From the President
Celebrating Many Changes, Structural Growth, and Strategic Planning
Susan McMahon
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DePaul University

Given the many issues going on in our country and around the world, this is an especially important time for assessment, organization, and thoughtful action that promote equality and social justice. I encourage you to volunteer and get involved with issues that you feel passionate about, whether it be at the local, regional, state, federal, or global level. Whether you are a student, faculty, practitioner, or have another primary role, there will always be another paper to write, deadline to meet, or task to finish. Yet finding the time and energy to engage in social change efforts is more important than ever. Some of us may be able to do this through our work, and others may need to reach beyond work settings and get outside of their comfort zones to effect change. Given our organization is committed to social justice, we would like to invite and encourage you to use SCRA as a vehicle to effect change. If we collaborate and pool our knowledge, skills, and resources, we can make more substantial progress on the issues we care about. Changes will funnel down from the national level to our nearby communities, so we need to be proactive, promote positive behaviors and communication, and respond as issues arise. As a first step, SCRA invited people to propose video calls on the conference line on issues of interest. This invitation led to a brainstorming conference call in December to discuss concerns raised by election outcomes. Several suggestions were made that we are working to implement. Second, we invited people to webinars that promote dissemination of information and enhancement of our skill sets. Our first webinar was held in December, with Nicole Buchanan, on interrupting street harassment, and she provided many helpful strategies that can be utilized and taught across various situations (http://scra27.org/current-events/current-events-scra-actions/). We hope to have a series of video calls and webinars that enable SCRA members to discuss, brainstorm, learn, plan, and act to address issues that are important to us. If there are individuals or groups of people interested in leading a call or hosting a webinar on a particular issue, please let us know. Third, we created space on our website to share SCRA actions, resources, and personal stories (http://scra27.org/current-events/) – please send us any material you believe would be useful to post. Many are likely to be searching for solutions to issues that arise, and effectively using social media may promote positive action. We have a lot of talented members, so let’s share our knowledge and skills. Email me (smcmahon@depaul.edu) or Jean Hill (jeanhill@scra27.org) with ideas for calls and webinars, material for our website, or for more information and support. People may be interested in collaborating with others to create and propose action plans to address issues of concern. You can submit
your plans through the SCRA rapid response action process; SCRA may adopt public positions and develop action plans on public policy issues of a time-sensitive nature (http://scra27.org/what-we- do/policy/rapid- response-actions/). SCRA policy statements can also be drafted and submitted to assert our position on pressing social issues (http://scra27.org/what-we- do/policy/policy- position-statements/).

As we work toward our vision of having “a strong, global impact on enhancing well-being and promoting social justice for all people by fostering collaboration where there is division and empowerment where there is oppression,” I would like to update you on the significant progress we have made on our strategic plan. In terms of operations, we have streamlined our approval process for our policies and procedures manual, improved our annual budget development process, created guidelines for sponsorship, and restructured our Executive Committee meetings to provide more time and focus on strategic planning initiatives. Regarding membership, the renewal form and membership database have been re-designed, and we have integrated membership renewals with biennial registration. In terms of education, the Council of Education Programs changed its name to Council on Education (COE), changed their meeting structure to encourage participation across the membership, and completed the biennial survey of graduate programs. Great progress has been made on visibility, with the purchase of a new website (communitypsychology.com), development and distribution of an RFP for website development, creation of an Outreach Communications Plan, and development of guidelines for collaboration with like-minded organizations. The new website is intended to be more focused toward the public and work in conjunction with our existing website that is more directed toward members. Communitypsychology.com presents us with some exciting opportunities to showcase our work and engage broader audiences. I see one of my primary roles as promoting the development of, and progress on, our strategic plan, and I think we are well on our way to achieving our goals; yet, there is much work to be accomplished. If you are not involved with a strategic planning team and would like to get involved, we would love to have you join our efforts. Please contact me or Jean Hill and we will be sure to link you with initiatives that are a good fit with your interests.

Finally, I want to shout out a few thank yous. As we prepare for the upcoming biennial in Ottawa, I would like to thank our colleagues on the planning committee, especially co-chairs Tim Aubry and John Sylvestre (University of Ottawa), and Manuel Riemer (Wilfrid Laurier University) for the planning and preparation of the conference. It is exciting to hear that we have a record number of biennial submissions – it is going to be a great biennial conference! I want to thank all of our members who have participated in strategic planning, as well as those who are engaging in important social change efforts. I also share my thanks to Jean Hill, our Administrative Director, who is contributing significantly to our steady progress on our strategic plan and the many initiatives we are engaged in.

As we usher in the new year of 2017, SCRA is open to ideas, strategies, and initiatives, so let us know how we can be helpful.
From the Editors

Daniel Cooper
and Tiffany McDowell
Adler University, Chicago

As we transition to 2017 the call for social action has become stronger than ever. The Winter 2017 Issue provides multiple examples of the importance of community psychology in society today. For those interested in collaboration, our president Susan McMahon outlines SCRA’s direction over the upcoming year. The special feature this month is an analysis of the ethics violations of clinical psychologists engaged in torture. Our colleagues have composed a persuasive argument, which is timely given the current debate on use of torture methods on detainees.

There are several ways to connect with others in SCRA toward social justice. We encourage you to read more about work happening on the local, regional, and national levels toward diversity and equity.

Dan and Tiffany
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EDUCATION
The Education Interest Group is dedicated to understanding the social justice issues related to education. This includes issues such as access to education, educational policies, and the impact of education on social justice issues.
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VITAL IMPACTS
The Vital Impacts Interest Group is dedicated to understanding the social justice issues related to vital impacts. This includes issues such as health, education, and economic opportunities.
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VOLUNTEERISM
The Volunteerism Interest Group is dedicated to understanding the social justice issues related to volunteerism. This includes issues such as community service, the role of volunteers, and the impact of volunteerism on social justice issues.
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*Last updated 12/05/16

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, & TRANSGENDER (LGBT)
The LGBT Interest Group increases awareness of the need for community research and action related to issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are either interested in research/services/policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.
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The transformative change in community mental health interest group is to strive to establish an alternative paradigm that focuses on the promotion of mental health based on community settings based on the values of 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: Jose Ornelas, ISPA, jose.ornelas@lcpa.gov

SELF-HELP/ MUTUAL SUPPORT
The Self-Help/Mutual Support Interest Group is an international organization of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help groups and organizations.
Chair: Greg Townley, gtownley@pdx.edu

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 on the promotion of mental health based on community settings based on the values of 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: Jose Ornelas, ISPA, jose.ornelas@lcpa.gov
The newly elected U.S. president, much of his cabinet, and the majority of the American public have made gestures of support for torture in national security investigations, despite prohibitions against such techniques. Previous support for involvement of psychologists in such interrogations came from the APA (American Psychological Association) and its psychologists. Despite being censured for its complicity (Hoffman, 2015), many APA psychologists continue to deny there were widespread problems with APA and that the psychologists that participated were just a few bad apples. Yet there remains a powerful movement within psychology, insisting that the use of such adversarial approaches are antithetical to the ethos of the discipline (Arrigo, Eidelson, & Bennett, 2012; Soldz, Olson, & Arrigo, manuscript under review).

Community psychology, going beyond traditional psychology, can provide a systemic analysis that equally supports the value of individual narratives of the most vulnerable in any situation, perhaps providing deepened understandings of the field’s problems.

The New York Times recently provided narratives of survivors of U.S. Torture, and many of these survivors (Apuzzo, Fink, & Risen, 2016) were impacted directly by psychologists, and likely indirectly by APA collusion (Hoffman, 2015). These narratives show the debilitating psychological consequences of torture and other cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment (CIDT). From a systems-based understanding of past and present atrocities, narratives help to understand the long-term realities of survivors, how they were impacted by manipulation and collusion of government policy and the field of psychology, itself.

Narratives of torture survivors provide precious in-depth testimonies to the ethics affliction faced by U.S. psychology. Community psychology, while providing a multi-level system of torture, provides a more humanizing and liberating approach, particularly of the role of U.S. clinical psychologists in these instances. By focusing on the narratives of survivors of torture we may better safeguard against continued deteriorations of civil society’s commitments to ethics, law and human rights, preventing associations and especially psychology, from becoming instruments of harm and oppression.

**Community Psychology, Clinical Psychology, and APA Collusion**

It is well known that the Department of Defense (DoD) and Intelligence (e.g., CIA) favored clinical psychologists, specifically, for their work in enhanced interrogations (i.e., torture). Our sub-discipline of community psychology has, since its beginnings in the 1960s, a long, and not tension-free relationship with clinical psychology (Swampscott Report, 1965). At the same time, community psychology has done much, over the past decades, to salvage so much of the good within clinical psychology. We have also worked to correct the ethical path of psychology as a whole, toward greater empowerment and well-being for diverse members of global communities.

There is much community psychology can do to further study clinical psychology, and to understand the missteps around the interrogation/torture scandal. By studying the role of clinical psychology, a community psychology can go beyond the “bad apple” approach and provide a more systemic analysis, one that deepens understandings of psychologists, survivors, the broader field of psychology and civil society.

In APA’s years-long collusion with the CIA, DoD, and the White House, the Association strove actively to keep clinical psychologists participating in enhanced interrogations. The APA’s willingness to comply to government requests led it to promote acts that violated the ethos of the discipline itself (and clinical psychology). The individual CIA/DoD clinical psychologists, by violating the primary stakeholder of clinical psychology, the client, they...
also fundamentally violated the field’s ethos. Different sub-disciplines of psychology use different names for ‘ethos,’ and it is more a constellation of factors that a single entity. We argue that the value of ethos involves Beneficence.

Principle A of the APA ethics code is Benefficence and Non-maleficence, that: “Psychologists strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm.” We argue that beneficence—striving to benefit the client—is even more central than “do no harm”. This ethos, with torture as its antithesis, is the healing and humanizing approach to psychology, and to the people most directly impacted by our interventions.

APA decisions were not steered by the well-being of the client. APA, with a willingness to comply to government requests, lost its ethical axis and consequently promoted decisions that overshadowed the client. The same was true of the clinicians, focused not on the client and ameliorating, but on their employment by their government who, in their eyes, was their real client. We do recognize that not every DoD/Intelligence adversarial clinical psychologist is the same. Some, like James Mitchell, greedily engaged in their passion for torture. Other clinical psychologists severely conformed, engaged, and may have experienced cognitive dissonance, but completely perpetuated the system of CIDT. They all violated the key forms of the good in clinical psychology, exploiting theories and tools of psychology to bring harm.

We focus on three violations to clinical psychology. Clinical psychologists: 1) using their tools to create long-term psychological disorder; 2) being used by the government to make torture look like non-torture, and; 3) breaking the trust of all therapist-clients around therapeutic alliance.

1. Clinical Psychologists Using Clinical Tools to Create Psychological Disorder

NY Times survivor narratives reveal just how psychologists used their clinical skills to produce lifetime-long clinical disorders: PTSD, anxiety, major depression. The narratives reveal much evidence of paranoia, psychosis, inability to sleep, long-term memory loss, and many other symptoms that would be of no surprise to clinical psychologists who have focused exclusively on beneficence with survivors of torture. The narratives show the debilitating psychological consequences of harm-focused psychologists. For the worst of these psychologists the goal was to psychologically dislocate the detainee and exploit this psychological suffering. The survivors report their experiences as: “Make him as uncomfortable as possible”, “Work him as hard as possible”, and “[Keep] him away from anyone who spoke his language”. The totality was the worst part: “They tortured us in jails, gave us severe physical and mental pain, bombarded our villages, cities, mosques, schools.” And, “Of course we have flashbacks, panic attacks and nightmares”.

Community psychologists, in our work, make the appreciation of diversity and vulnerable populations explicit. There is little more shocking than the case of Mohammed Jawad, brought in at the vulnerable age of 14 years, whose capture and detention involved a psychologist. Today he suffers from PTSD. The psychologist involved in his capture and detention said then, about the teenager: “The detainee comes across as a very immature, dependent individual... his demeanor looks like it is a resistance technique”. Rather than show any semblance of cultural competence of recognition of a youth as a vulnerable person, fundamental to all psychological ethics and good sense, the experience was a process of exploitation.

From a more sociopathic-orientation, there are the torturing “clinical psychologists”, like James Mitchell, CIA contractor, who boasted, publicly, about his use of waterboarding. Mitchell received knowledge directly from psychologist Martin Seligman, about Seligman’s long-time work on learned helplessness. Much like Seligman’s early work in his experiments with dogs, Mitchell’s only intent was to fully break down the psychological resources of his morally excluded “subjects”, the detainees.

2. Clinical Psychologists Used to Legitimize Torture

Psychologists like Mitchell were set only on harm while other psychologists used their psychological “skills” to exploit detainees. This latter group were also used by the government to pretend torture fell short of “torture” in a process of manipulating well-established legal definitions of psychological torture. The White
House goal was to undercut the internationally agreed upon definition “severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental” from the Convention Against Torture (CAT, 1987). This covers the psychological impact of techniques such as waterboarding, stress positions, beating, temperature manipulation, threats of harm to person, family or friend, sleep deprivation, sensory bombardment, violent shaking, sexual humiliation, prolonged isolation and sensory deprivation (Physicians for Human Rights, 2007). The White House was setting a higher bar for such harm to constitute torture. Under the new White House such techniques only constituted torture if they gave proof of “severe mental pain or suffering” and “prolonged mental harm” (Bybee, 2002). One could say then that psychological pain and suffering that did not develop new disorders was not “torture”. Who better then to monitor these enhanced interrogations then clinical psychologist who could say “stop here or long-term damage will occur”. Clinical psychologists on the health side at places like Guantanamo rarely diagnosed detainee symptoms as PTSD symptoms, which no doubt are attributable to torture. In other words, clinical psychologists played key roles in rationalizing that torture was something less than torture. What the NY Times survivor narratives, and the “legacy of damaged minds” show, is that despite the clinical psychologists, and despite the White House’s draconian definitions, torture is torture.

3. Clinical Psychologists

Destroying Therapeutic Alliance for All Psychologists

An additional key violation of clinical psychology was the radiating negative impact these clinical psychologists had on therapeutic alliance, not only within their own setting but everywhere else. Therapeutic alliance, within clinical psychology, best represents beneficence. Therapeutic alliance is the “quintessential integrative variable” of therapy (Wolfe & Goldfried, 1988). It is the crux of the clinical art where trust, respect, and acceptance are promoted and put into practice, first by therapist, ultimately in collaboration with the client. The quality of the alliance significantly contributes to positive clinical outcomes independent of the approach used. For benefits to occur, regardless of difficulty in the process, the client must know the therapist’s intent to help. Trust is essential. The therapist must respect the client’s culture, religion, worldview. Regardless of difficulty in the process, the ultimate goal must be to help the individual and primary stakeholder, the client. And if the therapist is unable to fulfill that contract, for whatever reason, the alliance is contaminated.

In many ways, adversarial clinical psychologists and the APA all contributed to the creation of survivors’ long-term symptoms, to the legitimization of torture denial, and to the radiating breakdown of the therapeutic alliance. In many ways, the lack of appreciation of, and empathy for, survivors of torture is, we believe, a primary cause so many APA psychologists of all types still engage in denial, historical revisionism, and political amnesia. Guantanamo psychologists, it is given, contaminated the therapeutic alliance within their own setting, but they, we argue, damaged it in all settings. Nowhere did they contaminate the future universe of therapeutic alliance more than for clinicians who work with torture survivors. Clinicians in the U.S. who work with survivors of torture must now have a very difficult time obtaining trust from their clients.

For these reasons, in our research, we are currently interviewing these clinicians. Survivor narratives acquire a deeper meaning when they are considered jointly with testimonies from clinicians. Through these interviews we hope to learn much, but we are particularly interested in understanding how the discipline of psychology can begin to re-establish a therapeutic alliance in clinician-survivor relationships, and trust from society in general. Through these narratives we hope to better understand the ethos of an ethical clinical psychology and the resulting systemic problems connected to the torture scandal. As community psychologists, we hope to help retrace the steps that led clinicians to do harm. With such new understanding we can all work to help re-focus psychology toward its fundamental ethical values and ensure psychologists’ decisions and actions adhere to those values.

By recognizing the survivors of torture and the clinicians who have dedicated their lives to helping survivors of torture, we can better safeguard the field of psychology. We can also help
prevent other areas of civil society from violating ethics, law, and human rights, preventing the protectors of mental health from becoming instruments of harm and oppression.

References

The Community Practitioner
Edited by Olya Glantsman

Supporting our Professional Growth as Practitioners: A Look at the Community Psychology/Practice Council’s Peer Consultation Calls

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Tom Wolff & Associates

I was asked to write about the Community Psychology Practice Council’s monthly peer consultation calls that I have been facilitating for the Council for the last four years. The calls are a format created by the Practice Council to provide support to each other in our community work, an informal chance to share our work with colleagues, and get some new ideas and help when we are stuck. We have met once a month by phone since March 2013 with a changing group of 6-8 students, new grads, and seasoned professionals showing up. We send out an alert inviting folks to a one-hour call on a Friday PM, at the start of the call we all go around and introduce ourselves, and say a bit about what we are presently working on and if we want some time to get some help with something we are struggling with, we then divide up the time so that everyone gets a chance. The calls have been a fascinating learning experience for all of us, so I am delighted to reflect on what we have learned. I have asked a number of participants to add their thoughts, which appear later on in this column.

The practice of community psychology is often a very complicated and stressful process. As the consultant, facilitator, trainer one can be immersed in multi-level, multi-dimensional issues that can be conflictual and often muddy. So what is a practitioner to do when faced with these situations? Who does the community psychologist turn to? We do not seem to have a tradition in CP of modeling how to continue to gain support and clarity in our work as we transition from student into the workforce and even as we go on with our careers.

I did my graduate work as community psychology was emerging as a field and was in a clinical program under Emory Cowen at Rochester. I was always appreciative of the careful ways many of those doing clinical work approached the complications they experienced. Supervision by more experienced clinicians or by peers was
almost always the norm. It was a given. Clinicians know that their work is complicated and that they need a place to reflect, get feedback and fresh perspectives. The psychoanalytic concept of counter-transference focuses on the clinician’s feelings and what ‘baggage’ the clinician brought to the situation. Community psychology work has no such model that I know of. So many are now calling for reflective practice to help us understand our own issues that we bring to our community work. Regina Langhout calls it developing an “ethical, critically reflexive anti-racist feminist praxis.” As a white male coming from privilege, it is required that I deeply reflect and understand that position as I work, especially in communities of color.

In my many years of doing CP practice I have tried different ways to puzzle this out. When directing Community Partners in Massachusetts one summer I came back from reading about Gertrude Stein’s Paris Salons – gatherings of intellectuals in Paris. I thought what fun – so I came back and suggested that we would have monthly “Social Change and Empowerment Salons.” I invited my staff, people from community institutions who we were working with, colleagues from the area to join us for a monthly gathering at a nearby inn – they bought their drinks, I bought the appetizers that we nibbled on. We talked, and we read, and we wandered – finally reading quite a bit about spirituality and social change. We also sponsored an annual conference where we could expose ourselves to some of the best thinkers in the field like John McKnight, Margaret Wheatley Robert Putnam, David Chavis, and Arthur Himmelman. Now, as I work in the area of health equity and racial justice, a group of us have created the New England Racial Justice Coalition, a voluntary unfunded quarterly gathering of those of us across New England who are working to promote racial justice as it relates to health care. The core group had worked together in CDC-funded racial justice coalitions and after the money ran out decided to keep meeting. This is another form of support for community work. We have employed “push back circles,” which involve re-playing instances of resistance in response to raising issues of racial injustice. During the role plays, some people take on the role of “coaches.” We also divide into Affinity Groups (White and People of Color) to do part of our support work.

What I know is that we need these kinds of settings desperately – for support, for colleagues, for clarity, for reflection, for growth. Let’s hear the voices of some of those who attend to get a real sense of how the Practice Council Peer Consultation calls really work.

A Case for Practice Calls
Lizzie Rodriguez, PhD candidate, Pacifica Graduate Program

As a new Community Psychologist, the field at times can seem complicated and cumbersome. While my role is a community organizer and relationship builder, I often find myself feeling isolated in the work with ideas and questions swirling in my mind. I find myself yearning for a mentor or professional group that would process case studies with me, encourage me to be mindful of community needs, while staying true to the guiding principles of Community Psychology, and support the multiplicity of experiences I encounter while engaging in community work. Thankfully, I have found the community of support I was yearning for in the monthly Community Psychology Practice Council’s Peer Consultation Calls. Call participants include students, recent graduates, and seasoned professionals who come together to support one another through questions or introducing dilemmas we are facing in our work. On several occasions I thought I was experiencing a very unique challenge and felt slightly self-conscious presenting the dilemma, only to learn that others have experienced the same challenges in their work. This process of hearing from others normalized the experience for me and allowed me to feel comfortable with a moderate amount of uncertainty. I consider the calls a practice of self-care. They allow me to settle into the comfortable space provided and engage in the wonderful process of sharing and learning from diverse colleagues. They help facilitate personal growth and development. I encourage others to join the calls as we all have wisdom to share with one another.

Carlos Luis, CP M.A. student, Wilfrid Laurier University

I started joining the Peer Consultation Calls in 2013, before I began graduate school. The very first thing that impressed me was how welcoming everyone
was. Even though I did not have a degree in CP my voice was heard and my work experience was valued. This made me come back every month and helped me learn from real life dilemmas in community psychology practice. Additionally, it helped me learn from topics I had never heard of. Usually there are follow up e-mails which include references to the topics that were discussed on the call. This proved to be a very helpful and enlightening resource. I remember having a complicated challenge at work once, and I shared it at the Peer Consultation Call. The feedback I got helped me maintain the course despite the adversities I was facing at my job. It helped me understand the values CP is founded upon, and the challenges we will face as we attempt to practice community psychology. I am very grateful for this reflective space, the valuable input of participants, and Tom’s leadership.

**Kyrah K. Brown, PhD, Early Career Community Psychology Practitioner**

I began actively participating in the Peer Consultation calls in 2014. During this year, I graduated with my doctorate in Community Psychology from Wichita State University. My journey was somewhat unique in that I was able to help structure my own postdoctoral appointment through a partnership between a local health department and a nearby medical school. So, I was doing a mixture of capacity building work as well as leading community research and evaluation. I’ve always found myself on a ‘fence’ between academia and practice. So, the space created on this call was important for me because I was able to hear the wide range of work in which my colleagues were engaged. In addition, I needed peer support as I was navigating very new territory while also building on my professional identity. Now that I work as a consultant engaged in evaluation capacity building among non-profit organizations, I face a number of new experiences and challenges (embedded within a new and different community). As an early career, self-identifying Community Psychologist, it has been helpful to me to bring issues or questions to the Peer Consultation Call to gain feedback. Usually, colleagues on the call share examples of what strategies worked for them in the past or probe you with questions to help you think through the issue and come to a resolution. I believe that the Peer Consultation Calls can be especially important for students and early career Community Psychologists even if they do not yet have their own community experiences to share. I think you gain so much from listening to others experiences in which case may end up serving you well if you ever find yourself experiencing a similar situation. In closing, there is so much to learn and share on the Peer Consultation Calls. It really is a valuable space for colleagues to connect reflect, discuss, advise and, most importantly, learn!

**How Are Practice Calls Helpful? Let Me Count the Ways!**

**Susan M. Wolfe**

I have been attending these calls as often as possible since they began. They have been helpful to me on a number of levels. First, for a long time I was the only Community Psychologist in my geographical area and it was wonderful to touch base monthly with a group of people who share my professional interests and orientation. Second, for most of those years I was an independent consultant and working solo. It was helpful in reducing the sense of isolation for me to have this group to bounce ideas, frustrations, successes and other information off. Third, the struggles and dilemmas that were shared often struck a chord with me and were relevant to my own. At times I accidentally found solutions to problems I didn’t realize I had, and at others I felt validated in the way I had managed some challenges I encountered in my own practice. Finally, it’s just interesting and enjoyable to hear from so many wonderful community psychologists with such a range of experiences and situations.

One of the best features of this group is the range of experience – there are some longtime practitioners and some new ones. It is a great example of how different levels of experience and interests can merge together to provide so much better feedback than a single person is able to provide. I am grateful to have this network of peers to engage with each month. Even when I
can’t attend because of conflicting demands, it is nice to know they are there.

**Academic as Practitioner?**
**Vincent T Francisco, PhD**

The Society for Community Research and Action has been a second home for me since 1991 when I attended a Biennial conference for the first time in Tempe Arizona. I was hooked from the start, but not because of what I learned in methodology or theory (although I learned, and have much more to learn about that). It was because of the values of the people who have become some of the most significant friends of my life. I have the great privilege to have a faculty position at a major research university, but my work has always been about a combination of learning and making a difference in the lives of others. At a university, I found that I can do both, but the draw to integrate more with community practitioners has been strong from the beginning. It helps me to create opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to learn and contribute. It helps me to feel connected to my roots, and to learn about what can work (and not work) so that it informs my teaching and scholarship within the academy. I was more active on the Community Practice calls at the beginning, before my schedule changed to having department and committee meetings on Fridays, but I miss it and plan to attend regularly when I am able. There I find guidance and support and excitement for making a difference in people’s lives. I brought to the group some of my challenges and found a group of people who include some of the most amazing teachers. People who span the breadth of training from the early days of community psychology through the present. I learned more in listening to them about how important and relevant it is to be a community practitioner, who is also an academic teacher and researcher. Continuing to learn and be challenged by others, having to clarify my language and intent, getting advice from others who think about things from very different points of view from me, are all critical to the work I do with communities. There are more and more academics identifying themselves as community practitioners. The Peer Consultation calls led by Tom Wolff are an important base of support and guidance for us. We have a lot to learn with full-time practitioners, and this is the best opportunity I know for it. As always, the participants’ words say it best.

**Committee on Ethnic and Racial Affairs**
**Edited by Chiara Sabina**
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**What Does It Mean to become a Diverse University?**
**Fabricio E. Balcazar, Ph.D.**
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I was recently asked to conduct a mentoring training at UIC for faculty in my college (Applied Health Sciences) and the College of Medicine. The training follows guidelines from the “Mentor training for clinical and translational researchers” by Pfund, House, Asquith, Spence, Silet & Sorkness (2012), which is sponsored in part by the University of Wisconsin Institute for Clinical and Translational Research. I want to share with you excerpts from a document that is summarized in the training materials called “Benefits and challenges of diversity in Academic settings” written by Eve Fine and Jo Handelsman (2010). The authors start by emphasizing that the diversity of a university’s faculty, staff, and students influences its strength, productivity, and intellectual environment. Diversity of experience, age, physical ability, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and many other attributes contributes to the richness of the research and teaching experiences for students and faculty alike.

There are of course many benefits to diversity that have been identified in the literature. Diverse working groups are more productive, creative, and innovative than homogeneous groups, and developing a diverse faculty will enhance teaching and research (Herring, 2009). Minority viewpoints stimulate discussion of multiple perspectives and previously unconsidered alternatives, whether or not the minority opinion ultimately prevails (Nemeth, 1995). According to the UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute (1995, cited by Antonio, 2002), scholars from minority groups have expanded and enriched scholarship and
teaching in many academic disciplines by offering new perspective and by raising new questions, challenges and concerns.

On the other hand, the authors also point out several challenges of diversity. Several researchers (e.g., Riger et al., 1997; Sheridan & Winchell, 2006; Harvard University Task Force on Women Faculty, 2005; etc.) have reported that women and minority faculty members are considerably less satisfied with many aspects of their jobs than the majority male faculty members. These aspects include teaching and committee assignments, involvement in decision-making, professional relations with colleagues, promotion and tenure, salary inequities, and overall job satisfaction. Another study at universities and colleges in eight Midwestern states reported that faculty of color experience exclusion, isolation, alienation, and racism in predominantly white universities (Turner & Myers, 2000). Multiple studies have also demonstrated that minority students often feel isolated and unwelcomed in predominantly white institutions and that many experience discrimination and differential treatment. Such minority status can result from race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, disability and other factors (e.g., Ranking, 2003; Suarez-Balcazar et., 2003).

Part of the problem is that people often hold unconscious, implicit assumptions that impact their judgments and interactions with others. Fine and Handelsman (2010) conclude that in order to reap the benefits and minimize the challenges of diversity, we need to overcome the powerful human tendency to feel more comfortable when surrounded by people we resemble; we need to learn how to understand, value and appreciate differences. They add that simply adding diverse people to a homogeneous environment does not automatically create a more welcoming and intellectually stimulating campus. Here are some of their recommendations:

- Become aware of unconscious biases that may undermine your commitment to egalitarian principles
- Strive to minimize the influence of unintentional biases
- Seek opportunities for greater interaction with women and minority colleagues
- Focus on the individual and his/her unique characteristics, qualifications, merits, interests, etc.
- Treat all individuals—regardless of race, sex, or status – with the respect, consideration and politeness they deserve.
- Actively promote inclusive communities—welcome new department members by initiating conversations or meeting with them. Attend social events and make efforts to interact with new members and others who are not part of your usual social circle.
- Counter common stereotypes by increasing the visibility of successful women and minority members of your discipline (by the way, I do think that our discipline of Community Psychology has distinguished itself in this regard).

In all my years as a Community psychologist, I have always been proud of our discipline and our commitment to social justice, diversity and equality. However, as community psychologists we are often a small minority within larger psychology departments and our voices are not always heard (“here she/he comes again!”). My recent work with these materials made me realize that we have to be constantly vigilant to challenge injustice and discrimination whenever and wherever we see it. We have to keep up the conversations with our colleagues and students. This is becoming ever more critical given the current political events in our country. Our challenge is finding ways to heal the deep wounds that have been opened by the recent public displays of hatred in our nation.

References


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Racial and Social Justice Mini-Grants
The Committee on Cultural, Ethnic, and Racial Affairs is proud to announce the recipients of the first round of racial and social justice mini-grants. These grants promote the concerns of people of color as a focus of community research and intervention and promote the training and professional development of people of color interested in community psychology. The following were selected as exemplar projects for funding.

Mapping our Formal and Informal Resources: Addressing Black Student Concerns at the University of Miami
Natalie Kivell, Ivann Anderson, Susie Paterson, Elizabeth McInerney, Scot Evans, Laura Kohn-Wood, and Stacey Kesten

This project plans to identify and connect the formal and informal resources at the University of Miami (UM) to better support black students in building power for social change within and beyond our university walls. The Standing Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (SCDEI) and the Engagement Power and Social Action Research Team (EPSA) have come together to create a strong and connected foundation on which to build social action at UM. Within the bounds of this grant, EPSA will work with members of the SCDEI and the Black Students Concerns identity group (one of nine identity groups under the auspices of the SCDEI) to complete a mapping project of the formal and informal resources across UM using a social network analysis methodology. A convening facilitated by SCDEI and EPSA students will be held after the mapping process to continue to build relationships and connections across our campus. We will simultaneously, through collaborative processes and training, work to build the research capacity of student members of the standing committee so that the work can continue beyond the granting period. Beyond the scope of this grant, this mapping tool developed will be used for the remaining eight identity groups (LGBTQ concerns, religious diversity, gender equity, veteran students, SES, Country of Origin, ableism, and intersectionality) with the plan of building a layered map identifying all formal and informal resources working for justice to be completed by/with the working group on intersectionality. The connections to the standing committee and thus the intersectional focus of its work provides a space with potential to shift the culture and climate of our institution, although the proposed work here is only one step of many needed to make these structural shifts.

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Muslim Women Teachers and Civic Engagement
LaRue Allen, Tess Yanisch, Rivka Narvekar, Millie Symns, Mikaeala Santos, Donna Finnegan, Rahimeen Ahmad, Shavonnea Brown, and Chloe Leveille

This study’s purpose is to better understand Muslim women’s motivations when they pursue a career in teaching, as well as their perceptions of civic engagement and its (actual or desired) role in their schools and classrooms. We are exploring how family, religious, and educational factors have influenced their civic values and their values as teachers. Because teachers influence their students, exploring teachers’ own civic values and opinions on the role of religion in the public sphere allows us to understand the values they pass along and the barriers they see to this process. Eighteen Muslim women, a mix of current and retired teachers and students in Masters of Education programs, participated in one- to two-hour-long interviews about their careers and civic engagement; we are attempting to recruit more for a total of 25. These women were diverse in terms of family background (some were immigrants or children of immigrants from several different countries); age; and religiosity (some wore hijabs; one described herself as “not religious but culturally Muslim”), and taught or plan to teach a wide range of ages. The interviews covered a range of subjects, including why they were drawn to teaching, their training as teachers, and the influence of family and school experiences in that career decision; their perspectives on their school’s role in student civic engagement; and their thoughts on the role of religion in school and in public. We plan to explore themes in how these women navigate their roles as teachers from a religious (and, for many, an ethnic) minority--roles that often include informally educating both students and peers. Their experiences shed light on teaching as a form of civic engagement and the role of religion in civic engagement, as well as on the strength of those practicing community and civic engagement as a part of daily life.

Build Anyway Program
Erin Carney and Sheila DeBerry

The “Build Anyway Program” uses a series of strengths-based classes in order to re-connect homeless U.S. Military Veterans in a transitional living program to their local community. These homeless Veterans often face intersecting challenges--such those relating to culture, race, socioeconomic status, and mental health status--that may compound to make it especially difficult to successfully build new lives. The Program aim is to identify and build upon the skills, strengths, and unique experiences of Veterans in order to refine their sense of purpose. The name of the Program is drawn from a quote by Mother Theresa and seeks to embody the ultimate hope that these gentlemen will feel empowered--regardless of previous and future setbacks--to be actively engaged in their communities.

Engaging, Managing, and Bonding through Race (EMBRace)
Monique McKenny, Riana Anderson, and Howard Stevenson

Engaging, Managing, and Bonding through Race (EMBRace) is a community-based program which was developed to address the specific effects of racism and discrimination in the lives and wellbeing of African-American youth and families. EMBRace is a 5-week culturally-based therapeutic intervention that empowers African-American youth (ages 10-14) and their parent(s) to confront racial stress and trauma together while promoting strength and bonding within the family. EMBRace is designed to increase parent and adolescent competence around racial socialization, reduce parent and adolescent racial stress and trauma, and improve familial psychological well-being as well as adolescent academic engagement. The program involves skill development regarding racial communication, processing racial encounters, and family bonding. EMBRace is the first identified racial socialization intervention for adolescents and their parents that uses culturally-specific theories and evidence-based practices to engage racial encounters and reduce racial stress and trauma. Using role-playing, debating, art, and media, families complete activities together and separately.
with trained clinicians. EMBRace is led by Drs. Riana Anderson and Howard Stevenson through the Racial Empowerment Collaborative at the Graduate School of Education within the University of Pennsylvania. The program is currently serving families throughout Philadelphia and brings together community members, clinicians, and researchers.

The Virtues of Vegetables: Teaching Urban Agricultural Practices to Underserved Youths at Boys Totem Town

August John Hoffman, Lesli Blair, Rich Downs, and Heather Weyker

We are very pleased to be awarded with the 2016-2017 SCRA Social Justice Award for Community Development. This award money will be devoted to creating a vegetable and horticultural program at a youth detention system (Boy’s Totem Town). Boy’s Totem Town has been serving youths for over 100 years in St. Paul, MN that provides counseling and family therapy to adolescent youths. The award money will be devoted to teaching the youths basic principles of urban agriculture, healthy foods, and ecological/environmental sustainability practices. I am currently a Wisconsin Certified Master Gardener and I will provide training for each of the gardeners in basic horticultural and urban agricultural skills. Part of the goal of this project is in teaching the youths (aged 14 years – 19 years) how urban agriculture impacts both their physical and psychological health. We also hope to teach basic agricultural practices so they may have a viable skill for employment once they leave the Boys Totem Town and pursue a degree program (Food, Community & Sustainability) at Metropolitan State University. We look forward to a very productive and healthy year this Spring 2017!

Education Connection

Edited by Carrie Fordan

Using Fiction in the Undergraduate Community Psychology Course

Written by

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A number of diverse types of audio and visual resources have been recommended and employed as adjunctive/supplemental instructional materials in undergraduate community psychology courses. For example, the instructor’s manuals for two of the leading texts in the field (Kloos et al., 2012; Moritsugu, Vera, Wong, & Duffy, 2013) suggest the following as possibilities: movies (e.g., Do the Right Thing, And the Band Played On), videos (e.g., An Ounce of Prevention; videos on women in various cultural contexts), television programs (e.g., Eyes on the Prize, episodes of Desperate Housewives and Friday Night Lights), websites (e.g., related to community services in various countries), newspaper articles (e.g., from the Tuesday Science section of the New York Times, local articles related to community issues), magazines, and songs.

The benefits of using literature (e.g., fiction and memoirs) in the teaching of psychology have frequently been explicated (e.g., Wheeler, 2009), especially with regard to personality (e.g., Stone & Stone, 1990), abnormal (e.g., Christler, 1999), and developmental (e.g., Boyatzis, 1992) psychology. However, to date there has been scant discussion about utilizing literature in community psychology courses. The present article is aimed at illustrating the use of fiction (in this case the novel Push) in the undergraduate community psychology classroom. This example hopefully can serve as encouragement for instructors to similarly and creatively introduce such works into the syllabus.

The Assignment

Fordham University’s undergraduate community psychology course is a fairly standard one-semester survey of the field. The Push assignment is given by the instructor (the first author) at a point in the course at which approximately two thirds (i.e., Chapter 1-8 in the Kloos et al. [2012] text) of the material has been covered. The students are asked to read the book and then “write a one- to two-page paper
in which [they] show, in detail, how the novel (incidents, themes, characters, etc.) illustrates constructs, terms, models, theories, etc. from community psychology.”

*Push* (Sapphire, 1997) has been the work chosen because it is short (140 pages), readable (easily read in 2 hours), and rich in examples of community psychology concepts — three important criteria in selecting literary works for this type of exercise. In raw and graphic language (a trigger warning is given by the instructor) and from the first-person perspective, it tells the story of Precious Jones, a 16-year-old African American girl living in Harlem, NYC, in 1987. Sexually abused by her father and physically and emotionally abused by her mother, extremely overweight, and illiterate, Precious is directed to an alternative school. There, in a small class and with a caring teacher, as well as in an HIV-positive adolescent support group, she develops a more positive sense of herself, her abilities, and her potential. The novel ends on a hopeful but cautiously realistic note, with Precious nurturing her young (second) child and

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*Note. N = 45.*
advancing academically toward earning her GED. (*Push* was subsequently made into the feature-length film *Precious* [Daniels et al., 2009].)

The students have a week to complete the assignment. Their papers are graded on a 3-point scale (check+, check, and check-), based on both quantity (number of concepts accurately noted) and quality (richness of the illustrations of the concepts). Points earned are factored by the instructor into the final course grade (similar to what is frequently done with extra-credit assignments). In addition to the written papers, a class session is set aside for discussion of the book and of students’ reactions to it.

**Discussion**  
Bringing fiction into community psychology courses has benefits for both students and instructors. For students, it makes abstract concepts more concrete and real. As one student wrote,
“Push brought to life what we have learned in class.” In the words of another student: “Nothing was sugarcoated by Precious, so why should it be for the rest of us? The very reason why I was initially hesitant about this book is the same reason why so many people ignored Precious for so long, because what you don’t know won’t bother or hurt you.”

For instructors, the assignment provides an additional mechanism for assessing students’ grasp of community psychology concepts. Both true positives (i.e., accurate application of terms to aspects of the book) and false positives (i.e., inaccurate illustrations) are revealed. With respect to the latter (i.e., misidentifications), for instance, one student erroneously cited Precious’s gradually broadened perspectives on different beliefs and sexual preferences as an illustration of multidimensionality in social support networks. Finally, a low frequency in a particular category (i.e., the absence of identification of a concept) might suggest that perhaps that concept has been insufficiently or ineffectively presented. For example, although Push contains many instances of Precious being viewed by others as the cause of her problems, only 6 of the 45 students provided an example of blaming the victim.

Although this article has focused on one particular work, a number of short novels, novellas, and short stories could be profitably read, written about, and discussed in community psychology courses. Table 2 presents examples of these, organized thematically. The wide range of possible pertinent works can underscore for students that, although the specific expression of community psychology concepts depends on time and setting, the concepts themselves are applicable across centuries and cultures.

Fiction provides a means of acquiring insights into and reflecting upon the human experience that complements the quantitative and qualitative research of community service. Though very different from one another, each is a valid way of knowing. Integrating the two in the undergraduate community psychology course, we can productively enrich our students’ understanding and appreciation of both.

References


“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The intent is to personalize Community Psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners. Prior columns are available online, at http://www.scra27.org/publications/tcp/tcp-past-issues. These past columns contain a wealth of life advice gleaned from over 60 profiled community psychologists, from graduate students to retirees, representing an invaluable resource for community psychologists.

Here, the column makes a radical departure by interviewing two people who are not, themselves, affiliated with our field. Rather, they are the son and grandson of Saul Alinsky, a highly influential figure in forming the values, scholarship and practice of Community Psychology.

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Upon entering a fundraiser for a progressive candidate for Congress, a young staffer greeted me. My jaw dropped at the sight of his nametag – “Jason Alinsky.” Could he be ….? He confirmed, yes, he is related to Saul Alinsky – in fact, his grandson. I wondered what it must be like to carry the name and maybe the legacy of this notable but polarizing American figure. Therein began my grand adventure, interviewing, first, the grandson and then the son (hereinafter referred to as David), of our field’s community organizing guru. Having been trained by Peace Corps to be a community organizer in 1966 Chicago by Alinsky staff and having worked as a community organizer for years, for me, this column is a very special treat, over and above those columns I have written over 17 years.

Following are snippets of information about Saul through the perspectives of his descendants, as well as an insight into their own lives as affected by their famous relative. You might want to, first, review the highlights of Saul’s biography, found in his Wikipedia entry, as well as a lengthy series of interviews published by Playboy magazine soon before his unexpected death in 1972. (The latter is found online, divided into 13 parts, at http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/3451533/posts). Playboy described Saul as “a bespectacled, conservatively dressed community organizer who looks like an accountant and talks like a stevedore.” Because Saul has been grossly misquoted and thus, grossly misunderstood over the years, David periodically edits the Wikipedia entry to assure its accuracy.

Saul was raised in a Chicago slum within an orthodox Jewish, Russian emigre family, but, after his parents’ divorce, he shuttled between his mother (remarried, eventually outliving several husbands) in Chicago and California, where his father, Benjamin, had moved his apparel business. His father neglected him during his stays in California, according to Saul, sending him, a young teenager, to stay in rented rooms rather than at home with Benjamin. Saul graduated Hollywood High School and in 1926 entered the University of Chicago.

To pursue his original goal of becoming an aeronautical engineer, Saul joined ROTC. However, during ROTC training, he broke his back and spent his first year of college in bed in a full body cast. He was able to keep up with his studies through assignments his professors sent him. And he read voraciously while disabled. But he suffered
from a bad back throughout his life. Fascinated with Indian burial mounds in Southern Illinois, he received his undergraduate degree in archaeology. However, having graduated during the Depression, he did not pursue a career in archaeology (for which no jobs or grants were available). Having received a 4F draft classification, he spent the war years selling war bonds for the US State Department. When he returned to the University of Chicago for graduate school, he changed his field to criminology, a field in which he could obtain grants and find employment.

Saul married Helene, another student at the University of Chicago. Unable to conceive children, they later adopted two children, Kathryn and then Lee David. (An oddity: Along with David, his son and two grandsons all bear the middle name of David, and David’s father in law is… also named David.) The children were always told that they were special; that, being adoptees, they were chosen. However, in 1947, while spending the summer in a rented cottage at the Indiana dunes, Kathryn and a friend waded into the waters without adult supervision. In the process of rescuing the girls, Helene tragically drowned, caught in an undertow. This, despite Helene being a strong swimmer -- the first woman varsity swimmer at the University of Chicago. (David’s daughter, Shelby, carries the middle name of Helaine, honoring her deceased grandmother.)

After Helene’s death, Saul hired a succession of housekeepers to care for the children. Saul claimed, in the *Playboy* interview, that he “always stayed close to my kids when they were growing up; I didn’t want them to have to go through [my own father’s remoteness].” However, David remembers that Saul was consumed by his work and constantly crisscrossed the U.S. to do field work and deliver speeches. After being a widower for 5 years, in 1952, Saul married his second wife, Jean Graham. However, within two years she was stricken with Multiple Sclerosis. Chicago’s weather exacerbated her MS so she spent more and more time in California. Jean and Saul amicably divorced in 1970, and Saul then married this third, and final, wife Irene McInnis in 1971.

Ironically, much like his own father's inattention to Saul, says David, “he did not pay much attention nor spend time with me, so – with his second wife, Jean, sick with MS and spending more time in California -- I was left to my own devices, going to high school in Chicago and living in our family’s apartment. For some kids, that can be empowering … or not.” Grocery store accounts were established so David could order his own food during Saul’s absences, and the family of his best friend, who lived upstairs, watched out for him.

When no one was available to care for David, during the summer months, Saul sometimes took him along on business trips. One of these trips contributes an amusing anecdote to Alinsky family lore. On one road trip to Wisconsin, Saul and his young son ate at a roadside diner and then checked into a motel. When hanging up David’s clothes for the night, Saul discovered a pile of coins in his son’s pants pockets. Turns out that David, thinking his father forgetfully left money back at the diners, had pocketed the tips Saul had left on the table for the servers. Unknowingly, David had left the impression with a string of waitresses that Saul had stiffed them. “So much for Saul Alinsky, the protector of the working class!” laughs his grandson, Jason.

Saul’s main base of operations (and later, for training future community organizers) was the Industrial Areas Foundation in Chicago. His second in command from 1953 to 1963 was Nick von Hoffman, who led most of the IAF’s field work. Nick later became well known as a journalist, author, TV commentator and *Washington Post* columnist. Saul did not directly teach David about community organizing. However, David remembers Saul, at the dinner table, recounting tales of his work with the Woodlawn organization. On the other hand, David was more interested in his social life at the time. Ironically, David attended the University of Chicago Lab School at the same time that Saul was confronting the same university in the Woodlawn struggle. Saul never encouraged David to follow in his footsteps, although it was always assumed David would attend college. Saul discouraged David’s one-time interest in being an architect, saying “architects don’t make much money.” In fact, Saul never earned much himself “although we lived ok,” remembers David.

Soon after the *Playboy* interview (March 1972), Saul died of a coronary at age 63 while
walking on a Carmel, CA street. Ironically, just six months before, at the urging of his physician, he had stopped smoking and lost considerable weight, but the damage from his years of heavy smoking and overeating had taken their toll. His ashes are buried in a family plot in Chicago. On the marker appears a quote from Thomas Paine that also appears in the epigraph of Rules for Radicals: “Let them call me rebel and welcome, I feel no concern from it; but I should suffer the misery of devils, were I to make a whore of my soul...”

After Saul’s estate cleared probate and the attorneys had withdrawn, his publisher (Random House) requested that the family name a representative(s) to conduct business related to his intellectual property. The responsibility was to be shared between Kathryn (never interested and now deceased), Irene and David. Irene is a silent partner, ceding the responsibility to her stepson, David. In this role, he considers requests (e.g., requests to republish Saul’s books in foreign languages), and book royalties and fees for the books’ rights are disbursed to him and to Irene, in equal shares.

Both Reveille for Radicals (published in 1946 and updated in 1969) and Rules for Radicals (published in 1971) are still in print; Saul’s 1949 John L. Lewis autobiography is not. Sales tended to be quiet until an event precipitated buzz about Saul’s influence on current-day politicians. Most recently, these included President Obama and to a lesser extent, Hillary Clinton. The connections are that Obama was a community organizer in Chicago for an organization that was once affiliated with Alinsky, and in 1969, Hillary Clinton wrote her senior thesis at Wellesley on Alinsky’s philosophy of community organizing. She had interviewed Saul who was sufficiently impressed to offer her a job which she turned down for law school. In truth, while recognizing many strengths of Alinsky’s approach, she disagreed with his unwillingness to work inside the system.

The far right wing demonizes Saul, unleashing a barrage of vitriol through blogs, magazines, op ed columns, etc. Much of their ire centers around the mistaken notion that Saul had dedicated Rules to Lucifer when, in fact, he had dedicated the book to his wife. (Snopes thoroughly discredited the lies about devil worshipping, etc., but the hatefulness continues.) Recently, Dr. Ben Carson obliquely criticized Alinsky when mocking Hillary Clinton during his speech at the Republican presidential convention in July 2016: “So are we willing to elect someone as president who has as their role model somebody who acknowledges Lucifer? Think about that.” In fact, Saul’s quote -- along with quotes from Rabbi Hillel and Thomas Paine that constituted an introductory page to Rules -- merely alluded to Lucifer as an early radical.

David has found that most of the detractors have never read Rules. He acknowledges that the writings are difficult to read -- dense with information and highly thought provoking. “Every sentence is packed and merits a slow, careful reading.” But the naysayers merely parrot claims about communism, etc. found in blogs rather than really attending to the content of Alinsky’s thoughts. David views Rules as a manual for organizing people who want a seat at the table, and is without partisan motivations.

David bears the brunt of attacks on Saul, receiving abusive mail and threats almost every day, when a new wave of hate rolls in. Then it dies down, until the next flurry, occasioned by someone implicating Saul in the process of insulting Democratic politicians. David uses an early warning system, Google Alerts, through which he receives notifications when Saul’s name appears in publications, blogs, etc. Nevertheless, David expects Saul’s name to “gradually disappear in the mists of history, until 300 or 400 years later, like The Prince by Machiavelli, when he will be rediscovered and then, like The Prince, become a classic.”

In closing down his office posthumously, Saul’s long-time secretary at the Industrial Areas Foundation, Georgia Harper, organized his papers for donation to the University of Illinois at Chicago Library. (Still angry with the University of Chicago for its obstructionist role in
the Woodlawn neighborhood organizing effort, “out of spite” Saul arranged for his papers to go to UIC rather than to his alma mater.) David kept a collection of index cards, which Georgia had typed and organized, consisting of quotes that Saul had underlined in books he had read, along with his handwritten marginal notes. Saul had used these cards when writing his books and speeches. Fascinated, grandson Jason claimed one of the boxes, which he calls his “treasured lockbox,” including Saul’s handwritten notes on airline napkins and other scraps of paper.

Few of us have one famous grandfather, much less two. Jason and his siblings (all born long after Saul’s death) are the progeny of two famous families. His mother (Joanne) is a member of the Linowes family of Washington, DC which included four eminent brothers – Robert, Harry, a corporate accountant; Sol (Linowitz), former Xerox chairman and senior diplomat; and Joanne’s father, David Linowes, an academic political economist and senior advisor to four U.S. presidents.

Both David and Jason recall incidents when their last name was recognized for its connection to Saul. The Alinsky name resonates in Chicago (“a common event there,” according to David). Elsewhere, David reckons he is asked about his name every 6-8 weeks, most recently at his wife’s high school reunion. His daughter in law (Rachel Alinsky, wife of his son, Robert) encounters the question at times, because the Alinsky name is stitched onto her lab coat as a resident at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Jason’s first encounter with name recognition came when he was young, and a retail clerk asked if he were related to Saul. “My mother explained to me why this man knew the name. However, it did not quite connect until I was in high school, when the gravity of who Saul was began to dawn on me.” Jason did not read Rules for Radicals until late in college (at the University of Cincinnati).

David has two older children: Shelby, age 33, received a 2006 degree in English and Education and is senior editor for children’s books at National Geographic in Washington, DC, and Robert is a 30-year old tax attorney in Boston. Although Robert wrote an undergraduate political science paper on grandfather Saul, his career path more closely follows that of his Linowes grandfather. However, Jason, the youngest grandchild, is following in Saul’s community organizing footsteps. David observes that the organizing tradition may have skipped a generation, with Jason being “our family’s contribution” to the Alinsky tradition. Nonetheless, the grandchildren are all keenly aware of their grandfather’s legacy. Jason learned, from David (as influenced by Saul), to analyze by reading between the lines. “From my earliest upbringing, I learned to decipher, from what people tell you, what they really feel and mean.”

Jason majored in history and marketing in college and was active in student government and fraternity life. After graduating in 2013, he “fell into” community organizing when he joined a Maryland political campaign and canvassed neighborhoods. “I loved the tangible products from knocking on doors and identifying a community’s leaders.” A pivotal moment for him was when he engaged a potential voter who had been ignored in the past by campaigners because he lived in a low turnout precinct. “Once he felt he was being heard, he could bring in 60 votes from his contacts. At that point, community organizing really began to resonate with me.”

Since then, he has worked on several Democratic campaign staffs in Maryland and Massachusetts and has worked in legislative offices. He expects to continue his involvement with Jamie Raskin and Will Smith. Raskin, at whose fundraiser I met Jason, won his election to the U.S. Congress. And State Delegate Will Smith, for whom he served as chief of staff, is contending to replace Jamie in the State Senate. Beginning the summer of 2017, Jason will be pursuing a master’s degree at Johns Hopkins Graduate School of Government and Public Policy and aspires to work on Raskin’s Congressional staff.

David Alinsky’s undergraduate degree, in mass communications, was from Emerson College in Boston, where his stepmother, Irene, was on the faculty. He was a photographer and then a television engineer. (David met his wife, Joanne, when they worked together at WGBH-TV, a public broadcasting station.) After earning an MBA (Boston College), he was a manager at Boston area hotels and then founded his own IT consulting firm. Although his career never...
followed his father’s path, he (now in retirement) is active in his own community of Medfield, MA (a Boston suburb), serving as the small town’s assistant registrar and also on its energy committee, looking to save costs for Medfield and assure energy sustainability.

David is occasionally invited to meetings to discuss Saul’s legacy. At one such meeting, hosted by Sanford (Sandy) Horwitt, an Alinsky biographer, he met and eventually befriended conservative Republican Ralph Benko. Although coming from very different political poles, they found common ground around their appreciation for Saul Alinsky’s (always nonpartisan) work. Forging a partnership, they recently established The Alinsky Center (www.thealinskycenter.com), intended to be a nonpartisan think tank serving as a forum to clarify and advance Saul Alinsky’s philosophy and methods. David expects the Center will host semiannual conferences, convening activists from the right- and left-wings to discuss how Alinsky’s work can be broadly useful for the common good. The Center’s Board of Advisors includes Saul’s 3 grandchildren and a bipartisan, diverse group of adherents to Alinsky’s philosophy and activism. Notable (and surprisingly) is Grover Norquist, enforcer of the Republican anti-tax pledge who finds Alinsky’s tactics to be of broad utility. This should be interesting!!!

When asked how he is like/unlike his father, David replied that he is similar to Saul by standing up to bullying of the vulnerable. The dissimilarity regards his relationship to family.

“I was left without much guidance from my parents. As a result, I am more conscious of my own family – encouraging and helping my wife and children to succeed.” Saul Alinsky’s name and his notoriety have certainly shaped the identity and experiences of his descendants, if in varying degrees. And so has Saul Alinsky shaped the practice and many of the values of the field of Community Psychology.

**Public Policy**
*Edited by Dan Cooper*

**Why do we have to be politically correct?**
*Written by Fabricio E. Balcazar, PhD., fabricio@uic.edu, University of Illinois at Chicago*

Current events regarding the discourse in the national elections, particularly by the GOP candidate, are raising alarm about the importance of being politically correct and the dangers of failing to do so. Although there are many topics that have been affected by this practice, one refers to the anger and frustration with immigrants, and undocumented immigrants in particular, who are being blamed for low wages and unemployment rates among White Americans. Other targeted groups include followers of the Muslim faith who are being blamed for the “destruction of the family structure as we know it,” and so on. Carolyn Lukensmeyer, the director of the National Institute for Civil Discourse, which is a non-partisan advocacy group, commented on NPR that “we now seem to cross a line where the commitment to plurality and civil society is being lost.” She is not alone in expressing her concern.

There is a fundamental need for all of us to tolerate and respect our differences. This is what we as parents and teachers instill in our children every day: To get along with one another, and to respect each other regardless of our differences. Political correctness refers to the avoidance of forms of expression or action that are perceived to exclude, marginalize, or insult groups of people who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against. This is a most fundamental norm of social engagement and the one that keeps societies from falling apart.

So failing to do so could have several implications. First, does it mean that people in the streets would be free to insult each other, call each other hurtful names or use derogatory words, be mutually aggressive, and now that so many people in the country are actually armed, proceed to kill each other? Based on what we see in the news about political rallies when adversaries confront each other, that appears to be the case. People seem to be yelling at each other with hatred while no one appears to be listening. In fact, “Inside Edition,” regarding the March 10th African American protester struck at a Trump political rally, reported that the aggressor said...“kill him.”

Yes, it is true that most of us have some kind of bias toward someone, yet we all have to
confront our prejudices and accept our differences. The process of becoming a loving and caring person involves challenging beliefs about others that may be misguided as a result of ignorance or previous negative experiences. Unfortunately for many people, the media plays a central role in perpetuating harmful stereotypes and maintaining social biases. The media tend to exploit and feed the flames of fear in our hearts. A recent report from a Harvard-Northeastern survey of 4,000 gun owners pointed out that the majority of people in the U.S. who have guns now do so because of fear of “bad guys.”

We all need to come to terms with our own prejudices in order to start the healing and understanding process, first internally and then in the community. We all can change and must change if we are to get along and recognize and accept our differences. This is not a trivial process of self-reflection. It is at the heart of personal understanding and can define the type of person we become—and define the type of Nation we become.

As a community psychologist, I care very much about the process of building a sense of community and belonging that allow us to get along and help each other in pursuing the common good. We emphasize the importance of reinforcing the strengths and competencies of people rather than their deficits; we operate from an ecological perspective that tries to move away from blaming the victim for his/her predicament and instead focus on examining the role of the environment as a critical causal factor; and we also emphasize the promotion of empowerment of individuals and groups, as well as social justice and social change. I recognize that life is not easy for many people and many people struggle to survive. Our society aspires to offer equal opportunities to all; however, the gap between rich and poor is becoming wider every day and a lot of people who used to be in the “middle” are now struggling. It is misguided to try to blame vulnerable groups of people for what is happening. It is also foolish to believe that there are easy solutions to these problems. Ultimately, we have each other and people in our communities that we need to care for. The healing process requires mutual acceptance and political correctness.

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No Aloha: The Criminalization of the Homeless in Hawai’i
Written by Jeanette Purvis and Kristen Gleason

Hawai’i is often known as the Aloha state. In Hawaiian culture, Aloha is a complex concept that includes a spirit of goodwill and kindness towards others. Recent developments with regards to state policies towards the homeless, however, have left many wondering why there is no Aloha for the state’s most vulnerable and marginalized people. While there has been a 2.3% decrease in the number of homeless individuals in the U.S. between 2013-2014, over this same period of time, Hawai’i’s homeless population increased by nearly 12% (Henry, et al, 2014).

Locally, many blame the Hawaiian homeless crisis on individuals arriving from the mainland. However, according to Yuan, Vo, and Gleason (2014) only 6% of homeless individuals in Hawai’i report that they have moved to the state in the fiscal year of 2014. In reality, homelessness in Hawai’i disproportionately affects the local Native Hawaiian population, as well as a growing number of Compact of Free Agreement (COFA) Nationals, which include those from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, or Palau. According to a 2015 point-in-time survey, 76% of homeless individuals currently living in unsheltered conditions in Hawai’i identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (C. Peraro Consulting, 2015).

One of the major contributing problems is that rent prices in Hawai’i are simply not affordable for much of the local population. A recent report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (2015) found that Hawai’i has the most expensive rental housing in the nation. The report estimates that an individual living in Hawai’i would need to make in excess of $31 an hour—or work 163 hours a week at minimum wage—in order to afford the fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment. Priced out of the rental market and having access to only 17 emergency shelters (spread across 5 islands), many of these individuals and families are forced to attempt to find shelter on the streets. This has contributed to the fact that the number of unsheltered homeless individuals in the state has grown...
by a staggering 19.9% within the last year alone (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2015) and has caused a number of semi-permanent homeless encampments to develop where unsheltered individuals and families have attempted to create some stability and community.

The increasing rates of homelessness in the state have, of course, resulted in an increase in the visibility of homeless individuals and families in public spaces and an accompanying increase in concern among the citizens of Hawai‘i. According to Google Trends, “homelessness” has been searched more per-day in Hawai‘i than in any other state in America for the past six years (2016, August 28). This widespread public concern has no doubt put significant pressure on the local government to address the issue. In response, the state and local governments have recently passed and aggressively enforced ordinances that are intended to limit the visibility of the homeless problem.

These ordinances effectively criminalize homeless behaviors such as sleeping in parks, sitting on sidewalks, or storing private property in a public place. Three bills were passed in the fall of 2014, which imposed fines of up to $1,000 or 30 days in jail for sitting on sidewalks or relieving oneself in public. These bills were followed by a number of highly publicized “street sweeps,” planned days for city workers to forcibly removed the tents and other property from many of the city’s homeless encampments. The citations typically associated with these bills ultimately end up in the hands of those with little to no resources for payment. As a result, homeless individuals end up in misdemeanor court. This places a massive burden on the local judicial systems and generates an institutional cost that greatly exceeds the amount of the original fine (Boruchowitz, Brink, & Dimino, 2009).

One of the main justifications for the sit-lie bans and street sweeps in Hawai‘i centers on a strategy of “compassionate disruption” (“Paradise lost; Homelessness in Hawaii,” 2014). This philosophy, championed by the Mayor of Honolulu, Kirk Caldwell, argues that the sweeps will help to move homeless individuals and families off the streets and into shelters. In other words, it is intended to “disrupt” and prevent this population from becoming acclimated to unsheltered living. Over the years, these sweeps have caused hundreds of homeless individuals to relocate either to new encampments or into already over-crowded emergency shelters.

One recent sweep—considered one of the largest ever conducted in the nation—was an attempt to remove an encampment of nearly 300 individuals from an area in Honolulu known as Kaka'ako (Associated Press, 2015). While initial reports suggested about one-third of these individuals moved into neighboring emergency shelters (Office of Governor David Ige, 2015), it is unknown if these individuals will go on to obtain regular, permanent housing as a direct result of this sweep. In fact, in a recent study from the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Dunson-Strane and Soakai (2015) interviewed heads of households living in three of the major urban encampments in Honolulu and found that only 11% of the participants reported being more able or likely to seek shelter after a sweep; whereas, 21% reported being less able or likely, and 68% thought the sweeps had no impact on their shelter seeking.

In addition to the fact that there is little empirical evidence that these sweeps facilitate transitions into regular housing, there is a growing body of evidence demonstrating their negative impacts on the financial and emotional wellbeing of homeless populations. These government-issued sweeps often result in jail time, financial burden from fines, loss of property, and emotional distress for the homeless individuals targeted (Boruchowitz et al., 2009; Dunson-Strane & Soakai, 2015). These effects are clearly evident in preliminary findings from another study by Gleason (2016) that has found that street sweeps are destabilizing and reshaping social interactions among different homeless populations. For example, one service provider who targets runaway youth discussed the new challenges their team has faced in trying to locate runaway teens. Before the sit-lie bans and street sweeps, most unsheltered youth used to be concentrated in the Waikīkī area of Honolulu, where they had relative safety (being a tourist area, it is not a “rough” neighborhood). In Waikīkī, they were close to the youth drop-in center and were easily located and served by outreach workers. Now workers have a much harder time finding these youths. Additionally, several participants mentioned
concerns about the trauma caused by the sweeps, the barriers put up when clients lose their documents, and the growing number of fines and legal problems they are now seeing among their clients. According to one participant:

*What they’re not seeing is that you’re forcing a population to go to places where they cannot be successful, and thereby pushing them away from shelters and pushing them into different communities, and, you know, having those communities affected by it. And you’re driving this population from being, you know, poor human beings that just need a little bit of help, into “you ravage animals, you need to be locked up.”*

Most of the interview participants in the homeless service system study (Gleason, 2016) cited the same huge barrier to addressing homelessness in the islands: a dire need for more affordable housing. Many service providers reported difficulty in helping clients get housed, even after those clients had participated in 2-year long transitional housing programs or had received housing vouchers to help with their rental costs. Several participants discussed the fact that there are simply not enough units in an affordable price range, even after incomes are supplemented with a federal housing subsidy. This results in a bottleneck at the housing end of homeless services and limits the number of people who can be housed. Indeed, Quigley, Raphael, and Smolensky (2001) have found that even small changes, such as “moderate” decreases in rental costs and increases in the number of affordable housing units, could result in substantial decreases in the homeless population in a given area.

Rather than dehumanizing and criminalizing the visible poor in our cities, public policies would be much more effective in reducing the problem of homelessness if they focused more consistently and more seriously on creating policies that address the need for more affordable housing. As it stands, it seems clear that Honolulu’s sit-lie bans and street sweeps are doing little more than making business owners and politicians feel like they are addressing the issue. However, in the process of easing political concerns, these policies are forcing the city’s homeless population into ever more concentrated areas, further and further from service centers and viable job markets and causing significant anxiety, loss of property, and stress for an already marginalized population. Additional efforts by Community Psychologists and service providers are needed to pressure local governments to increase subsidies for affordable housing. Additionally, social scientists must work together to empirically demonstrate the harmful and counter-productive effects of policies that lead to the criminalization of the homeless. The first step to showing “Aloha” will be to make sure all citizens of Hawai‘i have a safe place to call home.

**References**


Regional Update

Edited by Scot Evans

Greetings from your new SCRA Regional Network Coordinator and a big thanks to Gina Langhout for taking such good care of our regional groups over the past few years. In October, along with a group of students from the University of Miami, I was fortunate to be able to drop in on the Southeast Region Eco conference - On the Corner of Peachtree and Action - hosted by the good people at Georgia State. It was great to see friends and colleagues and hear about the great work being done by students and programs in the region. They thanked us for attending by signing us up to host the SE Eco conference next year in Miami – how kind!?

There are a lot of great things happening in our SCRA regions across the globe – check out the news.

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What Role do Women Play in Global Peace Initiatives?

Written by Katie Thomas

“Women, War & Peace” is a film series by PBS that spotlights the stories of women in conflict zones from Bosnia to Afghanistan and Colombia to Liberia. The aim of the series is to challenge the conventional wisdom that war and peace is men’s domain. Using the frames of conflict and security and in an attempt to re-frame our paradigm and understanding of modern warfare, the films examine topics ranging from the global position and contribution of women to peace initiatives.

After obtaining the screening rights for Women War and Peace SCRA has worked in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross Humanitarian Youth at Southern Cross University to host public screenings and panel discussions. Screening of Peace Unveiled (the fifth part of Global Women, War & Peace Series by PBS) is to occur at Southern Cross University on August 19th. This will be followed by a panel discussion with Kay Danes OAM, Katrina Elliot, David Freeman and Dr. Melanie O’Brien, chaired by Dr. Natalia Szablewska.

Ms. Danes is a humanitarian
worker, researcher and recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to social justice and human rights worldwide. She has lived and worked across the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan and is currently researching the protection of humanitarian workers in conflict situations.

Mr. Freeman is a retired Australian Army Legal Corps Office who served in Iraq, Afghanistan and East Timor. He is the recipient of an Australian Red Cross Service Award.

Ms. Kunardi is International Humanitarian Law Coordinator, Australian Red Cross (QLD).

Dr. O’Brien was formerly at the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court. He has published extensively on international criminal law and violence against women in armed conflict and on sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. Dr. Szablewska (SCU) is Adjunct Professor at the Centre for the Study of Humanitarian Law, Royal University of Law and Economics (Cambodia). They promise to provide a lively and knowledgeable analysis of “Peace Unveiled”. Please attend if you can. This event is also open to the public so feel free to distribute throughout your networks.

VENUE:
SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY
Gold Coast Campus B Block,
Room B5.40
Southern Cross Drive,
Bilinga, QLD, 4225
VIDEO-LINKED TO:
Lismore Campus R Block,
Room R1.06
Military Rd, East Lismore, NSW,
2480

Member Support
We have many new members as a result of the recent membership drive. If you are a current SCRA member and would be willing to maintain a collegial support system in your region, please forward your name and contact details Katie Thomas at mothercarematters@gmail.com.

This will be a great opportunity to set up some support and mentoring networks across the regions and will help us gain direction and momentum for the year ahead.

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News from the Midwest
Written by Crystal N.
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DePaul University

On October 14-15, 2016, DePaul University hosted the 40th Annual Midwest Ecological-Community Conference at their Lincoln Park campus. Organized by current students of the DePaul University Community and Clinical Community Psychology Ph.D. programs, this year’s conference focused on engaging and building diverse perspectives with the goal of social action and change.

To that end, this year’s theme was Building Diverse Communities for Change. Diversity is emphasized in the stakeholders involved—practitioners, community members, academics, and others—, the identity characteristics welcomed and acknowledged for their strengths, as well as the diverse systems and ideologies mobilized. As such, this year’s conference emphasizes sharing ways in which we enlist the collaboration of entities that may have different beliefs and experiences, incorporating knowledge of the context in which diverse groups function, and ways in which we work together despite differences and find common ground, question, and explore to create change.

This year’s Midwest ECO Conference welcomed nearly 150 attendees. The keynote speaker on Friday was Dr. Amie McKibban. For the last two years, Dr. McKibban has focused on a community wide assessment of areas of LGBT inclusivity, which has resulted in a usable community asset map (http://mapevansville.com/) for individuals and companies in the Evansville, Indiana area. Additionally, she and Dr. Stephanie Young co-founded a community- and campus-wide http://www.tristatesafezone.org/. This program has trained over 600 participants across the University of Southern Indiana, the University of Evansville, Ivy Tech Community College, Henderson Community College, Echo Community Health Care, Deaconess Health Care, and the community at large. Dr. McKibban’s keynote focused on working within communities that may be resistant to change or whose members may have values opposed to one’s own.

On Saturday, the conference
The schedule included 13 symposia and presentations, 18 roundtable presentations, 4 workshops, and 29 poster presentations. The Saturday evening social events included a networking dinner at local restaurant Babareeba Cafe. Midwest Eco is currently searching a host for next year. If you would like to host the 2017 Midwest Eco conference, please contact Crystal Steltenpohl at cstelten@depaul.edu. The organizers for this year would be happy to guide next year’s hosts and are looking forward to working with them.

**Upcoming Events:**
The annual MPA conference is just around the corner (April 20-22nd, 2017). The SCRA meeting at the Midwestern Psychological Association will be held Friday, April 21st 2017 in Chicago. For more information about the MPA conference (e.g., lodging, fees, etc.) please visit the MPA website at: [http://midwesternpsych.org](http://midwesternpsych.org).

Also, plan to join us for the annual dinner, which will include the poster award ceremony, following the Conference on Friday night (Exchequer Restaurant & Pub located at 226 S Wabash Ave, Chicago, IL 60604).

See you in Chicago!

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**News from the Bay Area**
**Written by Angela Nguyen**

The Bay Area Community Psychology Network met in May at the University of California, Santa Cruz, for our 2016 Spring Symposium. The gathering featured two speakers: Dr. Rebecca Covarrubias (a new faculty member in the Psychology Department at UC Santa Cruz) and Robert (Bob) Majzler (a doctoral candidate in Social Psychology at UC Santa Cruz). Dr. Covarrubias presented her research regarding the effects of a summer bridge program on “borderline” students, and facilitated a discussion on the implications for university admissions practices in a presentation titled, “I know that I should be here”: Lessons learned from the first year performance of borderline university applicants. Bob presented on his interview study with White men who identify as anti-racist feminist activists, and facilitated a discussion on the ethics of research in a presentation titled, 26 Summer 2016 The Community Psychologist Studying up: Ethical questions in researching power and privilege. The goal of our network is to provide a forum to informally discuss work in progress, network with other community practitioners, and provide an exchange of ideas related to community intervention work. The larger group generally meets twice a year, once in Fall and once in Spring, alternating between UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz. Our upcoming fall meeting will be held at UC Berkeley. If you are interested in attending and/or presenting at one of our meetings, or if you would like to be on our mailing list to receive more updates, please contact Angela Nguyen (angelanguyen@ucsc.edu).
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SE Regional Update
Written by Elan Hope

2016 Southeast
ECO Conference Update
The 2016 Southeast ECO Regional Conference, On the Corner of Peachtree and Action was held October 21-22 2016 and hosted by Georgia State University’s Community Psychology program. The purpose of the conference was to share current research and actions taken towards social change. Session topics included research on sexual violence perpetration, positive youth development, leadership training, becoming an emerging scholar and public intellectual, and connections between Black Lives Matter and community psychology. The keynote speaker for the conference was Mr. Lonnie King, civil rights activist and leader of the Atlanta Student Movement. There were also informal opportunities for networking at a Friday evening social and a Saturday night dinner.

Southeast Region Leadership Transitions
After 4 years of dedicated service, Dr. Sarah Desmarais has stepped down from her role as a Southeast Regional Coordinator. Dr. Elan Hope, assistant professor at NC State University, has stepped in as a new Regional Coordinator for the Southeast region. Dr. Wing (Winnie) Chan and Dr. Pam Imm will continue to serve as Regional Coordinators in the Southeast.

There are also transitions in student leadership. After several years of outstanding service, Candalyn Rade (NC State) and Jaimelee Mihalski (UNC-Charlotte) will be leaving their positions as student representatives. Jaimelee now serves as a SCRA National Student Representative. Abby Nance (NC State) and Andrew Gadaire (UNC-Charlotte) will join the Southeast regional leadership team as new student representatives. The Southeast region thanks Dr. Desmarais, Candalyn, and Jaimelee for their dedicated service to the Society for Community Research and Action. Brava!

Rural Interest Group
Edited by Susana Helm
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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 if you would like to submit a brief rural report or if you have resources we may list here.

Rural Resources: The Rural Health Information Hub (RHIhub)
Formerly referred to as the Rural Assistance Center (RAC), RHIhub supports healthcare and population health in rural communities across the United States. Their website www.ruralhealthinfo.org is organized with an online library, topical and state guides, tools for success, publications and updates, and a rural community gateway (toolkits, health models). From the publications and updates menu, you can subscribe to receive weekly email updates which include funding announcements and Rural Monitor articles. A cool feature that can be accessed from the RHIhub homepage is the “Am I Rural” link, a service to help determine whether a specific location is considered rural based on various definitions, including those used as eligibility criteria for federal programs.
We walked 400 kilometers of the Camino de Santiago in June and July 2016. The impetus for the trek was Tai, who had watched a movie about the Camino in her ninth grade Spanish class. The Way starred Martin Sheen playing the role of a father who walked the pilgrimage to honor his son. As we started to co-author this piece, Tai remarked that she hadn’t imagined that our family dinner conversation about the film back in 2014 would materialize into a month-long journey across two oceans and a continent in order to walk through rural and remote Spain.

As a water polo athlete and surfer, Tai was fit, but unaccustomed to walking with a full pack. As a middle-aged college professor with minimal through-hiking experience, Susana also needed to prepare. So, we spent the next two years of weekends day-hiking the ridges above our home in Honolulu.

Upon arriving in Spain, our route was partly planned to line up with a number of UNESCO World Heritage sites. Susana’s only prior experience in the country was work related, for the 2012 International Community Psychology Conference in the beautiful and high-energy tourist-friendly city of Barcelona. ICP Barcelona was fantastic, though Susana hadn’t afforded time to wander beyond the city limits. As a high schooler living in the middle of the Pacific, traveling is a rare luxury. So this was Tai’s first international experience, and became a way to better understand herself and the bigger world in which we live before heading off to college in 2017.

We started in Pais Vasco, in Bilbao where we visited in the Guggenheim and the Viscaya Bridge (UNESCO site #1). We also availed ourselves of the city’s many gastro restaurants specializing in slow food, referred to in Spain as OKm, and known in the U.S. as the farm to table movement and (www.slowfood.com). Tai did the locovore research online ahead of the trip and Susana did the UNESCO planning. Our research ensured our experiences with Spanish culture would fulfill our respective interests, Tai’s being food and Susana’s being museums.

We departed Bilbao by bus to avoid urban walking and began our trek along the Northern Camino in a small town called Santillana Del Mar. We first visited the Paleolithic museum at Altamira Cave (UNESCO site #2) just outside the historic village, then initiated our 17 days of slow and steady walking. We encountered only one other peregrino on the Camino our first day – a gentleman from Austria who had started walking from France.

The whole of our trek was similarly spent in near solitude, with the exception of the many cows and sheep we knew were near – their constantly tinkling bells a telltale. The Camino is a pilgrimage route dating to the 9th Century, actually several routes, leading westward across Europe into Spain and terminating at Santiago de Compostella. We selected the Northern route, then connected to the Primitivo route because these were the least travelled (as compared to the Francés route depicted in The Way). We were seeking the peacefulness and contemplation afforded by rural and remote backpacking.

We arrived in Ribadesella after six days. Ribadesella was our first planned resting spot, so that we could enter the caves to view the 10,000-year-old paleolithic drawings there (UNESCO site #3). We experienced some of the most pristine, stunning, and uncrowded coastline and beaches along the way, which may be quite an admission coming from Hawai’i residents (Photo 1). And we met some amazingly generous Spanish, Brazilian, Italian, Australian, French, Canadian, and American peregrinos en route. As an example, by the time we arrived in Cóbreces to check in for our first night at an Abbey-administered albergue, the stores and restaurants had all closed for the evening. Being that we were located in a remote area, we were faced with savoring our remaining granola bars and left-over dribbles in our camelpacks for dinner and breakfast. Instead, a priest also staying at the albergue gave Tai the sandwich he had prepared for himself. Aside from a lesson in gratitude and generosity, we learned that, unlike Barcelona and Bilbao, rural Spain does not dine at midnight!

From Ribadesella we took public transport to the city of Oviedo, thereby skipping about 100 Km or 4 days of walking, so that we could visit the
pre-Romanesque churches of the 9th century perched above the city (UNESCO site #4). Again to bypass urban walking, we used public transport to reach Bodenaya, our first stop on the Primitivo route. Although the most challenging terrain due to rapid ascents and descents, and longer distances between public water, the Primitivo was the original pilgrim route, and considered to have the most beautiful farming vistas (Photo 2). It did not disappoint, rather it was breathtaking to walk through the morning fog and encounter wild horses and cattle roaming side-by-side with us along the trail (Photo 3). From Bodenaya we walked up and over the Cordillera Cantábrica, and possibly the eastern edge of Picos de Europa. This was particularly challenging for Susana to keep up with her very fit 17-year-old niece. For Tai, the Camino posed many physical challenges in the beginning of the trek, but soon after became easier and easier as she became accustomed to the conditions. In spite of the challenge or maybe because of it, we were availed some of the most breathtaking views of the trip (Photo 4). And we met more fantastic Spaniards, Poles, Croatians, Dutch, and German peregrinos equally enthralled with the countryside.

Susana even managed to squeeze in a 4th of July mini-pub crawl from village to village after encountering other Americans that day between Fonsagrada and Cádavo Baleira. Aside from wine being less expensive than bottled water, the sidra is also quite fortifying. The next day, our 13th day of walking, we arrived
in Lugo where the albergue de peregrinos is located inside the largest surviving Roman walls (UNESCO site #5). Later, the day before returning to the US, we visited Avila, another ancient walled city surrounded by farmland on the outskirts of Madrid. (UNESCO site #7).

On Saturday July 9 we descended into our ultimate destination of Santiago de Compostela in time to register our journey at the archbishop’s office (UNESCO site #6). The next morning we arrived an hour early for Sunday mass to ensure ourselves a seat near the main altar, and were pleasantly surprised to see our generous friend from Cóbreces among the priests in the entrance procession. In addition to being acknowledged (registered peregrinos are announced by homeland) we witnessed the swinging of the botafumeiro due to a wedding ceremony during the mass (http://www.catedraldesantiago.es/en/node/482).

Post Script by Susana:
Now that we are nearly a half year from returning, I am trying to understand our trip vis-à-vis rurality. We had heard that many of the small villages and farming communities along the route flourished as a result of centuries of peregrinos walking the Camino, who in-turn relied on villagers, farmers, and shepherds for food, shelter, and water. Globally today, our dependence on rural communities for our livelihoods persists, whether we are passing perigrinos, gathering in grocery stores rather than growing food for ourselves, benefitting from the natural resources extracted from the land and water, or enjoying respite from busy lives in the city. I really cannot imagine my world without the countryside. While I acknowledge that is a privileged view and I am not prepared to uproot myself permanently for greener rural pastures just yet, I remain committed to improving rural wellbeing in my work through the university. In truth, that is why I work at a public university – to leverage the resources of our State and nation in terms of cutting edge thinking and technology to improve rural wellbeing without compromising its inherent, inimitable goodness. Part of my goal for this Rural Interest Group column is to shed light on those inherent and inimitable goodnesses, as well as the compromises, and the paths we walk to get there.

Post Script by Tai:
Throughout the trail, the thought “What did I get myself into?” ran through my mind constantly. I thought I could never continue and persevere through the physical and mental pain, until I had to. I chose to have my mind overpower my body’s wants. On the Camino, you don’t stop. I knew I didn’t want to stop, and I knew I didn’t want my self-doubts to take away from my experience. So I continued. From this decision, yielded the best experience of my life so far.

Post-Post Script from Susana:
For those of you interested in getting to know Ottawa by foot and would like to join me in some short hikes in the greenbelt during the 2017 SCRA Biennial, please let me know. http://www.ncc-ccn.ge.ca/places-to-visit/greenbelt/things-to-do/hiking-walking-greenbelt

Self Help Interest Group
Edited by Greg Townley and Alicia Lucksted

Seeking interested individuals for Self-help Interest Group leadership position: Our second term as interest group co-chairs ends in Summer 2017, and we are hoping to identify individuals interested in taking over this leadership position. We will happily provide technical assistance to make the transition as smooth as possible. Please email Alicia (Aluckste@psych.umaryland.edu) and Greg (gtownley@pdx.edu) to discuss further!
Community integration refers to the notion that individuals with disabilities have a fundamental right to live, work, engage with others, and enjoy recreational activities in the same manner as peers without disabilities (Wong & Solomon, 2002). In the 21st century, the ideal of individuals with disabilities enjoying equal opportunities to live and participate in their communities remains an unrealized goal. Unaffordable or inaccessible housing, limited opportunities for employment, lack of transportation, and pervasive mental health stigma severely limit the community involvement of individuals with mental health disabilities (Townley, 2015). Community integration research has emerged as a high priority among mental health advocates, policy makers, and researchers working to remove barriers and uncover ways to encourage inclusion and participation of individuals with psychiatric disabilities (Davidson, Bellamy, Guy, & Miller, 2012). There has been exponential growth in the employment of Peer Support Specialists over the past decade, with estimates of over ten thousand peer support staff in the United States alone (Repper & Carter, 2011). Research evaluating peer support programs highlights its effectiveness in reducing hospital admissions, engaging clients in treatment, increasing community tenure, and decreasing symptom distress (Davidson et al., 2012; Repper & Carter, 2011).

Less is known about the role of Peer Support Specialists in programs aimed at increasing community-based activities and natural supports. The CISRO Project aims to address this knowledge gap, and the results of a pilot study evaluating this program will be the focus of the remainder of the report. In the next section, we will present descriptive information and results from the CISRO pilot study. We will then conclude with lessons learned and suggestions for similar peer-delivered interventions aimed at facilitating community integration of individuals with psychiatric disabilities.

Focus groups
Mental health consumers. We conducted two focus groups with mental health consumers (n = 18 total) to assess perceived barriers to community integration, types of activities individuals would like to participate in more frequently, and support that individuals would appreciate receiving from a Peer Support Specialist. Individuals noted wishing to engage more frequently in a variety of activities, including volunteer work, sports, employment, dancing, and going to movies. Participants discussed numerous barriers to community engagement, including symptom distress, concerns about physical safety, societal stigma of mental illness, fears of socializing with others, and transportation challenges. They also discussed the value of working with a Peer Support Specialist to address these barriers. Specifically, participants reported preferring to do activities and feeling safer with other individuals who also experience mental health challenges. They also reported appreciating the higher level of transparency available when working with peers compared to traditional staff, as well as the general support and investment provided: “Just basic availability—time, commitment.
If there was a group or person that shared the same condition or experiences or same history, that would be very helpful.”

**Mental health staff.**

We conducted one focus group with mental health staff (n = 6) to assess attitudes about the value of Peer Support Specialists working within mental health service organizations. Staff participants noted several positive aspects of having peer workers within provider agencies. These included building trust with consumers based on shared experience; being able to reframe client issues from the perspective of individuals with mental health challenges; assisting consumers in connecting to community, family members, and friends; and meeting clients where they are at: “They meet them in their homes and the community where they live their life. Peers operate in the gray area between clinician and client, which can be excellent in filling the holes in a multi-disciplinary team.” Despite the overwhelmingly positive attitudes that staff participants reported about Peer Support Specialists, they did note some challenges, including more frequent staff turnover, issues with documentation and billing, mental health symptom impairment, and tensions between clinicians and clients: “It can become too much like advice-giving. The peer may think that because they have lived experience, they’re an expert on all the medication and treatment options. And then they tell the peer, and the peer doesn’t want to do what the clinician has advised. It can become a power struggle.”

**Summary of pilot project findings**

A total of 12 mental health consumers worked with two Peer Support Specialists trained in the CISRO model (referred to herein as Community Integration Specialists, or CIS) over a period of two months. Participants were recruited from a mental health service agency in the Greater Portland Metropolitan Area. Inclusion criteria included being age 18 or above and having a diagnosed serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia and bipolar disorder). After completing baseline measures about physical and mental health interferences, mental health recovery, satisfaction with social roles, ability to perform social roles, social isolation, and community integration, participants worked with CIS to identify community integration goals (e.g., completing job applications, researching housing options, and volunteering at the zoo). The CIS then worked on formulating suggestions and resources for the peer, which were discussed at follow-up meetings. CIS also offered to provide any additional supports requested by the peer (e.g., transportation, joining them for the activity, providing follow-up calls or texts, etc.). After participants attempted or completed initial goals, additional community integration goals were discussed and undertaken. Peer participants who worked with CIS for at least two months were then invited to complete follow-up measures of the primary study variables.

The average age of participants was 44; half identified as men and half as women; nine were White, one was Asian, one was Latino, and one was multi-racial; 10 lived alone, two with friends, roommates, or other unrelated adults; 10 reported not working at the time of the study, while two were working part time; and, finally, nine participants reported being single, with one married, one divorced, and one declining to answer. A total of six participants (50%) completed both rounds of data collection, and we conducted paired t-test analyses to determine significant differences between baseline and follow-up scores. There was a significant difference in participant satisfaction with social roles scores at baseline (M = 2.44, SD = 1.04) and follow-up (M = 3.26, SD = .87), t(5) = -4.75, p < .01. And while we noted positive changes in physical and mental health interference, mental health recovery, ability to perform social roles, social isolation, and community integration, none of these changes were statistically significantly, likely due to our very limited power to detect significant effects.

**Lessons learned and suggestions**

Interviews with Community Integration Specialists (CIS) and other project staff help to inform lessons learned and suggestions for similar projects. CIS reported having no major challenges communicating to peers what the CISRO Project entailed. However, they felt that the monetary incentive for completing baseline measures was often the primary motivator for enrollment. CIS reported that some peers had a difficult time understanding that they needed to be actively engaged in the intervention for at least two months, which helps to explain why half of the participants...
dropped out of the program. CIS also reported perceiving a low level of embeddedness within the partnering mental health provider agency. They noted only one instance of a case manager directly encouraging a client to speak with the CIS about the project, and some staff expressed a lack of knowledge about the project entirely. One CIS stated that having a longer timeline to work with peers (a minimum of six months) would have made her work with peer participants more successful. She also noted that the participants involved in the project were not necessarily those who needed the highest levels of social support. More could be done to reach out to individuals who may be more isolated and who may not have felt comfortable inquiring about and enrolling in the CISRO Project.

Given the higher-than-expected number of Community Integration Specialists who were trained in the CISRO model but then decided to withdraw from the project (n = 2), it is advisable to train more CIS than are needed. It is also important to work more intentionally to encourage buy-in from mental health agency partners, including hosting more frequent meetings with frontline staff at the beginning, and throughout the project. Further, framing the project more as a service-enhancing program rather than a research program may increase agency support as well as CIS and peer involvement. As peer-delivered services continue to be implemented throughout mental health service organizations both nationally and internationally, it is important to identify unique roles and niches for Peer Support Specialists that complement traditional service approaches and address the most pervasive barriers to recovery, quality of life, and community inclusion of individuals who experience persistent mental health challenges.

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