level of success/help for programs, though it is worth noting that the converse may also be true — weak programs may struggle to receive support from their universities where other programs and departments have relatively greater prestige and resources (which may, consequently, not be inclined to continue to support struggling programs). This idea would appear to be supported by the stronger association of program grades with difficulties with “status in university” relative to other types of difficulties.

Overall grades and specific difficulties were mostly unrelated to rigor as captured by levels of training in practice and research competencies, or had relatively weak or paradoxical relationships (e.g., the inverse relationship of number of difficulties with practice competency training; Haber et al., 2017a). Thus, although one would expect at least some overlap between subjective health perceptions and rigor, they appear distinguishable to a substantial degree. From the perspective of program directors, programs may be perceived as troubled but at the same time be seen as providing rigorous research and practice training.

Diversity of Focus and Health

In these analyses, “diversity” was primarily represented as a focus on practice versus research, as captured in program directors’ responses about the professional trajectories of their students following their training and the Carnegie classifications of programs’ university settings. Relating these data to levels of training in practice and research competencies can provide some insight into whether graduate community psychology training programs are preparing students for their subsequent careers. Relating them to indicators of overall health and sustainability can contribute to an understanding of whether difficulties faced by certain programs relate to the types of preparation or goals characterizing their training. Findings clearly indicate that practice-focused programs reported training to higher levels of competence in practice areas, and research-focused programs reported training to higher levels of competence in research areas. This indication of specialization lends credence to the perspective that programs need not “serve all masters.” With respect to differences of opinion about whether levels of competencies achieved are adequate for achieving training objectives, discussed in the first report and in multiple sessions at the 2016 biennial (e.g., Haber et al., 2017b), the proverbial jury is still out. Levels of competency training across both research and practice domains averaged below the “experience” level, regardless of whether they aligned with students’ career trajectories (i.e., subsequent research versus practice focused career paths), meaning that on average, program directors indicated that training provided in a given competency area did not result in students acquiring a basic capacity to use the competency. If the goal of training programs is to provide students with skills that they can readily apply upon graduation, regardless of the type and level of post-graduate support received, levels of training consistently below the “experience” level (i.e., the level of application) are troubling. Conversely, if the goal of graduate training is merely to set the stage for continued, intensive training and mentorship beyond graduate school, it is possible that “exposure” levels of training are adequate for students to achieve their future career objectives. It will be important for the field to tackle the issues of specialization and quality given the equivocal data on rigor, as well as findings in our first report (Haber et al., 2017a) that trying to train students in an overly broad range of domains may be associated with challenges for some training programs.

Although findings appear to suggest diversity of focus among programs in favoring research versus practice career destinations, one area in which programs did not vary greatly was their emphasis on social change interests in evaluating prospective students. We believe that this is positive news for the field, as our commitment to social change is one of the key qualities differentiating us from most other subdisciplines in psychology as well as other disciplines and their subdisciplines (cf. Prilleltensky, 2001; Trickett, 2009).

Future Directions

Based on these data, we recommend that subsequent surveys continue to track program health. The indicators of “difficulty” included in the 2016 survey appear to correspond well with overall health perceptions. Thus, these and other indicators discussed in the present and prior reports may provide reasonable proxies of overall health or potential problems, and in turn may be helpful in...
identifying programs that could be in need of outside assistance if they are to continue to thrive. These data also provide important context for furthering the discussion of program excellence, whether specialization or increasing competency levels is the preferred aim. Assessing training is an essential pursuit of a mature field and a critical activity for an academic discipline. We look forward to the potential for this second report of findings from the CoE 2016 Survey of Graduate Training programs to provide context for further discussion and action to advance the quality of graduate training in community psychology.

References

Immigrant Justice
Edited by Fabricio Balcazar and Kevin Ferreira

The “Immigration Crisis”: Lending a Helping Hand
Written by Cassandra A. Bailey and Amanda C. Venta,
Sam Houston State University

Most recent estimates from the Department of Homeland Security suggest an increase in unauthorized immigrants residing in the U.S. from 11.6 million to 12.1 million (Baker, 2017). Yet, data indicates that the rate of unauthorized immigration is slowing down in comparison to prior years (Zong, Batalova, & Hallock, 2018). Indeed, Customs and Border Patrol (2017) reported the lowest number of border crossings and apprehensions in recorded history in the most recent fiscal year, which is 23.7% lower than that of the prior year. Still, government officials, media, and laypeople alike continue to refer to an “immigration crisis” that requires increased protection for our borders (Greene & Bowman, 2018).

Nonetheless, the “immigration crisis” lies not at our nation’s borders, but within our communities, and concerns the disparities that undocumented individuals face. It affects not only those individuals undocumented living among us, but their family members, our citizens, and our nation’s future. Indeed, researchers found that most undocumented individuals are either employed or enrolled in some level of education (Passel & Cohn, 2016; Perez, 2014), suggesting that undocumented persons are heavily integrated into the lives of those with documentation. Additionally, undocumented people live, work (i.e., both manual labor and white collar jobs), and contribute to society like those of us with legal status, but they do so with an added level of stress, trauma, or uncertainty stemming largely from discrimination, fear of deportation, and push factors (i.e., influences that motivate immigration; Capps Fix, & Zong, 2017; Garcini et al., 2017; Moon, 2017; “Root Factors That Cause Migration,” 2017). This stress puts undocumented persons at a higher risk for mental health problems than the general public, with recent estimates showing higher levels of depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, and posttraumatic stress disorders (Garcini et al., 2017; Kirmayer et al., 2011).

To exacerbate issues, undocumented persons must overcome specific barriers to mental healthcare including access to insurance or financial resources in general, access to culturally competent providers, access to bilingual mental health professionals/translation services, and knowledge navigating the mental health care system (Hacker, Anies, Folb, & Zallman, 2015; Siskin & Lunder, 2016). Further, research shows there is an increased level of stigma associated with mental health care service utilization among undocumented immigrants, greater than the stigma held by the general population (Derr, 2016). With the American Psychological Association (APA) having made immigration reform a top priority of advocacy for 2018 (DeAngelis, 2018b), the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) Immigrant Justice interest group suggest several ways community psychologists can augment justice for immigrants, reduce the “immigration crisis,” and get involved, based in the “8 ways to advocate for psychology” recently published in APA’s Monitor in Psychology (DeAngelis, 2018a).

1. “Take it to your lawmakers”

There are numerous nationwide and local immigrant advocate groups that write amicus briefs, are involved in local and national legislation, write letters, and publish articles in response to policy changes and proposed legislation. Indeed, the APA has an Immigration Working Group consisting of a wide variety of advocates, including licensed psychologists, graduate students, policy analysts, lawyers, professors, and researchers. More information and advocacy efforts related to immigration can be found at https://www.apa.org/advocacy/immigration/index.aspx. Additionally, the SCRA Immigrant Justice interest group is a nationwide (and international) advocacy group whose mission includes, but is not limited to, supporting and advocating for the rights of immigrants to promote dignity, respect, and beneficence in line with the general principles set forth in the APA (2002) Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (i.e., heretofore referred to as the APA Ethics Code). Their website can be found at http://www.scrac27.org/who-we-are/interest-groups/immigrant-justice/ and includes ways to become involved such as joining the listserv and participating in monthly calls. For more local involvement, a list of state, provincial, and territorial psychological associations can be found at http://www.apa.org/about/apa/organizations/associations.aspx.

2. “Volunteer for a cause”

As aforementioned, access to resources and finances may limit many undocumented immigrants from being able to participate in mental health care. Offering services pro bono or at a reduced
cost not only may increase accessibility to mental health care, but is in line with Principle B, Fidelity and Responsibility, and Principle D, Justice, of the APA Ethics Code. For example, following changes in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA; a form of temporary relief for undocumented individuals brought to the U.S. as children) policy, a Texas University’s mental health center, compiled resources to help those affected by the change in collaboration with the Diversity Division of the Texas Psychological Association. They began a “Dreamers & Allies Support Group” and increased visibility of free mental health care services provided on campus (for more information, visit http://www.shsu.edu/dept/counseling/daca). Other ways to become involved include pairing with already established local advocacy groups, increasing visibility for the cause by participating in awareness programs (e.g., marches, philanthropies, fundraisers), or starting a support group of your own. Indeed, pro bono legal service providers exist throughout the country, and can be a starting point for becoming involved with undocumented populations. A list of providers can be found at https://www.justice.gov/eoir/list-pro-bono-legal-service-providers.

3. “Run for office”

Whether at the national, state, city, county, or small organization level, running for office can help engage others in immigration advocacy, set advocacy as a priority, increase visibility, and foster relationships among those who would like to get involved, but desire direction.

4. “Publish”

Research on mental health specific to undocumented immigrants is sparse yet growing. It can be difficult to find funding for research on undocumented immigrant populations, given that the current sociopolitical climate regarding immigration is polarized. Even with funding, it can be difficult to find access to large undocumented populations due to government policies limiting research with those in custody, as well as individuals who are hesitant to participate in research due to fear of deportation (Gusmano, 2012). As such, those with access to funding and willing immigrant populations should consider becoming involved in research to promote understanding and competence when working with undocumented individuals. In addition to publishing research findings, publishing op-eds can supplement peer reviewed research findings, to reach a wider audience of people.

5. “Raise your voice on social media”

Activist movements have been started and maintained through social media, which can be a quick and easy way to reach a large audience (Kosinski, Matz Popov, Stillwell, & Gosling, 2015). However, with limited privacy in today’s ever-growing online platform, community psychologists should be cognizant of their online presence, and the implications it can have for their practice, clients, and public image (Drummond, Cromarty & Battersby, 2015). Nonetheless, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and the like can all help spread advocacy for a population often left without a voice.

6. “Support advocacy by your students”

Sometimes all a student needs to get involved is the motivation and support of a mentor. Establishing labs, interest groups, or clinical work related to immigration advocacy can help mobilize students who question the impact they can make alone. Indeed, supportive faculty can help create a common location to gather, promote organization, and offer continued encouragement when some may lose inspiration. For example, the National Latino/a Psychology Organization (NLPA; http://www.nlpa.ws/) welcomes student groups with the objective of advancing applied research in Latino/a populations.

7. “Serve as an APA fellow”

The APA currently offers 37 fellowships, including four that are specific to practitioners. Some fellowships that may be relevant to improving the “immigrant crisis” include the Foundation for Child Development: Young Scholars Program, Abe Fellowship Program, APAGS/Psi Chi Junior Scientist Fellowship, Minority Fellowship Program in Educational Research, APA Executive Branch Science Fellowship Program, and the APA Congressional Fellowship Program. A full list of APA fellowships can be found at http://www.apa.org/about/awards/search.aspx?query=&fq=(AwardTypeP%3A%22Fellowship%22)&sort=AwardDeadlineSort%20asc.

8. “Become a citizen psychologist”

A citizen psychologist is someone who helps the community outside of their place of employment or position as a psychologist (DeAngelis, 2018a). The possibilities of serving as a citizen psychologist are endless, including serving food at a shelter, donating time to helping rebuild communities, and volunteering at a battered women’s shelter. Improving other areas of concern for undocumented immigrant populations, many of whom live in poverty (Passel & Cohn, 2009), may reduce obstacles to treatment, in turn ameliorating health disparities (Goodman, Pugach, Skolnik, & Smith, 2013).

Bonus: “Increase your knowledge base”

To increase knowledge and wherewithal of the proceedings through which many individuals will go, we recommend attending a basic immigration court training or watching webinars on the topic. A list of trainings can be found at https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/calendar/topics.2018-4-01.

Conclusion

Undocumented immigrants are more integrated into society than most individuals realize, especially in states such as Texas, California, Florida, New York, and New Jersey who have the largest population of immigrants (Zong et al., 2018). Indeed, although by no means a thorough review, becoming involved with and advocating for this population has the potential to improve the lives of not only undocumented immigrants, but those with whom they interact.

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References


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**Public Policy**

**Dialogue on Gun Safety: A Community Psychology Values Check Relative to Public Policy**

**Written by Robin Jenkins, Ph.D.**

**(SCRA Policy Committee)**

As I edit this article, another tragic school shooting has occurred. And perhaps even sadder were some of the quotes from students at Santa Fe High School, stating that they weren’t surprised that it happened to them because “that’s just how it is these days in schools”. It is easy to become outraged and look for quick solutions. How can we not feel compelled to do something, and urgently? How can the emotions and other challenges attached to these events be channeled into something that makes sense? Unfortunately, solutions won’t be coming soon because of the complex elements involved as well as the diametrically opposing stakeholder perspectives on many gun violence-related issues. Gun rights advocates argue that guns provide equal opportunity for all relative to personal and property rights and protection. Gun safety advocates take the position that the number, availability and types of guns (and accessories) in the US, coupled with the culture(s) we embrace around how Americans solve conflicts and allow violence to be embedded in what we see, listen to, and report on each day make for potent if not catastrophic risk factors. There are middle ground solutions; yet the rhetoric and blaming get in the way. Community psychologists embrace values and principles that include an important focus on social justice. Defined as “conditions that promote equitable distribution of resources, equal opportunity for all, non-exploitation, prevention of violence, and active citizenship” (see http://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/), social justice conversations become challenging when the issue of gun safety takes center stage. Yet social justice, and the prevention of violence are bedrocks of our discipline’s value system. So how can community psychology use its principles, values, tools and resources to (a) inform the policy dialogue in a more scientific and balanced form, (b) work to ensure that violence prevention as well as other core values are actualized in policies, and (c) inform public policies to advance science as well as public outcomes? Will these activities lead to greater social justice and lower violence rates relative to gun-related harms? And, are we nearing a tipping point, periodically called out by several of our colleagues over the years (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 1997; Fondacaro & Weinberg, 2002; Sarason, 1978; Rappaport, 1984) to move toward a more value-based and critical psychology-informed community psychology?

Our focus on broad population-level work to prevent individual stress, maladaptive systems and human suffering positions us well to use our research and methodology skills in innovative and urgent ways to discern empirically supported strategies, programs and other solutions. More than ever we need science-informed research policies that can be quickly activated to deal with the growing epidemic of gun violence. Such policies might consider prevention-focused policy recommendations at multiple ecological levels to ensure full exposure to the system impacted by gun violence (policymakers and government actors, agencies, communities, schools, peers, families and individuals). Congruent with our multi-sectoral partnerships and collaborative (e.g., “equifinality”) lenses, engaging stakeholders at all levels to bring formal and informal resources to researching the complexities involved, and crafting
policy/program solutions makes profound sense. As Parkland (and other) students have taught us, there is much wisdom that comes from those most directly affected.

Prevention science has also evolved in ways that fully support the competencies and resources that community psychologists bring to discussions (see Catalano et al., 2012; and Kitzman et al., 2010 for examples). Community psychologists, with their expertise in both research and applied interventions can assist to further scale effective prevention science interventions specific to the prevention or reduction of gun violence across multiple ecological settings. Parenting and parenting supports, mental/behavioral health interventions at multiple levels, bullying and aggression prevention, home visitation, school climate, collective and effective community coalitions, empowerment and self-help advocacy efforts are just a few examples of interventions informed by prevention science combined with the more traditional “worlds” of community psychologists.

Community psychologists embrace equity and fairness in all aspects of our work. In fact, we build these values into our expected competencies (Elias et al., 2015). Policy frameworks encompassing equity, diversity, and collaboration values developed from science-informed gun violence-prevention research can maximize the cultural strengths and resources found across multiple communities and settings. Such sensitivities to context (at each level) allow for all stakeholder viewpoints to be valued. By attending to equity, diversity and collaborative approaches, many other related impacts of gun violence (e.g., citizen-police distrust, eroding collective efficacy, race-related conflicts) may also improve.

Our discipline arose in part from the recognition that social problems cannot be resolved one individual at a time. Gun violence impacts include a broad set of issues that require multi-faceted policies and interventions. We do know something about complex systems, policies and interventions. We also have important prevention science and interdisciplinary research teaching us how to shape our work. Because of these contributions, public health approaches should be primary in our thinking. Community psychologists are well trained in public health approaches to population level problems, capable of marrying participatory and action research methodologies to public health prevention strategies. And as Fondacaro and Weinberg (2002) remind us, “Despite its historical and cultural relativity, community psychology remains eminently capable of producing genuinely valid insights regarding the nature and accomplishment of social justice” (p. 488). We are beyond urgency in these matters. Community psychologists must engage in this critically important challenge and use all the tools in the toolboxes to bring both prevention and support to hurting families and communities.

References


Regional Network News
Edited by Scot Evans
Regional Network Coordinator

Summer is a great time to float down a lazy river… and to get more involved in your SCRA region. Check out your SCRA region information on the website and contact the coordinators to see what is going on in your neck of the woods (http://www.scradiv.org/who-we-are/regional-activities/). There are a lot of great things happening in our SCRA regions across the globe – check out the news from the Northeast, Western, and Midwestern regions.

News from the Northeast Region U.S.

Northeast Regional Coordinators
Robey Champine (robey.champine@yale.edu), Yale University (CT);
Monique Guishard (Monique.Guishard@bcc.cuny.edu), Bronx Community College (NY); and Justin Brown (Justin.Brown93@sphmail.cuny.edu), LaGuardia Community College (NY)

Northeast Student Regional Coordinator
Taylor Darden (tdarden1@umbc.edu), University of Maryland, Baltimore County (MD)

Eastern Psychological Association Meeting
In March we convened at the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association in Philadelphia. For the SCRA division of this conference we braved the “bomb cyclone” and had a wonderful program, with a day and a half devoted to Community Psychology presentations, including a lunch social, 10 posters, 3 roundtables, 2 symposia, and 4 presentations. We also presented awards to undergraduate and graduate students for poster presentations (see picture). SCRA’s representation at EPA is growing, and it was a great time seeing colleagues and networking with folks from across the East Coast. Please keep your eyes open in the fall for the call for proposals for the next EPA conference, which will be held in New York, NY from March 1st – 4th 2019!

We currently need people to fill some of our coordinator positions. If you are interested in serving as a regional coordinator or student-level coordinator (undergraduate), please email Monique Guishard (Monique.Guishard@bcc.cuny.edu) or Justin Brown (Justin.Brown93@sphmail.cuny.edu). Coordinators serve three-year terms and provide regional...
leadership and guidance to the processes of membership development, activities, and communication. We are also grateful for the service of Christopher Beasley (University of Washington, Tacoma) and Melissa Whitson (University of New Haven) as Northeast Regional Coordinators over the past 3 years. They are officially rotating off but continue to help as we grow and develop our regional network.

News from the West Region U.S.

West Regional Coordinators
Emma Ogley-Oliver (3rd Year),
Marymount California University;
Greg Townley (2nd Year),
Portland State University;
Mariah Kornbluh (1st Year),
California State-Chico

West Student Regional Coordinator
David Gordon,
University of California, Santa Cruz

To join the Western Region listserve go to: http://www.scra27.org/who-we-are/regional-activities/western-region/email-list/

Western Psychological Association Meeting
The 2018 Western Psychological Association Meeting was held in Portland, OR from April 25th to April 29th. Notably, various community psychologists (Portland State, CSU Humboldt, CSU Long Beach, CSU Chico, CSU Sacramento, Northern Arizona University, and University of Washington, Tacoma) convened at the conference for presentations, posters, and a Friday night dinner at the Duck House organized by Community Research and Action in the West (CRA-W).

Two specific symposiums were hosted and led by community-psychologists. These presentations focused on: 1) utilizing research to inform multi-level systemic public policy, and 2) exploring critical consciousness and developing community on college campuses for historically underserved students (communities of color, transfer students, and first-generation students).

Symposium 1: Policy-oriented research: Developing, implementing, and evaluating public policy in multiple contexts. Papers presented were:
- Public policy and organizational supports for addressing the rape kit backlog. Courtney Ahrens and Cassandra Gearhart (California State University, Long Beach)
- Evaluating the implementation of policies for batterer intervention programs. Jason Kyler-Yano, Kate Sackett, Eric Mankowski, and Rachel Smith (Portland State University)
- They can’t work at a pace: Education policy, time constraints and the social cultural construction of the deficient student. Danielle Kohfeldt (California State University, Long Beach)

Symposium 2: Exploring the role of community, critical consciousness, and empowerment on college campuses for underserved student bodies. Papers presented were:
- Investigating the relationship between culturally reflective leadership, community building, and empowering outcomes for college students of color. Mariah Kornbluh, Sherry Bell, Jessica Anne Fernandez, Alexis Green, Christopher Jones, and Kristin Vierra (California State University, Chico)
- Examining associations between experiences of marginalization, critical reflection, and well-being in college students. Rachel Hershberg, Emily Clouse, Autumn Diaz, Ananya Dontula, Sophia Boguk, and Sam Larsen (University of Washington Tacoma)
- We come here, we go home: The challenge of building community among transfer students. Erin Rose Ellison, Madilyn Bovey, Melvin Cockhren II, LaDawna Hugg, Yonnell Jarrell, Rana Moradhasel, and Sam Stevens (California State University, Sacramento)
Critical Consciousness and Community Building on College Campuses (Student Reflections)

Mariah Kornbluh,
California State University, Chico,
Rachel Hershberg,
University of Washington-Tacoma,
and Erin Ellison,
California State University, Sacramento

Photo: Question & Answer Session: U-W Tacoma, CSU Sac State, & CSU Chico

CSU Sacramento, CSU Chico, and UW Tacoma brought together a total of twelve undergraduate and three graduate students to present on critical consciousness building, participatory research, and community building within predominately white serving institutions. Below we share some quotes, and personal reflections from our students.

Many of our students were attending their first academic conference and remarked on the experience.

“It was such an awesome experience. It was interesting to learn and listen to other students like myself present on what they have been working on. It was the first time I have ever presented at a symposium or attended a conference. It helped me feel as if I was part of a community and helped our research team bond. We left Portland feeling like a family.” -- Madilyn Bovey, California State University, Sacramento

In response to the symposium, students noted the excitement in a collaborative and multifaceted question and answer session across presenters:

“I enjoyed the symposium. It was nice to see that other students and professors were working on projects similar to our own.” -- Christopher Jones, California State University, Chico

“After our symposium, we had our Q&A. It was great bouncing around ideas and it could have gone on forever, so I look forward to applying my experience here to my future work…” -- Sherry Bell,

California State University, Chico

“I felt honored and validated at having the opportunity to present at the WPA. It was wonderful having the academic community attentively listen to the needs of transfer students. I really enjoyed the feeling of camaraderie that I had during the Q&A portion of the symposium.” -- Melvin Cockhren II, California State University, Sacramento

Furthermore, students reflected on specific presentations, utilizing core concepts, and applying them introspectively to their own lives:

“I was surprised at how much I learned at and enjoyed WPA. The talk by Dr. Burnes on Critical Consciousness was one of my favorite panels… I felt motivated and inspired to go out and start similar conversations with other people. The talk also focused on how those with privilege should be using that privilege to do something about inequality versus just feeling guilty about the privilege.” -- Sophia Boguk, University of Washington Tacoma

Future collaborative efforts are planned in the form of virtual meetings between our research teams to share strategies, as well as a joint presentation at the American Psychological Association.

Regional Member Spotlight – Samantha Kinkaid

Child Trafficking: Bridging National Borders and Cultural Perspectives to Expand Competencies

For the last two and a half years, I’ve been in collaborative partnerships with NGOs focused on the healing and well-being of survivors of trafficking and abuse in Northeastern India and Nepal. The complexities of trafficking with the various push/pull factors - not only in this part of Asia, but also in the domestic U.S. - have informed my concurrent research on prevention aspects rooted in environmental sustainability initiatives and innovative education models. The work overseas has widened the lens for me in local initiatives in Southern California - specifically greater sensitivity for cross-cultural competencies and diversification of communication tools. Learn more about Samantha’s work at http://samanthakinkaid.com/

Pacific Oaks College Launches B.A. in Community Psychology: The College’s Newest Program Addresses Community Needs and Social Action

Pacific Oaks College & Children’s School (PO) in Pasadena, CA announces the launch of its first full bachelor’s degree program, a Bachelor of Arts in Community Psychology, to be available on campus in Pasadena as well as online starting in fall 2018. With over 70 years of dedication to respect, equity, peace, and inclusion, Pacific Oaks College continues to be a higher education leader in progressive programming that responds to the needs of the community.

Community psychology focuses on the study of how individuals relate to their communities and the reciprocal effect of communities on individuals. The field recognizes that just like individuals, communities have their own social and psychological dynamics, and aims to promote community well-being through research and action. “Community psychology is the opportunity to advocate, empower, and reduce oppression within our communities that we serve,” said Dr. Bree E. Cook, Psy.D., Associate Dean for the School of Cultural & Family Psychology. The Community Psychology degree provides students with the skills and knowledge to make immediate impact in diverse settings such as, public education, governmental health and human service agencies, non-profit organizations, and research and evaluation firms.
For Pacific Oaks’ inaugural B.A. in Community Psychology class, the institution will offer a locked-in tuition rate for students who enroll during the 2018-19 school year. Students who enter the program in fall 2018 are also eligible to apply for the Community Psychology Scholarship, an award of up to $5,000. For more information, applicants are encouraged to contact admissions@pacificoaks.edu. Pacific Oaks College & Children’s School (PO) is a non-profit, accredited higher education institution offering Bachelor’s and Master’s programs in human development, marriage and family therapy, psychology, education, advocacy & social justice, and organizational leadership and change. PO is dedicated to the principles of inclusion, social justice, and the valuing of each individual. For more information, visit www.pacificoaks.edu.

News from the Midwest Region U.S.
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Midwest Student Regional Coordinator
Naz Chief,
National Louis University

Event: Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA)
Written by Amber Kelly

The Midwest region held its annual conference during SCRA affiliated meeting at the Midwestern Psychological Association on April 13th, 2018. The annual conference is an opportunity to share work that is being done in the field and learn from others doing similar work. Conference attendees had an opportunity to participate in poster sessions, roundtable discussions and symposiums. Scholars across the region submitted 62 proposals (36 posters, 21 roundtables, 5 symposiums). Undergraduate and graduate students participated in the poster session which showcased their work and passion for community psychology. Congratulations to the poster winners!

Awards for Student Poster Presentations
- First Place – Magdalen Kroeger and Susan M. Long, Lake Forest College
- Second Place – Daniela I. Olmos Alvarez and Susan M. Long, Lake Forest College
- Third Place – Lauren Hochbert, Olya Glantsman, and Leonard Jason, DePaul University

After the SCRA affiliated meeting concluded, a social event at a nearby restaurant, Exchequer, allowed members to have an informal opportunity to meet with students, practitioners, and faculty from across the region. Although the event was informal, members took advantage of the opportunity to network and possibly make connections for future collaborations. In addition, the poster award winners were notified of their accomplishment. Check out the photo from the dinner.

The next MPA conference will take place April 12, 2019 in Chicago at Palmer House. Look out for updates on the SCRA Listserv. Announcements and information for inclusion in future Midwest updates should be sent to Melissa Ponce- Rodas (ponce@andrews.edu).

Rural Interest Group
Column Editor, Susana Helm, PhD,
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa
Co-Editors Cheryl Ramos, PhD
and Suzanne Phillips, PhD

The Rural IG column highlights rural resources as well as the work of community psychologists, students, and colleagues in their rural environments. Please email Susana Helm (Rural.IG@scra27.org) if you would like to submit a brief rural report or if you have resources we may list here. In this issue, we highlight the work of two recently retired professors with decades of experience working in rural Pennsylvania. Professors Murray and Keller reflect on their academic-community careers, which emphasize the importance of access to health care in rural communities, among other important contributions.

Rural Resources:
Rural Health Care Access

The Journal of Rural Health announced its inaugural “article of the year” awarded at the National Rural Health Association annual meeting, entitled, “The Rising Rate of Rural Hospital Closures” (Kaufman, Thomas, Randolphp, Perry, Thompson, Holmes, & Pink, 2016, 32-1, 35-43). As a rural resource, Murray and Keller describe hospitals and hospital closures in the brief report below. Although peer-reviewed journals, such as JRH, may be difficult to obtain unless you are affiliated with large universities, JRH also has a virtual library that appears to be open access, and which includes a number of articles on health care access.
Brief Report: A 40-year Perspective on Serving Rural Communities
Written by J. Dennis Murray and Peter A. Keller,
Professors of Psychology (emeriti), Mansfield University, Pennsylvania,
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Introduction
We both have worked and lived in rural communities for over 40 years. For a great majority of that time, and until our recent retirements, we were colleagues at Mansfield University, a small public institution in rural north central Pennsylvania. During our careers, we have spent a great deal of time studying and serving our regional community. We were each trained in clinical psychology programs where we had the good fortune to integrate the precepts and values of community psychology into our emerging professional identities. That identity shaped all our academic and community work including over two decades leading and teaching in a master’s degree program in community-clinical psychology that Peter started in 1975. At one point, the program was NIMH funded because of our focus on training students to work in rural settings (e.g. Keller & Murray, 1987; Keller, Murray, et al, 1983; Murray & Keller, 1991).

We helped graduates enter appropriate careers in diverse rural clinical settings and in a variety of leadership and policy roles in rural agencies, both within our region and across the U.S. While we advocated to preserve the value of master’s level psychologists to underserved rural communities, forces within APA and our state redefined what it meant to be a psychologist. A reduced commitment to master’s training at NIMH and changes in state licensing laws led us to close that program in 2001 as opportunities for its graduates faded. On the positive side, our commitment to understanding and participating in efforts to improve rural communities and services continued unabated. In what follows, we first reflect on the past and current situation in rural America. We also describe some of the meaningful experiences we’ve had as community psychologists working in partnership with others to affect our students and community.

Rural America: “The more things change, the more they stay the same” (or perhaps get worse)

The situation in rural, relative to urban, America has been relatively constant over the past 40 years. A short list of ongoing challenges includes: lower per capita incomes and relatively higher rates of unemployment and poverty; slower recovery from economic recession; relatively fewer human services, fewer health and behavioral health workers per capita, less access to comprehensive health care services; higher percentage of the population over 65 and under 18; and struggling public schools, including significantly lower per student spending compared to many metropolitan areas. (See for example, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2016). Janet Fitchen (1981), a pioneering anthropologist and rural sociologist, documented the intractability of rural poverty over 35 years ago, and her work remains salient today.

From some economic and educational perspectives, rural communities look more like impoverished inner cities than thriving middle or upper middle-class communities. In recent years, the challenges facing rural communities have accelerated as larger economic and policy forces have stressed commercial centers, core education, health and human services, and physical infrastructure. Notably, the loss of manufacturing jobs, the consolidation of agricultural enterprises and loss of traditional family-run farms, the steady rise in health care costs and related rural hospital closures (Ellison, 2016), and the continuing flight of capable young people to more metropolitan settings negatively affects the vitality of many rural communities. We recognize that these are broad generalizations regarding rural communities and that there are exceptions to these trends, such as those occurring in areas suddenly buoyed by an energy extraction boom. We experienced one such boom in the form of natural gas fracking in our northern Pennsylvania region, but it was short-lived: the ensuing bust left the region little ahead economically and perhaps worse off in terms of the residual problems and disruptions to community networks and institutions.

Interestingly, a great deal of attention is being directed to rural America’s role in the recent presidential election. Cramer (2016) presciently documented the political consequences of a “rural consciousness” that reflects the frustration and pain of many rural people who believe themselves left behind by the larger, urban, society. Monat (2016) has shown that Donald Trump’s success in 2016 (relative to Mitt Romney in 2012) was greatest in economically distressed counties with large working-class populations, high unemployment, higher loss of factory jobs; and the highest drug, alcohol, and suicide mortality rates (“deaths of despair”). Those are all significant factors in America’s rural counties. We would like to think that this kind of political attention will result in efforts to address these problems, though early signs do not suggest authentic concerns from a policy perspective.

The strengths of many rural communities are also evident. From our perspective, most communities survive and sometimes thrive on the strength of gemeinschaft networks of family and neighbor support and volunteerism that create an informal safety net and counterbalance to the challenges noted above. In our experience, rural people often embrace community problem solving and support. Community members accept difficult circumstances and make the best of the fewer resources they have and work together to find creative solutions. We highlight some of our experiences in this regard.

Successful Partnerships: Three case examples

The Institute. For a decade, starting in 1984, Denny helped create, direct, and support our University’s Rural Services Institute, whose mission was to use the resources of the University to address the needs of the community. Faculty and students participated in many data-driven projects including creation of a rural county-level data base, needs assessments, and program evaluations. The institute also hosted several grant-funded initiatives including projects assisting small business and industry development, providing consumer credit counseling, and outreach to rural parents to help guide their children’s plans for higher education.

An evolving health-care system. Denny also has been fortunate to serve for over 30 years on the boards of the primary health care organizations serving our county and region. He participated in three significant organizational mergers designed to better meet the health needs on the community. The first occurred in 1989 when an umbrella health and human services agency (North Penn Comprehensive Health Services), including five federally funded health centers, joined the local hospital to create a single countywide health care system (The Laurel Health System). The success of that new organization and the increasing financial pressures...
on rural hospitals then led in 2012 to a strategic merger with the larger three-hospital health care system in the county south of us (Susquehanna Health). Denny led the local system board during that process. Recently (2016) Susquehanna has affiliated with the largest not-for-profit health care system in Pennsylvania (University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, UPMC) to further strengthen and grow health care services in our two counties. These three “up-link” experiences were all guided by a few key principles: keeping the needs of the local community at the forefront of all decisions, increasing access to locally offered services, increasing the breadth and quality of services (while cognizant of the financial realities in the increasingly difficult national health care environment), and ensuring that the merging organizations shared compatible values and cultures to ensure success. All these changes required the commitment of visionary board members and administrative leaders to set aside personal and parochial anxieties and to fearlessly embrace the need for change to meet community needs.

The Partnership. Both of us have played leadership roles in a remarkable “Partnership for Community Health” that was initiated 23 years ago through a collaborative effort of our rural community health system, the county human services department, and our university. This enterprise was initiated based on a comprehensive study of health needs and services, including mental health, that was undertaken with the support of the university’s psychology faculty and, over time, contributors from other academic programs ranging from social work to health sciences and dietetics. Students as well as faculty have been engaged from the early years, and continue to be involved, particularly in needs assessment and outcome studies of partnership initiatives. Studies and interventions have ranged from identification and treatment of diabetes to drug abuse prevention and intervention. Need and outcome assessments have included alliances with the state department of health and surveys of students and families through the county’s school systems. 

The strategic goals of the Partnership have focused broadly on health promotion and disease prevention. One of us (Peter) has served on the executive or planning committees since the inception of the partnership. The other (Denny) provided leadership to ensure a data-focused foundation for the varied initiatives of the partnership. The Partnership was chosen, as one of only 25 sites from a diverse range of communities across the United States, to participate in the Kellogg National Community Care Network Demonstration Program. A variety of substantial grants from local, state, federal agencies, and companies have helped to sustain the continuing work of the partnership.

It seems remarkable to both of us in retrospect that this health partnership, which we helped initiate and nurture from our perspectives as community psychologists, continues to function and receives broad support and recognition within the community. It is a testimony to what is possible within a rural setting when there is respectfully shared leadership across a wide range of community sectors that ignites a passion for serving the varied health, human, and environmental needs of rural community members.

Conclusion

The activities we’ve described highlight the importance of coalitions and partnerships built on shared values and vision. We have seen the power of value-driven systems thinking and strong organizational and community leadership. All these efforts required effective community listening and data-driven analysis and action. These values and collaborative efforts are powerful antidotes to the isolation and helplessness often seen in under-resourced rural communities. As you might guess, we are pleased to reflect on the work we’ve done and very grateful to have had the opportunity to collaborate with so many remarkable people in our university and in the community. We doubt that neither our faculty mentors nor we would have guessed how these experiences would have unfolded because of our community psychology identities, but it seems that focused theory and intentional do lead to engagement and positive outcomes over the long term. We would welcome discussion with anyone interested in the topics or experiences we’ve touched on.

References


Self-Help / Mutual Aid

Edited by Tehseen Noorani

Editor’s note: This issue’s contribution comes from ‘Sarah’, who lives in Michigan and hears the voices of Broken Siri and the Jerk Squad. Sarah describes the onset of her distressing experiences, encounters with the psychiatric system, and coming to find the Hearing Voices Network (HVN). The HVN satisfies all seven of Humphrey’s criteria for mutual aid groups (see this column, TCP volume 50, issue 4). It has spread rapidly, building its own network of groups independently of mainstream healthcare services. Understanding voices as meaningful, the HVN advocates not to ‘shoot the messenger’ but to “decode the messages” - a radical alternative for this most-stigmatized and stigmatizing of experiences.

The Hearing Voices Network:
Finding Hope in Peer Support
Written by Sarah,
Hearing Voices Network group facilitator, Michigan

Many people who are in extreme distress and end up hospitalized leave without adequate support. It is especially hard for people who experience unusual sensory perceptions like voice hearing, visions, unusual beliefs, or altered states like psychosis to find the help they need. It often becomes isolating, as people are encouraged not to talk about their experiences. In 1987, Dutch psychiatrist Dr. Marius Romme listened to one of his voice-hearing patients named Patsy Hage. She wanted to talk to other people...
who were experiencing similar things. Soon enough the Hearing Voices Network (HVN), part of a larger Hearing Voices Movement, was born, where voice hearers can talk to one another, providing mutual support. The HVN views voices as a meaningful, despite unusual, human variation. Since its formation in 1987 it has spread to many countries around the world, in the everyday community, in closed psychiatric hospital wards and prisons. Local hearing voices groups (HVGs) provide non-pathologizing spaces where it is safe to talk about what one experiences and to share coping strategies. In its best form, an HVG can hold hope for those who might not have any left.

If only I heard of the words “peer support” or “mutual aid” when I first started hearing voices. I was in great distress, perpetuated by extreme fear. I thought that my life was in danger, and that people were spying on me and out to get me. I became obsessed with finding “hidden cameras” and “recording my voices” so that I could “prove” what I thought was happening. I needed help, but the help that I ended up getting was very traumatizing. I needed to know that I was safe, and desperately needed compassion. Unfortunately, my treatment plan did not start from a place of trust. I was taken to a city that I have never heard of, an hour away from where I was going to school. I was forced to swallow different pills that made me feel strange. Also, I was held down and injected with something which initially wasn’t explained, beyond ‘doctor’s orders’. Some of the medication that I was given gave me awful side effects. I thought that I would never make it out of the institution alive. My voices were telling me that the staff were going to kill me. I did not trust anyone.

After being released from the hospital, I was still psychotic, and hid it well enough so that when I was out in public, I did not act too strange. I moved back with my family and returned to my old job. I lasted in the world for maybe a little over a month before I was hospitalized again. My voices were telling me that I had ESP. In my mind, I thought that I could get a diagnosis of ESP, to replace the diagnosis I had been given and really hated, schizophreniform. Things did not go as planned when I walked into an ER and asked for an ESP diagnosis. During my second hospitalization, I made a pact with myself that no matter what happened to me, I was never going back to a psych hospital again. In the hospital, I learned that if I wanted to avoid going back, I couldn’t talk about the people that I thought were spying on me. Because I didn’t talk about what I was experiencing, no one thought anything was off. I would go to work, and for many months afterwards would go home and squeeze the heck out of my eyebrow, thinking that there was a camera implanted in my head. I was afraid to cut it out because I thought that in doing so, I would end up in the hospital again.

My life changed forever when I came across Eleanor Longden’s Ted Talk “The Voices in My Head,” which spoke about the existence of peer support and the HVN. I was apprehensive when I went to my first meeting since I was not sure what I was walking into, but what I discovered were other people who had similar experiences as me. I learned that there were places and spaces in this world where it was ok to talk about hearing voices, experiencing visions, unusual beliefs, or other sensory perceptions that people sometimes experience but don’t really talk about. While finding the hearing voices movement and seeing Longden’s Ted Talk was helpful for me, this may not be the case for everyone with similar experiences because surviving, coping, and recovery all look different for each individual. Some people in HVN view Longden’s type of recovery as unattainable. As a result, I can only speak from my own experience.

Something that works well with our HVG is our pro-choice stance on psychiatric medication. Most people in our group take medication, and we encourage people to keep doing what works best for them. We never tell anyone to stop taking their medication without first consulting with their doctor but are open to people using other options if medication was not effective.

After several months of going to my HVG, I learned that there was a HVN facilitator training nearby. The training was free to attend, but participants were selected from applicants who had to apply by writing a short piece about why they wanted to attend. What was really cool about the training was that our student group was about a 50-50 mix in terms of people there with lived experience and professionals who wanted to learn how to make a real difference in the lives of the people they worked for. After my negative experiences with my hospitalization, it was extremely reassuring to see so many caring professionals who wanted to better understand what people with lived experience of extreme distress and altered states including psychosis actually go through. In the three days that we came together as students, we learned so much information about the history and values of the HVN, and about the lived experiences of our two instructors. We ended the training having mock HVGs where voices hearers took over and shared parts of their stories with everyone.

My favorite part of the training was when we broke into groups of three. One person was supposed to be interviewing for a job, one person was supposed to be the interviewer, and one person was holding up a roll of wrapping paper up to the interviewee’s ear whispering into their ear, acting like a voice that only they could hear. This activity gave all the professionals who did not hear voices a first-hand experience at what it might feel like for someone to hear voices. Also, it put into perspective for them how hard interviewing for a job could be for a voice hearer, because the voices can be really distracting. One other thing that really stood

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out throughout the course of the training was when a professional gave the rest of our group an example of patient mutual aid. He was working on a psychiatric unit and a patient was frozen in a catatonic state for hours in a position where it looked like he was holding something. It took another patient to come along and tell the guy in the catatonic state that he will take over and hold that thing for him. When the other patient took over in holding this thing, the guy who was catatonic got up and went to eat dinner.

I started supporting my HVG as a facilitator shortly after the training. Our group was started by a psychologist in Michigan. She started our group in 2011 despite having no additional supports. For the first couple of years she would sit in the room holding space for our meetings. Often only one person would come to the group, while sometimes it was just her in the room. Eventually more people started coming. Every HVN group runs a little differently – ours usually starts with everyone going around the room and saying their names. We then repeat our two ground rules of confidentiality and the importance of mutual respect - even if we don’t agree with each other. Then the conversation usually goes in whichever direction people take it. Some groups have more structure, but ours lets people talk about what is on their mind. As facilitators, we sometimes check in with people to see if they had a chance to share, and we might try to redirect the conversation if needed.

Our group’s biggest challenge remains that we have people from many different backgrounds coming together to share with each other some very personal aspects of our lives. Sometimes there are differing points of view present amongst the people in the discussion, ranging from things related to where voices come from, what coping skills work for different people, and what our views on religion or spirituality are. As a facilitator it is sometimes challenging to balance all points of view and to provide all people with the right support. Learning how to become a good facilitator was a learning process. I’ve made facilitation mistakes before, but now I know to try to handle certain situations differently if they come up again. For example, I learned that it’s important to check in with people who are quiet to make sure that everyone who wants to share has a chance to do so. Sometimes it’s important to politely stop a person who is sharing so much that they are not leaving any space or time for other people to talk. I have learned that what I consider to be validating for me is not always what others need as validation. As a result, I now know that it is important to acknowledge how hard it is for a person to talk about certain things and to give them extra support beyond what I might need. Also, I learned to ask people questions about pressing issues that they might have brought up in previous meetings to see what has happened with that situation since then.

One key principle of the HVN is for groups to be as user-run and user-facilitated as possible. While that is the ideal situation, in reality the only way that an HVG often initially starts is if a professional starts it. In our HVG I see it as a benefit that I can co-facilitate the group with a psychologist. She never comes to our meetings as the sole authority in our discussion because she is a professional and the rest of us are people with lived experience. With where I am in life, it is helpful to have her be the public contact for our group because there is less pressure on me to be fully ‘out’ about my lived experience in my community and day to day life. For a person with lived experience to start taking on a role in supporting and facilitating their group, they have to feel ready. My guess is that they probably would be a person in the group who has found some coping skills and has learned to deal with enough challenges of their own lived experience where they feel comfortable taking on a helping role. Some ways that a professional can take over an HVG would be by not listening to the people who hear voices, or by telling people what they need to do. While this may possibly be a problem for other groups, I am glad that this has not been an issue in ours. It’s also helpful to have two facilitators because if one is not there, the other can facilitate. Also, while my co-facilitator is a professional, she still comes to the table with her own personal experiences which help her relate better to some people in our group compared to me.

While my HVG is a great example of peer support and mutual aid, it is not the only option out there in today’s world. Over the years I have learned about other great examples of peer supports which provide mutual aid, including online support groups on Facebook, the Icarus Project, and Intervoice, a part of the overall international hearing voices movement. The World Voice Congress is the annual meeting of people from around the world who are all a part of the hearing voices movement. Being in such a large crowd of voice hearers and professional supporters is an amazing experience! It feels wonderful to meet other people who have experienced similar things from around the world, and to see just how huge and supportive the HVN really is! The next World Voice Congress is coming up in September 2018 in the Netherlands. I also went to another peer-run conference last summer, called Alternatives. Alternatives focus on all peer aspects related to mental health. At Alternatives, I discovered the existence of peer respite places where people in crises can go as alternatives to a hospital, and ‘warm lines’, call lines where people can call if they are in distress and just want to talk to someone without calling a crisis line that will connect the person with emergency services. It makes me happy to see so many different options involving peer support and mutual aid because when I was in distress they were unheard of in my area.

Usually peer support takes place outside of traditional mental health settings, but sometimes it makes its way inside them. I find it amazing when there are HVGs on closed psychiatric units in the UK and in Massachusetts in the US. The group might start out with volunteers with lived experience coming and working with hospital staff to run the group. Over time, some hospitals let peers with lived experience run the group independently. While it is still rare in today’s world, when hospitals hire peers without compromising the peer role to help provide support for patients, it’s a sign that things are moving in the right direction, to a more patient focused treatment plan and to a shift in the mental health care paradigm.

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**Student Issues**  
*Edited by Jaimelee Behrendt-Mihalski and Erin Godly-Reynolds*

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**Announcing the 2018 National Student Representative Research Grant Recipients**

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2018 National Student Representative Research Grants! A special thanks to members of the National Student Representative Research Grant Committee who served as reviewers. If you’re interested in serving as a student reviewer for research grants or travel awards to the Biennial, please contact the Student Representatives at StudentReps@scra27.org.

Since National Student Representative Research Grants have shifted to a spring RFP, the next opportunity for students to receive up to $1,000, $500, or $375 in funding to support their dissertation or thesis project will be March 2019.
Dissertation proposals selected for funding
First Place, Ana Genkova, University of Illinois at Chicago
Resiliency in context: A community-anchored approach to experiences and responses to hardship
To reinforce mechanism of resiliency, action researchers must appreciate community members’ individual and collective capacity to survive and thrive despite systemic injustice. This phenomenological inquiry will interpret a collection of digital stories from Chicago’s Little Village community to better understand residents’ meanings, experiences, and responses to hardship. Stories were recorded in partnership with StoryCorps in the context of community-based participatory health assessment. Stories give unique insight into the complex interplay of cultural and structural factors of wellbeing in the community. This interpretative inquiry will highlight personal experiences and shared cultural meanings that orient people’s responses to hardship. The inquiry will discuss the cultural and communal roots of resiliency in the context of compounding oppression and structural violence in immigrant communities.

Second Place, Francesca Esposito, ISPA-University Institute
Immigration detention in Portugal: Exploring the lived experiences of detainees
This study aims to analyze the reality of immigration detention in Portugal. In so doing, it focuses on the Housing Unit of Santo António, the only detention facility on the Portuguese national territory. Drawing on previous fieldwork, this research seeks to shed light on life in this site of confinement, and the lived experiences of people detained inside it. Participant observations and topic-focused interviews will be used for this purpose. A thematic analysis will be performed to identify salient themes across detainees’ narratives. Findings from this study will contribute to the development of policies and practices concerned with wellbeing and human rights of people subject to immigration detention in Portugal.

Third Place, Lauren Munro, Wilfrid Laurier University
Everyday indignities: Exploring weight discrimination through photovoice methods
Weight stigma is pervasive in North America and research in this area is largely negative, framing the reduction of fitness as a legitimate goal in the context of damaging obesity discourse. Thirty participants who identify as fat will be recruited to take part in a phenomenological photovoice project designed to: (1) explore the type and nature of discrimination experienced by fat individuals in social, family, healthcare, and work environments; (2) examine the impacts of weight-based discrimination on the wellbeing of fat people; (3) document the complex and dynamic ways in which fat people respond to discrimination; (4) identify avenues for identifying, building, and developing fat culture and community; and (5) carve out space in academia that challenges the dominant obesity discourse.

Fourth Place, Zahra Murtaza, Georgia State University
The impact of concurrent racial and religious discrimination on the mental health and well-being of Muslim young adults
Following September 11th, 2001, Muslim Americans report heightened levels of discrimination. However, given their multiple minority identities, it is unclear whether this discrimination is based upon their racial or religious background. The current study seeks to investigate if and how these different types of discrimination (racial and religious) impact the mental health and well-being of Muslim American young adults. Furthermore, the current study will explore the possible protective role of spirituality in protecting these stressors. In order to gain insight about potential within-group differences in the experiences of racial and religious discrimination, the current study will also examine the interactive role of ethnicity in these relationships. Online surveys will be distributed to religious, cultural and social organizations’ mailing lists to which sizeable samples of Muslim Americans belong. Multiple regression will be used for data analysis. The consideration of intra-group diversity and resilience strengthens the contextual ecological approach of this study.

Thesis proposals selected for funding
First Place, Colby Kipp, University of South Carolina
Understanding the effects of positive parenting, neighborhood supports and perceived stress on African American adolescent weight-related outcomes using a community participatory approach
African American (AA) adolescents in the US experience a higher prevalence of obesity, a significant risk factor for diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and other poor health outcomes contributing to higher morbidity and mortality. An ecological framework will be the guiding model utilized in this thesis proposal to understand the complexity of important determinants of adolescent obesity, such as parental stress, parenting style, and neighborhood stressors. The overall goal of this study is to expand understanding of the role of perceived stress on adolescent health outcomes (body mass index; BMI) in underserved AA youth using qualitative (in-depth family interviews) and quantitative (interactional modeling analyses) methods. This will expand our understanding in order to develop a tailored community-based participatory program to improve family health.

Second Place, Tiyon Chante-Coleman, Wilfrid Laurier University
Adinkrahene: Improving access to health and HIV services for African, Caribbean, and Black people in Waterloo Region, Ontario
In Ontario, two factors may have an effect on the health outcomes of African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) people including those living with HIV/AIDS. There is a dearth of family doctors in Canada and gentrification in the Toronto area has pushed racialized families further out of the core and into smaller urban regions such as Waterloo. Access to a family doctor is critical to improve health outcomes, especially for people living with HIV/AIDS (PHAs). In partnership with the AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo and Area (ACCWKA), I, a Caribbean woman, endeavor to identify the barriers and facilitators to accessing the care of a family doctor in Waterloo Region for ACB people, with
a specific focus on PHAs. Utilizing both critical race theory and a community-based participatory action approach, this research project will engage 30 ACB participants in focus groups and interviews to understand their experiences in attempting to access healthcare in the past and preferred actions to improve access in the future. This work contributes to the scarce knowledge regarding healthcare access for ACB people living in smaller urban regions, specifically access for PHAs. Findings of this work can contribute to the development of culturally competent care for ACB people and PHAs.

From our Members
New World Era:
Culture, Self-Determination, and the Sociopsychological Construct of Black Power
Written by Tarell C. Kyles,
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Pacifica Graduate Institute

Introduction: Black Power as a Sociopsychological Construct
From early maroon societies and the initial sociopsychological stirrings of Back to Africa movements, to the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, and the PGRNA (Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika) there has always been an aspect of the collective consciousness of U.S. born Africana peoples that has directed community thought and behavior towards projects of unity, autonomy, self-defense, armed struggle, and self-determination. I posit that Black Power as a social movement emerged from the collective consciousness of U.S. born Africana peoples as an explicitly decolonial response to the racial violence and oppression of the state. In this light, Black Power may be seen as not only a social movement, or a unifying slogan, but as a generative sociopsychological cultural construct.

The community benefits of Black Power have been myriad. The synthesis of race consciousness, unity, empowerment, and self-determination within Marcus Garvey’s UNIA led to the most massive organization of U.S. born Africana peoples in the nation’s history. The organization’s periodical, The Negro World (with high profile contributors like Carter G. Woodson), educated hundreds of thousands of U.S. born Africana individuals, families, and communities at a time when quality, (not to mention culturally relevant) education was in many cases withheld from them.

In the 1960s, Black Power organizations like Stokely Carmichael’s SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee), RAM (Revolutionary Action Movement), and later the Black Panther Party, began to form, offering grassroots and community-based education, self-defense, and food-based programs to communities all over the country. The psychological and material benefits and impacts of Black Power were international, interracial, and intercommunal. Black Power inspired Latino, Asian, and Native American decolonial/resistance groups. Its impacts upon various communities could constitute their own separate studies.

Black Power and Decoloniality
Black Power is an explicitly decolonial response to the racial violence and oppression of the state. Various thinkers, including...
Additionally, internal inconsistencies have rendered the construct 35
370). More recently the FBI’s report on “black identity extremists”
Through its insistence on U.S. born Africana political, cultural, and
vulnerable to cooptation, and neutralization in confrontations
COINTELPRO and Critiques

Self-determination, or the process by which a person or a group
controls their own life, or in this case community life, has been
associated with “three innate psychological needs--competence,
autonomy, and relatedness--which when satisfied yield enhanced
self-motivation and mental health and when thwarted lead to
diminished motivation and well-being” (Ryan, Deci, 2000, p. 68).
Through its insistence on U.S. born Africana political, cultural, and
economic autonomy, as well as its declarations of Black historical
accomplishments to illustrate a trajectory of competence that
pushes back against racist stereotypes, and the shared cultural
legacies of Africana ancestry, Black Power challenges the
dominant ideology. “Dominant ideologies disempower people by
obscuring the extent to which present realities are the direct results
of ongoing historical violence and by co-opting people to endorse
and reproduce the ideological systems that contribute to their own
domination” (Philips, Adams, Salter, 2015, p. 374).

Sense of Community and Collective
Identity

Within the sociopsychological cultural construct of Black
Power, self-determination takes on a collective character. “We”
becomes a commonly used pronoun, culturally harkening back
to the Nguni Bantu (southern Africana) concept of Ubuntu,
which is often translated as, “I am, because We Are.” In this
case, self-determination arises from and informs a sense of
community. Identity-based discrimination and oppression are
collective phenomena; this suggests that people who experience
discrimination-related stress or trauma can draw upon their
shared or collective identity as a coping mechanism. Black
Power functions in this capacity, by facilitating shared emotional
connections, as well as explicit soul or spiritual connection based
upon cultural traditions and shared experiences. This includes the
perception of a shared reality. “Drawing upon a community with
similar histories of discrimination and oppression gives credence
and substantiation to one’s own experience of bias” (Dalton, 2007).

COINTELPRO and Critiques

Despite the positive psychological impacts of Black Power, the
construct and its resultant social movements have suffered from
issues of gender imbalances, and misogyny, as well as flawed
conceptualizations of U.S. born Africana people as a monolith.
Additionally, internal inconsistencies have rendered the construct
vulnerable to cooptation, and neutralization in confrontations
with the coloniality of the state. The now infamous government
initiative COINTELPRO, employed violence, psychological
warfare via infiltration, and political subterfuge to erode
community. “Across settings, a common domination strategy has
been to deny people from oppressed groups the opportunity to
build communities of support. This practice not only destroyed
potential bases for solidarity, but also deprived enslaved people
of an important source of relational and ontological security upon
which to base acts of resistance” (Philips, Adams, Salter, 2015, p.
370). More recently the FBI’s report on “black identity extremists”
has caused alarm among many who liken it to the racialized
domestic warfare of COINTELPRO.

Conclusions: The Resurgence of Black
Power and Further Considerations

In the wake of highly publicized police terrorism in U.S. born
Africana communities, the sociopsychological cultural construct of
Black Power is experiencing a resurgence. Though organizations
like the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement have managed to
remain relevant for decades, new organizations such as the
New Era Nation have taken up the mantle of Black Power. The
community-based chapters that constitute the New Era Nation (a
contemporary Black Power organization which began in Detroit
in response to publicized killings of U.S. born Africana people by
police, and other community issues in the city of Detroit), utilize
the core aspects of the construct. New Era represents both types of
communities commonly recognized within sociology and
community psychology (Dalton, 2007, p. 172). While individual
chapters represent grassroots, people-centered organization within
cities like Detroit, Chicago, and Atlanta, the New Era Nation
itself represents a more relational community. The potential
for Black Power to catalyze a paradigm shift away from racism,
dehumanization, and oppression towards pluralist, humanized,
culturally relevant and dignified models of being in the world is
immense. Black Power has been largely misunderstood, often
inspiring fear, as all paradigm shifting concepts initially do, yet,
with further development, the construct could move us towards
psychological models that support critical community theory
and practice rooted in culturally emergent understandings of the
complex relationships between the individual and the communal
psyche.

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News & Updates

**Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology**

Please join the SCRA Executive Committee in congratulating Ms. Christiane Sadeler, the recipient of the 2018 SCRA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Practice in Community Psychology!

Since its inception in 1995, Ms. Christiane Sadeler has been the Executive Director of the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council (WRCPC; Kitchener, Ontario, Canada), a unique partnership between local government and the community. She came to prevention work after years of working in human services with diverse populations in four different countries (Germany, England, New Zealand and now Canada). While working with children who had been sexually victimized she began her lifelong interest in prevention, and her degree-related research at Wilfrid Laurier University. Key was the realization that many of the children she encountered had childhoods characterized by severe neglect and abuse, and often silence around these experiences of trauma. This led Ms. Sadeler to the belief that silence about challenging topics needs to be broken, and voices from the margin needed to be amplified. She feels fortunate to do this work on a rich soil where restorative justice is embraced, and Community Psychology is increasingly understood and recognized.

Congratulations Ms. Sadeler!

**Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research in Community Psychology**

Please join the SCRA Executive Committee in congratulating Dr. Irma Serrano-García, the recipient of the 2018 SCRA Award for Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research in Community Psychology!

Dr. Irma Serrano-García is a leading contributor to theory and research in bicultural and bilingual community psychology in the Americas. Dr. Serrano-García has made substantive contributions in at least six specific areas of community psychology theory and research including international community psychology, empowerment, community intervention and research methods, education, psychology and public policy, and HIV-AIDS. Dr. Serrano-García has published about 21 co-authored and edited books, including her role as co-editor of the recently published second *Handbook of Community Psychology*. She established the International Conference of Community Psychology and hosted its inaugural meeting in San Juan in 2006. Her initial conceptual work created the foundation for the social-community psychology doctoral program at the University of Puerto Rico four decades ago. That work became a template for others seeking to initiate community psychology programs in Latin America and shaped the creation of programs in Venezuela and Argentina among others.

Congratulations Dr. Serrano-García!

The full list of 2018 award recipients are posted on the SCRA website: [http://scra27.org/members1/member-awards/](http://scra27.org/members1/member-awards/). Awards will be formally presented at the 2018 APA Convention and/or the 2019 SCRA Biennial Conference.

Want to bring prestige and recognition to your institution? Consider hosting the 2021 SCRA Biennial Conference!

The Society for Community Research and Action is soliciting proposals from individual institutions and consortia of academics and/or practitioners to host the 2021 SCRA Biennial Conference.

**PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The focus of this proposal is on the Local Planning Committee.

Consider the following:
- Local planning committee members
- Proposed dates
- Availability of facilities and accommodations
- Transportation accessibility
- Budget

Conference planning and organizing assistance will be provided by SCRA.

The conference is typically 3 to 4 days in mid to late June and draws 500 to 700 participants. Hosting this exciting event draws national and international recognition to the host institution and enables conference participants to appreciate the sponsoring institution and its location.

If you have interest in possibly being a host, are considering applying, and/or have any questions, we will be delighted to talk with you and send you more information regarding the details required in a formal proposal. We would like to begin conversations as soon as possible.

Please contact both:
Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, SCRA President
(ysuarez@uic.edu)
and Jean Hill, SCRA Executive Director
(jeanhill@scra27.org).

**Formal proposals are due September 15, 2018.**
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: _________________
Telephone: ______________________ Email: ______________________
Academic or Institutional Affiliation: ______________________

Primary Job Title: ______________________
Secondary Job Title: ______________________

*** Please complete the following information ***

APA Membership Status: _____ Not an APA member

_____ Fellow _____ Member _____ Associate _____ Student _____ Lifetime Member

APA Member Number (if known): _______________

Please indicate any interest groups or committees you would like to join:

_____ Aging
_____ Children & Youth
_____ Community Action
_____ Community Health
_____ Cultural & Racial Affairs Committee
_____ Disabilities
_____ Interdisciplinary Committee
_____ International Committee
_____ Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender Concerns
_____ Council of Education Programs
_____ Organization Studies
_____ Prevention & Promotion
_____ Rural
_____ School Intervention
_____ Self-Help & Mutual Support
_____ Social Policy Committee
_____ Environmental Justice
_____ Women’s Committee
_____ Indigenous
_____ Council for Community Psychology Practice

May we include your name and contact information in the SCRA Directory? _____ Yes _____ No

The following questions are OPTIONAL; however, this information helps us better serve our members.

Sex: _____ Female _____ Male

Race/Ethnicity (check all that apply)

_____ Native American, Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian
_____ Asian or Pacific Islander
_____ Black/African American
_____ Hispanic/Latino
_____ White/Caucasian
_____ Other: _______________

Do you wish us to indicate in the database that you identify with a sexual minority group (e.g., lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender)? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you wish us to indicate in the database that you are a person with a disability? _____ Yes _____ No

What year did you graduate? __________
Membership dues enclosed (please write in amount):

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**Please consider supporting the following SCRA Initiatives by contributing to the following funds**

**SCRA Student Initiatives Fund:** Your contribution will help support student initiatives, e.g., conference travel awards, poster presentation awards, and the mentoring initiative.
If most members gave $10, this fund would gain $10,000 for student initiatives this year.

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**SCRA International Travel Grants Fund:** Your contribution will help bring international members to the Biennial Conferences.
If most members gave $10, this fund would gain $10,000 to support international travel to future Biennials.

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**Payment by:**

- Enclosed check (made out in United States dollars, paid to the order of SCRA)
- Charge to my credit card: ___ Visa ___ MasterCard

Name on Card: ________________________________
Billing Address: ______________________________
City: __________________ State: _____ Zip: _______
Security Code: ____________

Authorized Signature: __________________________
Expiration Date: ________/_____

Please send form and credit card payment information or check to:
SCRA (Div 27), PO Box 6560, Macon, GA 31208.
Name on Card
Annual membership is based on a calendar year, January 1st through December 31st.
One year's dues are payable in full with application.
Those joining in November or December will be extended through December 31 of the following year.

**Thank you for your support of the**

*Society for Community Research & Action*
ABOUT The Community Psychologist

The Community Psychologist is published four times a year to provide information to members of the SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH AND ACTION. A fifth Membership Directory issue is published approximately every three years. Opinions expressed in The Community Psychologist are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect official positions taken by SCRA. Materials that appear in The Community Psychologist may be reproduced for educational and training purposes. Citation of source is appreciated.

TO SUBMIT COPY TO The Community Psychologist

Articles, columns, features, Letters to the Editor, and announcements should be submitted as Word attachments in an e-mail message to Susan M. Wolfe and Dominique Thomas at TCP@scra27.org or by postal mail to the editors: SCRA (Division 27), PO Box 6560, Macon, GA 31208. 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.
- **Footnotes:** Footnotes should be placed at the end of the article as regular text (do not use Word footnote function).
- **References:** Follow APA guidelines. These should also be justified to the left with a hanging indent of .25”.
- **Headers/Footers:** Do not use headers and footers.
- **Long quotes:** Follow APA guidelines for quoted materials.
- **Preferred email:** Please provide an email address for all authors so that readers can contact you directly and for you to be notified of commentary posted on the SCRA website in reference to your submission.

UPCOMING DEADLINES:

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION:

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 (Division 27), PO Box 6560, Macon, GA 31208. 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.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Address changes may be made online through the SCRA website <www.scra27.org>. Address changes may also be sent to SCRA (Division 27), PO Box 6560, Macon, GA 31208. Email: <office@scra27.org>. APA members should also send changes to the APA Central Office, Data Processing Manager for revision of the APA mailing lists, 750 First St., NE, Washington, DC 20002-4422.