9th Annual Northwest Ecological Community Psychology Conference

October 17, 2014

Portland State University
PSU Native American Student and Community Center

Interdisciplinary Dialogues in Community Research and Action
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2014 Planning Committee Members

Adolfo Cuevos, Keith Kaufman, Eric Mankowski, Rob Meeker, Kate Sackett, Amy Shearer, Rachel Smith, Kelly Stewart, Greg Townley, Judith Zatkin

Contributing Institutions

Bronx Community College – CUNY & The Graduate Center – CUNY
DePaul University
LaGuardia Community College – CUNY & The Graduate Center – CUNY
Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling
National Center for PT SD, Dissemination and Training
Portland State University
The Sage Colleges
University of Washington
University of Washington (Bothell)
VA Palo Alto Health Care System

Conference Hosts and Co-Sponsors

Portland State University
Portland State University Native American Student and Community Center
Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)
Psi-Chi of Portland State University

“None of us can do it alone, however. Indeed, viewing social problems as amenable to influence by a given discipline or a single approach can only enhance, over time, our sense of collective powerlessness, and ultimately lead to a lowering of our expectations and goals. (Ken Maton, 2000, p. 27)”
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Keynote Address
Perspectives on the Practice of Evaluation from an Evaluator and Evaluatees

Alison J. Martin, Ph.D.
Assessment & Evaluation Coordinator
Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs
Oregon Health & Science University

Accompanied By:

Kamesha Robinson, M.P.A., Program Specialist, Schools United Neighborhoods (SUN), Multnomah County. Robinson earned her M.P.A. from Portland State University.

Lena Teplitsky, Former Asst. Director and Program Consultant at The Shadow Project. Teplitsky also is a M.P.H. candidate at Portland State University.

Keynote Summary:

The practice of program evaluation is an inherently interdisciplinary activity in that an evaluator must collaborate with partners of varying professional backgrounds and expertise. This panel presentation will provide an opportunity to hear from both “sides” of a program evaluation relationship: the evaluator and the evaluation partners. Alison Martin will represent the evaluator perspective: she will discuss her career path and the value her education in community psychology contributes to her skills as an evaluator. Kamesha Robinson and Lena Teplitsky will represent the evaluation partner perspective: they will discuss their career backgrounds, ways in which evaluation is important to their work, and positive and challenging experiences working with program evaluators. The panel will encourage dialogue with audience members around the interdisciplinary work of program evaluation.
Oral Presentations

Casadi “Khaki” Marino, LCSW, PhD student
Portland State University, School of Social Work

9:00- 9:30, Room 170
Title: Mental Diversity and Social Sustainability: Inclusion of the Moonlight

Presentation Abstract:
Social sustainability has been defined as the conditions and processes in which life is enhanced within communities. Indicators include equity of access, widespread political participation, and a valuing of diversity. As another social indicator, mental health involves a sense of belonging to community and the opportunity to make a contribution to society. Mental diversity concerns a community’s ability to value difference rather than homogeneity in regards to mental and emotional states and experiences. Interdisciplinary disability and mad studies locate the difficulties faced by individuals with lived experience of mental health challenges at the intersection of the person and the environment. Grounded in such perspectives, recovery becomes defined as the social process in which an individual is able to lead a full and contributing life as an active citizen. This presentation will utilize disability and mad studies lenses to explore the social determinants of a sustainable mental health recovery.

Charles Collins, Ph.D., Tiffeny Jimenez, Ph.D., & Kelsey Budnick
University of Washington, Bothell

9:00- 9:30, Room 180
Title: The Structure and Function of Collaboration: A Relationship Capacity Framework for Community Coalitions

Presentation Abstract:
The Structure and Function of Collaboration: A Relational Capacity Framework for Community Coalitions
Community coalitions are multi-stakeholder collaborative entities designed to advance human service system changes and enhance the health and wellbeing of their communities. Developing organizational capacity to influence systems changes is central to enhancing coalition effectiveness. As Foster-Fishman et. al. (2001) contend, community coalitions’ relational capacity is a major component influencing coalition effectiveness. These relationships occur across multiple levels of analysis and exist among a variety of community and coalition actors. Indeed, coalitions and the communities in which they operate make up ecological environments in which actors are related directly or indirectly. The patterns of social interaction within these ecological environments may enhance or inhibit coalition effectiveness. However, there have been relatively few attempts to formulate an explicit understanding of the patterns of relationships, direct and indirect, existing within an ecological environment that affect and are effected by community coalitions. As such, this talk will present a framework for relational empowerment for community coalitions’ relational capacity. To build this framework, we conducted a critical literature review on coalition effectiveness over the past 5 years, examining the relational components of coalitions’ ecological environment. We draw on social network literature to build our framework, particularly the work conducted by Neal and Neal (2013) examining the relational nature of ecological systems. We found that relationships are integral to promotion coalition effectiveness across micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-systems. We provide a brief overview of each as they are associated with relational capacity.
Rob Meeker
Portland State University

11:30- 12:00, Room 170

Title: Fostering Compassionate Communities: The Promise of Contemplative Science for Community Research and Practice

Presentation Abstract:
In recent years, rising interest in the study of mindfulness and compassion practices has led to the development of the Contemplative Science Project – a global network of researchers in fields such as Neuroscience, Developmental and Clinical Psychology, and Prevention Science. Although Community Psychology focuses primarily on levels of analysis beyond individual behavior and well-being, the prosocial practices of Contemplative Science can contribute to Community Psychology’s engagement with individuals in a variety of settings, from community interventions to the training of researchers. With reflections on a mindfulness-informed violence-prevention program for youth in Portland, this presentation will offer suggestions for incorporating contemplative practices into community research. The presentation will also explore the values shared by Contemplative Science and Community Psychology and the potential for mindfulness practices to inform “liberation psychologies” in community research and practice (Watkins and Shulman, 2008).

Benjamin C. Graham, Ph.D.
DePaul University

Sarah Butler, Ph.D.
The Sage Colleges

11:30- 12:00, Room 180

Title: Critical Community Psychology in Action: Results of a Participatory Research Study of Member Experiences of BDSM Communities

Presentation Abstract:
Throughout its history community psychology has pursued innovative methods to ask bold questions about how we understand the individual and society, adopting at times a critical psychology perspective to examine how psychology itself can play a role in furthering marginalization. This session will share the design, method, and results of a critical community psychology research project to bring community voice to descriptions of alternative sexuality in human sexuality textbooks.

Bondage/Discipline, dominance/submission, and sadomasochism (BDSM) is an often marginalized and misrepresented experience within society (Stiles, 2011; Bezreh, 2012). Psychological sense of community has been widely researched and suggests that communities play an important role in well-being (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). For some individuals and partnerships who identify with BDSM, organized communities provide social contexts where interests can be explored, challenged, and cultivated (Sisson, 2007).

College-level human sexuality textbooks are often students' first exposure to the way social science frames BDSM. While some textbooks include positive portrayals, others do not, and reflect social stigma
as well as the pathologizing influence of the DSM. The current project thus sought to explore and integrate community voice into textbook narratives.

The Kink Representation Outreach Project (KROP) was a two-year study which involved 7 workshops involving 48 members from diverse BDSM communities including heterosexual/bisexual, gay, and women’s groups. Nominal Group Technique was used to answer the question, “What role does the BDSM community play in your life?” Results were coded and validated by the research team and community volunteers. Fifteen categories were identified and organized into 3 broad themes, and included friendship, support, education, sexual expression, and personal growth. Findings were multifaceted and overwhelmingly positive, suggesting that research exploring community voice may serve as an “antidote for arrogance” (Kelly, 1970) regarding pathology-based theories of BDSM present in much of the history of psychiatry and psychology.

Benjamin Graham, Ph.D.; Josef Ruzek, Ph.D.; Katelin Jordan, B.S.
National Center for PTSD, Dissemination and Training Division
VA Palo Alto Health Care System

3:00-3:30, Room 110

Title: Individual and Organizational Factors in the Utilization of Online PTSD Training: Implications for Systemwide Dissemination

Presentation Abstract:
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is a serious condition that impacts 7-8% of people in the U.S. at some point in their lives (National Comorbidity Study, 2005). While the current body of research has identified several evidence-based treatments for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), more mental health clinicians must be trained in order to meet national and international needs. Mental health providers who serve individuals with PTSD do so in diverse organizational and ecological contexts, which may impact how knowledge of evidence-based treatments are acquired and implemented. Online training methods are a potentially valuable means of disseminating training, but to be scaleable their utilization must be feasible across organizational settings. The current project examines individual and ecological variables in the engagement and skills utilization of a novel, modular-based training curricula for clinicians treating veterans with PTSD. The analyses draw from two large, randomized controlled trails. The pilot trail involved 168 clinicians practicing in a diversity of settings within Veterans Affairs. Perceived control of treatment environment and organizational support for training are examined in relation to training dosage/completion, self-reported implementation, and skill demonstration across multiple practice settings. The second study involves descriptive preliminary data for 151 mental health clinicians practicing within diverse settings, half within the VA and half in the community. We will compare perceived control of treatment environment and organizational support for training across different practice settings, and describe how these differences will be explored at the end of the study as predictors of implementation. After reporting on current results, implications for further work examining the contextual variables which impact evidence-based practice will be explored. This research contributes to community psychology by exploring the impact of setting on how training is acquired and implemented.
Amy Shearer & Greg Townley, Ph.D.
Portland State University
Christina Overgard, BS

3:00- 3:30, Room 170

Title: More than physical benefits: A mixed-methods study of engagement in a healthy eating and active lifestyle program for individuals with psychiatric disabilities

Presentation Abstract:
Recent studies suggest that individuals with psychiatric disabilities served by the public mental health system die an average of 25 years earlier than members of the general population, largely due to preventable medical conditions and suboptimal medical care. Responding to this concern, Luke-Dorf Inc., a private nonprofit community mental health agency developed and implemented the Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyle (HEAL) initiative. The program consists of monthly health educational workshops, low barrier and inhouse activity, and healthy menu development. As a component of a broader program evaluation, we conducted four focus groups with Luke-Dorf residents to uncover facilitators and barriers to program engagement. The groups had a range of 3 to 8 participants, aged 24 to 66, and residing in their current housing for an average of about 2.5 years. An additional focus group with 5 housing staff was conducted in order to triangulate and contextualize resident reports. Focus group discussions were recorded and transcribed verbatim, and thematic content analysis was employed to uncover central themes. Participants also completed rank-ordered lists of mental health service priorities (e.g., physical health, mental health, housing, independence, etc.) and short surveys that included questions about demographics, general health and wellness, perceptions of social support, and selfdetermination.

Findings suggest that despite individual and organizational barriers to engagement (e.g., symptomatology, motivation, financial resources, and staffing constraints), individuals with mental health challenges are interested in and committed to participating in residential programs to improve their health and well-being. Further, they experience more than just physical benefits as a function of participation, including increased opportunities for community integration, social support, and independence. This session will begin with an overview of HEAL delivered by the program’s health educator, followed by a presentation of 1) information gleaned from the focus groups and surveys; 2) suggestions for modifying the program based on resident and staff experiences; and 3) lessons learned from our community university partnership.

Alma Trinidad, Ph.D.
Portland State University, School of Social Work

3:00- 3:30, Room 180

Title: Improving Access to Food Systems among Communities of Color: A Food Justice Issue

Presentation Abstract:
Food insecurity among communities of color is a major social and health issue. Limited studies rooted in Oregon exist that help practitioners, policy makers, and scholars understand food insecurity among recent immigrants and refugees. This presentation focuses on a study on recent immigrants and refugees and their food access issues. Through a multi-method qualitative research design and youth-asset approach (paired youth-parent dialog, photovoice, and “talking circle”), this study examined how recent
immigrants and refugee families learn, identify, and access to cultural resources and/or programs in the community related to food. It sought to understand how the existing food resources and/or program meet their needs culturally and socially. Additionally, the study sought to learn about the families’ perceptions and insights of daily routines and practices regarding food, and explored ways community partnerships can be developed. Participants included five recent immigrant/refugee families who relocated in Portland from diverse backgrounds including Africans (e.g., Congolese, Ethiopian, etc.), Karen (from Burma/Myanmar), and Nepali. Data are drawn from a photovoice project with paired youth-parent recorded dialog, and a “talking circle.” A content analysis of the photos, transcriptions of the paired dialog with each family, and the talking circle was conducted. Findings indicate emerging themes on the utilization of cultural resources (e.g., mini-markets and farmers), financial strain and stress that families face when preparing their own cultural foods and foods their children have adapted to, and major concerns around health. Additionally findings indicate opportunities for school and community-based partnerships focused on the development of youth and multigenerational family empowerment, health education, and social entrepreneurship. Implications on access to food relevant and culturally responsive to one’s racial/ethnic group or cultural community, and the potential call to shift programmatic paradigms from social service to community development are discussed.

Roundtables and Innovative Sessions

Sylvia Kidder, Rob Meeker, Amy Shearer, Rachel Smith, Kate Sackett, Kelly Stewart & Judith Zatkin
Portland State University

9:45-10:45, Room 110
Title: Getting into graduate school: Demystifying the path to good program fit
Round Table Abstract:
Getting into graduate school is a complex process, and finding the program and advisor suited to your interests and experience can seem daunting. In this roundtable, doctoral students in PSU’s Applied Social and Community Psychology program will break down the process into straightforward and manageable steps, and provide our insights and lessons learned along the way.

We will discuss our experiences in preparing to apply, including searching for a good program and advisor fit; studying for and taking the GRE; building relationships with current faculty; and obtaining strong letters of recommendation. Next we will cover the application process itself, including composing the statement of purpose and personal statement, developing a curriculum vitae, and approaching advisors of interest. We will walk through what to expect during interviews and visiting day. Lastly we will give tips on how to make the all-important decision of which offer to accept.

Lauren Lichty, Ph.D.; Janelle Silva, Ph.D.; & Charles Collins, Ph.D.
University of Washington, Bothell

9:45-10:45, Room 170
Title: Power and Privilege in the Classroom
Round Table Abstract:
Title: Power & Privilege in the Classroom Description: Students find their ways to community psychology (CP) classrooms through many pathways.
Not uncommonly, they are there to fulfill a university requirement. While our interdisciplinary classrooms can breed fascinating insights, it also means that not all students are expecting or ready for the conversations about social justice that inevitably occur. CP course content often challenges narratives well-woven into the social fabric of our students’ families and communities. Our classrooms may serve as the first occasion someone has troubled dominant US and world narratives. They also create space for students to give voice to the ways in which topics of social justice, privilege, systematic oppression, and diversity have directly touched their own lives.

In CP classrooms, there is no denying or disregarding our complex social locations and intersecting identities. The identities of the person at the front of the room assigning the readings, facilitating activities, or leading discussions are put in dialogue with each individual student’s history and identities. For some students, this can promote a sense of being seen and heard for the first time. However, this diversity of readiness, experience, identity, and ideology can become a breeding ground for distrust, hostility, silence. We stand witness to thinly veiled if not overtly expressed prejudice and denial of systematic oppression; some stated generally, some directed at individual students, and sometimes directed at us (faculty). This harms all members of the classroom community. Both faculty and students often remain silent about the harm and discomfort of these moments. We engage in closed door venting sessions rather than publicly naming and seeking support. We are emotionally involved and impacted, just as our students are. Given that our classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse (demographically and ideologically), consideration for how we engage in discussions of complex social justice-related phenomena in CP classes is needed. In this round table session, participants are invited to reflect on and share their own experiences as learners and teachers engaging “difficult to discuss” social justice topics in classrooms. Three faculty who come from diverse backgrounds will share their own experiences and facilitate a discussion to inform community psychology teaching practices. What are some challenges and strengths of these spaces? How can we create safe spaces for all members of the classroom? What are the responsibilities of the larger university for preparing students early on for this level of critical reflection and dialogue? What supports should be available to faculty and students? Our goal for this session is to promote open dialogue and learning through sharing our collective experience and expertise.

Justin Brown, PhD(c), MPhil, MA; & Monique A. Guishard, MA, ABD
LaGuardia Community College – CUNY & The Graduate Center – CUNY
The Graduate Center & Bronx Community College, The City University of New York-- CUNY

9:45-10:45, Room 180
Title: Two Frameworks for Transformative De-colonial Ethics: In LGBTQ Community Based Research and Participatory Action Research
Innovative Session Abstract:
In this innovative session we primarily aim to reflect on and update Jordan, Bogat, & Smith’s (2001) important work on the obstacles psychologists of color often encounter when attempting to conduct collaborative and participatory action research (PAR) with and in communities they share ethnic/cultural heritage, social class, abilities, geographically defined communities and/or sexual orientation. We (Monique and Justin) use three indigenous concepts to frame our relational ethical praxis which moves beyond scrupulous adherence to institutional review boards and federal guidelines, and ethical principles: Nepantla (Anzaldua, 1987), Ubuntu (Chuwa, 2014) and Kanohi kitea (Tuhwai-Smith, 2012). Using multimedia presentations and interactive exercises we contextualize, separately, our own attempts to flesh out a framework for transformative decolonial ethics through our dissertations. Monique (Guishard, 2014) will share what she learned about ethics of solidarity after conducting
Interviews with academic PAR researchers and after a longitudinal ethnography of a community based research review board. Using psychosocial assessments, focus groups, surveys, identity maps, and wordles Justin (Brown, forthcoming) will detail his exploration of ethical concerns when working with young gay and bisexual Black and Latino men to explore their self-constructed identities, which could potentially inform health intervention that historically have pathologized them as well as their behavior as problematic and the root of disease within larger US society. Together we will invite workshop participants to share their own ethical quandaries, stories of what went wrong but also right. We will work together to share tools and strategies such as MOUs, MOAs, CIRBs, and defining the sacred/uninterrogated parts of our collective work among other tools that might make this work less tricky and more respectfully conducted. The workshop will consist of a 30-minute discussion of theory and practice, 15-minute interactive small-group activity, and a 15-minute Q&A.

Austin Edge
University of Washington

3:45-4:45, Room 170

Title: Planned Obsolescence: Can Organizational Impermanence Serve Our Communities?

Round Table Abstract:
I will facilitate a conversation around the role of planned obsolescence in organizational design. Participants will think critically about the complex and at times contradictory relationship community-based organizations hold between fostering community empowerment and maintaining their own self-preservation. We will consider the value and feasibility of planned obsolescence by community psychologists on the individual level and translate these examples into a broader framework that includes organization-level design and analysis. Additionally, we will together identify the variety of contextual conditions that either act to incentive or create barriers for community-based organizations seeking to see this principle through in practice. Inherent to its structure, this interactive roundtable discussion will bring together a variety of voices, perspectives, and levels of analysis. Among which will be my own, informed by my extensive work in youth development, including several teen centers and all-ages spaces around the greater Seattle area.

Pilar Hernandez-Wolfe, Ph.D.; Thomas Doherty, Ph.D.; & Michel Hyman, M.Sc
Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling

3:45-4:45, Room 180

Title: Decolonizing and Ecopsychology Perspectives on the Use and Development of Indigenous Healing Practices

Round Table Abstract:
Decolonizing and Ecopsychology Perspectives on the Use and Development of Indigenous Healing Practices.

This round table will discuss two interrelated topics. First, it will outline key contributions from decolonizing and ecopsychology perspectives to contemporary thinking on biodiversity and relationships between planetary and personal well-being. Second, it will identify and discuss tensions emerging from the development, integration and refashioning of psychological and ecological healing practices rooted in Native American and other indigenous communities. Cultural borrowing, blending and mixing are not recent phenomena and the cross-pollination and sharing of traditions between people is an unavoidable result of human movements around the world. Today, these processes of exchange are heightened and
magnified by rapid technological changes, globalization and ecological stressors. However, the politics surrounding these exchange processes, particularly around issues of authenticity and appropriation, requires closer examination. This includes perceptions of inclusiveness and exclusiveness as well as universal or generic cultural tropes in the context of neo-colonial discourses. The discussion will be informed by interviews of indigenous educators seeking to bridge the gaps between institutions, learning communities, and the natural world and by attempts to create a multi-culturally authentic and ecologically-grounded graduate program in ecopsychology. Questions to consider during this discussion include the differences between cultural exchange and appropriation, responsibilities to maintain the cultural integrity of specific practices, examples of what accountability and equitable exchange with indigenous communities looks like, and ways to assess for sustainability and conservation outcomes.
Monique A. Guishard, MA, ABD
The Graduate Center & Bronx Community College, The City University of New York-- CUNY

Title: Testimonios: Insider Perspectives on Participatory Action Research Ethics

Poster Abstract
In this paper session I will discuss the nuances of my dissertation an attempt to elucidate threshold perspectives on participatory research ethics. I was stoked to investigate, what I anticipated were, diverse perceptions of ethical conduct in PAR and CER from the perspective and practices of different stakeholders. I conducted individual interviews with researchers, community partners and members of institutional review boards (IRBs). Secondly, I analyzed ethical guidelines, namely the Belmont Report and 45 CFR Part 46 using a hermeneutics of demystification (Josselson, 2004) striving to document how federal regulations prime researchers’ representations of ethicality, to illuminate “what is unsaid and unsayable” within these prescriptive rules and provide evidence of the link between bio-medically centered, individualized ethical regulations and the logics of settler colonialism and neoliberalism. (Josselson, 2004 p 14) Lastly, I conducted a longitudinal de-colonial ethnography of the activities of the Bronx Community Research Review Board (BxCRRB).

I had hoped that in analyzing the ethical dilemmas that collaborators in participatory and community based research wrestled with while looking to narrow conceptualizations of ethical conduct to guide their footprints would allow me to theorize back to bio-medically centered research ethics (Chilisa, 2013; Guishard & Tuck, 2014; Tuck, 2009). A huge part of me that feels that articulating what is incommensurable between IRB centered ethics and threshold de-colonial ethical positions is just not enough. I yearn to advance some kind of resolution; I wanted to end with optimism, with hope, particularly at a time when participatory, community engaged, and patient centerd research projects are moving from margin to center. In some respects my participants taught me that PAR research partners espouse a more tangible, inclusive, but at the same time less antiquated, androcentric, racist, sexist, and ableist ethical compass. I am in other respects left with the sobering realization that conducting truly ethical collaborative research is trickier than I could have possibly imagined.

Monica Myers
University of Washington

Title:

Poster Abstract:
Financial distress has been found to cause physical and psychological problems in children. One potential solution is to provide opportunities for children to gain greater access to resources through the relationships they have with others – or through their social capital. Social capital includes the resources, trust, and norms of reciprocity that exists through relationships of social actors (Coleman, 1988). Social capital can influence economic development. In Community Psychology this term is viewed as the social links, structures of mutual relations, ground rules, or stages of trust that persons or communities may have, or the means resulting from them. The purpose of this presentation is to understand social capital within the context of a summer youth program housed at the Compass Housing Alliance (CHA).
Throughout the summer quarter three members of our class partnered with CHA as part of a service-learning component for BISCP 343: Community Psychology. During our partnership, we volunteered in helping with the summer youth program. We utilized participant observation to understand how social capital manifests for youth members of the organization. The findings suggest that social capital is revealed through the resources made available by CHA’s collaboration with other organizations. Among the many resources are the local libraries, which help promote reading through fun activities and contests. Furthermore, social capital is manifested through the educational activities offered by these programs. Universities, such as University of Washington, provide access to volunteers and help by informing the public of the existence of such organizations and their needs. Our team was formed in this manner and social capital is provided in our interactions with young children in their learning activities.