One of my favorite classroom exercises was provided by Marybeth Shinn on the teaching resources section of the divisional website. Different groups of students are presented with two questions on causes and responsibility for homelessness or for school dropout.

Why do some people become homeless? Why do some students drop out of school?

Why do so many people become homeless? Why do some schools have such high drop out rates?

The first set of questions usually leads students to describe individual causes and responsibility for the problems. The second group of questions elicit system level answers. When the students realize the effect of the type of questions they have been asked, they seem to better understand the effects of a community psychology perspective. Shinn proposes that “the framing question” is critical to our theory and our work. The effect of the different framing is a point to which I return throughout the term.

Among the reframing perspectives is the importance of context in explaining behavior. The important difference in attribution explanations is keenly seen in the social psychology literature of in and out-group biases. This emphasis on context provides more advantageous and constructive frames to the questions we ask and the answers we seek. Ed Tricket and Marybeth Shinn in their respective Annual Review articles remind us that context is important to both our theory, our research and our interventions. Jack Tebbs broadens the contextual perspectives within our journal.

The second reframing perspective that has always attracted me to a community psychology is the recognition and appreciation of diversity. Julian Rappaport provided this in textbook form early in the definition of community psychology. Amado Padilla and Joseph Trimble presented this in practical terms early in community psychology literature, when they proposed that ethnic groups might more likely engage with social service settings which were aware of their culture and spoke their language. Stanley Sue and Lonnie Snowden have emphasized the importance of recognizing cultural and ethnic variables in both the individual and systemic examination of community interventions. More recently, Joseph Gone has reminded us that our research has to match in some manner the “ways of knowing” for our communities.

I am reminded of these perspectives: of the importance of context, and of the importance of cultural and ethnic diversity in our theories and in our interventions. An understanding of context and diversity informs the social and community issues of our times. I think of a comment made by colleagues and friends, Leonard Jason and Richard Wielkiewicz. They separately noted the opportunities in our classrooms and in our texts to influence the thinking in our
students. The comment was again made at this past divisional midwinter meetings. In our community psychology courses and in our other classes, the framing questions can be posed. Alternately, in missed opportunities, how frequently have community psychology principles been identified in our introductory psychology, adjustment, developmental, social and abnormal psychology courses? Since many of us teach such courses, and we write for such courses, there are many opportunities to describe community psychology in application. Do we take the opportunities to note community psychology frameworks in other courses, where hundreds of students are enrolled? How do we transform student thinking from an individual to a systems/context focus; from a “color blind” perspective to an appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity?

In my final presidential column, I offer questions. How do we make an impact on systems, communities and society? How do we come to an appreciation of our diversity and differences? Are there newer methods for working with these concerns? Is our division well positioned to address these questions, which frame the challenges that continue to guide the work of community psychology. I have been privileged to serve as President of the division, which has played an important role in shaping my scholarly, academic and professional life. As the result of the division’s initiatives, there are changes that have been made over this period, but they are really just setting the stage for more to come.

My thanks to all who have been a part of this year’s work in the division. The contributions from the “presidential stream” of Bret Kloos, and Susan McMahon have made the presiding duties comprehensible and doable. And a last thank you to the administrative team of Victoria Chien, Taylor Scott and more recently Rachel Storace. It has been a good and full year.

From the Editors
Daniel Cooper and Tiffany McDowell
Adler University, Chicago

We are in the thick of summer and this issue of the Community Psychologist is packed with evidence that community psychology is alive and well across the globe—so many resources and reflections that how could anyone ever question that this was the case? Nothing says summer more than bountiful gardens, and this issue shows us how gardens and community go hand in hand. The Environment and Justice column is a must read for that reason alone. This year marks the first community psychology conference in the MENA region, and this issue provides us many in depth reflections from students and international colleagues. The Policy Column shows us how impactful small grants have been in helping our society execute the action component in pushing for policy change. The rich international perspectives are again clear in the Student Issues column, where we see comparative perspectives on LGBT communities. These are but a small slice of the excellent work,
happenings, and community building happening across the globe. Happy reading and stay cool out there.

Dan and Tiffany

Correction: Please note that the Spring print version of TCP, the SCRA Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award Recipient, Robin Miller’s biography listed incorrect information. The correct biography should read the following: Robin Miller has enthusiastically and steadfastly mentored ethnic minority students as their primary advisor, committee member, and practicum supervisor. Given Dr. Miller’s “history of involvement to increase representation of ethnic minority persons in their own institutions, research programs, or within SCRA,” her students note that they owe many of their own career successes to her mentoring. Her former students have successful careers at UCLA-Williams Institute, Northwestern University, DePaul University, The Children’s Trust, the University of California, and San Francisco AETC National Evaluation Center. Dr. Miller has transformed the lives of so many students through her dedication to diversity and inclusivity and is highly worthy of the SCRA Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award. Read more at http://www.scras27.org/members1/member-awards/#AgIDHFx5rSrQ10w.99

The Community Practitioner
Edited by Olya Glantsman

How Practitioners Can Access Academic Literature
Written by Bill Berkowitz, Jasmine Douglas, Melissa Strompolis, Kyrah Brown, and Chris Corbett

Information is power, and community practitioners need access to desired information to make wise community decisions and strengthen their work. Fortunately, most of the time, they can get it. Some practice settings have affiliations with colleges and universities and others are even located within said settings, offering automatic access to staff members. Others are lucky enough to work with undergraduate and graduate students who can access resources for them. But what happens when practitioners do not have affiliations with academic institutions? Or when practitioners do not have students to access the
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*Last updated 01/01/16

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**THE SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY RESEARCH & ACTION**

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 addressing research by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas, literature and experience. This will assist the Group’s more specific focus which is to utilize our combined resources more effectively to conduct research-based praxis towards raising public awareness of the plight of indigenous people and addressing the social justice issues they face in oppressive dominant societies.
resources? Much information needed today is freely available to anyone online or (even now) in print. Such information may come from traditional websites or journals in library databases, but also from blogs, podcasts, apps, and even social media postings. Yet if a practitioner needs the latest scholarly evidence on a topic, or wants to consult an academic source, that information may be harder to find; for physical library holdings are limited, and online access to full-text academic journals and reports is sometimes restricted to members of an academic community.

Despite these barriers, many options do remain available for locating what one wants and needs. Here are a few examples of how you can access these resources as a community psychologist working in non-academic settings.

1. Consider online academic databases that may be available through your local public library. For example, Bill Berkowitz, who works as a professor at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, explains that his hometown library system offers unrestricted access to dozens of databases, including Academic OneFile (8,000 academic journals), Expanded Academic ASAP, and an impressive list of e-journals. “If you check what’s available through your own town, you might be surprised!” he says. Bill adds that if your own community doesn’t offer such access, a nearby community might. Policies and resources can vary widely from place to place. Sometimes too an online statewide network can get you what you need.

2. Consider acquiring ‘community membership’ to a local college or university library. Sometimes what you are looking for might only be available through a college or university library. However, colleges and universities themselves vary with public institutions generally tending to have broader access policies than private institutions. Moreover, sometimes a desired data source may be available to you, but only for in-person use rather than remotely. For example, Kyrah Brown, a postdoctoral research associate at the Sedgwick County Health Department (Wichita, Kansas), works to build the research and evaluation capacity of several community agencies. She encourages a very collaborative process that often involves agency staff helping with literature reviews. In such cases, she encourages those staff to obtain a community member library card from the local university. This card grants community members full access to the library’s resources. The membership card is free of charge and community members can only access resources on-site.

If this option falls short, your college library may offer access to members of certain community groups or organizations, often by prior arrangement. If you are a professional working in the area, it may be worth asking about. Even if such an arrangement does not currently exist, you may still be able to negotiate access and use with the library director. During such a conversation you can explain what resources you need and why you need it. Many, if not most, directors do want to make information available to those needing it as long as no specific policies prohibit such use and no significant cost is involved.

3. Consider collaborating with a colleague who works in an academic setting. A colleague in an academic setting may be able to share a password or access specific information for you. Better yet, an academic colleague may even be able to assist you with getting an affiliate status so that you can access the necessary academic resources. For example, Melissa Strompolis, who works at a statewide nonprofit in South Carolina, was able to capitalize on her relationship with a research partner to become an affiliate investigator with the College of Education at the University of South Carolina. The affiliate investigator status not only provided access to academic resources but also opened the door for research collaborations with other faculty in the College of Education.

4. Consider open access journals or public academic websites. For example: Google Scholar can be a useful tool for finding scholarly resources such as journal articles, research reports, dissertations and theses, technical reports and so on. In addition, Google Scholar can be helpful for finding ‘gray literature’ (e.g., conference proceedings), locating obscure references that may be difficult to find in a larger database, and access books and articles in single search. Google Scholar also has a feature that allows you to review “related articles” as well as articles that have cited the article you found. Two drawbacks to Google Scholar include its inability to limit searches to only peer reviewed articles or only full text articles (as can be done with more robust scholarly databases) and you must pay for full-text articles. Open access journals and databases
offer another opportunity to access academic resources. Articles in open access journals are usually peer reviewed (be sure to check the publisher) and permanently free for anyone to read. Many of the major publishers such as Elsevier, have listings of their open access journals. There is also the ‘Directory of Open Access Journals’ which can be a useful resource.

In sum, a number of possibilities for accessing academic literature do exist. The information world (and access) is changing rapidly. This means that what may be hard to find today, may be freely available a year from now (or even less). So it may pay to keep checking. You may have your own access experiences or ideas; and if so we hope you will share them with us, so that we can share them in turn. Please contact us at compsyschpractice@gmail.com.

Environment & Justice
Edited by Laura Kati Corlew

Community Psychologists in Community Gardens: A Fertile Ground for Ecological Inquiry
Written by Sarah Hernandez and Laura Kati Corlew

Literature Review
Community gardens are plots of land typically in an urban setting that are grassroots, community-based efforts to grow food. Community gardens have been historically created in response to a crisis; the earliest gardens emerged in response to poverty during the economic crisis of 1893 in Detroit (Kurtz, 2001). During both World Wars, community gardens were used to increase the supply of food for Americans, and by World War II, the “victory garden” campaign was established. By 1944, 18 to 20 million families were supplying 40% of America’s total vegetable supply (Okvat & Zautra, 2011). Victory gardens sprung up in response to economic hardships and food shortages as a way for communities to independently develop their own source of food. This victory garden model now serves as the foundation of traditionally organized communal style gardens in urban areas today.

In communal community gardens, members collectively decide on the purpose of the garden, design, and the usage of the space (Firth et al., 2011). These decisions are usually contingent on garden members’ worldviews, culture, and community needs. The community takes ownership of the garden, which is often viewed as a space that inspires shared action. In contrast, allotment style community gardens require membership fees and assign individual plots to members within the overall garden space. Social networking and collaboration is not necessary in allotment gardens because the individual plot is not collectively owned by several gardeners.

Benefits of Community Gardens
The literature on community gardens is relatively new and a majority of the early research focused generally on what community gardens do for people and why they are created.

Community gardening has a host of benefits across multiple domains of people’s lives, including psychological benefits through reducing stress and depressive symptoms and health benefits by improving diet and exercise (Nishii, 2011). In addition, one of the first literature reviews on community gardening reported on how gardens served to provide people with a greater sense of food access and security in their neighborhood (Draper & Freedman, 2010). Community gardens were also tied to an increase in neighborhood economic development through the use and preservation of open space (i.e. many community gardens were created from previously vacant lots). Lastly, gardens were also a way for communities to beautify their neighborhoods and provide better spaces for leisure and outdoor recreation (Draper & Freedman, 2010). Overall, community gardens are beneficial neighborhood settings because they provide residents with a multitude of health benefits.

Social Context of Community Gardens
Beyond the direct health benefits of community gardens, participants often report that the social context of the setting is considerably more impactful (Draper & Freedman, 2010). More specifically, gardens improve social interactions, cultivate relationships between different groups of people, and strengthen residents’ social networks considerably more than their urban settings normally allow (Draper & Freedman, 2010). By facilitating improved social networks in lower income and ethnic minority neighborhoods, gardens play a role in community development as well (Malakoff, 1995). Improving residents’ social networks can also result in knowledge and skill enhancement and systems change in the neighborhood (Twiss et al., 2003). Because gardens provide apolitical spaces for communication, deliberate co-learning, inclusiveness, and resource sharing, particularly
among diverse garden members, these settings contribute to community resilience as a form of systems change (King, 2008). Generally, community gardens are settings that bring different groups of people together who would not normally socialize and improve social networks among diverse people.

Although most of the literature on community gardens refers to the strengthening of social networks, few studies connect this theme to specifically intercultural or interracial relations (Glover, 2003; King, 2008; Malakoff, 1995). Most of the research on culture and race in community gardens is framed with social capital theory, because the setting is conducive to cooperation, bridging between different groups, and improving trust (Alaimo, Reischl, & Allen, 2010; Firth et al., 2011; Glover, Parry, & Shinew, 2005). In one of these studies based in the UK, one gardener reported, “A few years ago there were barriers between the Asian and Black communities, but these have been broken down as people have joined in our food-related activities” (Firth et al., 2011). As a function of bridging social capital, community gardeners seem to recognize their gardens as settings that allow them to form meaningful relationships with people of different ethnic and racial groups through a common connection of growing and cooking food (Firth et al., 2011; Kurtz, 2001; Saldivar-Tanaka & Krasny, 2004).

In a critical analysis of race in community gardens, Dunford (2009) engaged in an ethnography of vacant lot community gardens in the North Lawndale community in Chicago. In Dunford’s (2009) exploration of race in the gardens, she found that Black and White participants valued gardening quite differently, and moreover held misperceptions of others’ values. The most prevalent discourse was from the staff and non-local White individuals assuming the motivation for the Black gardeners stemmed from “gardening like they used to in the South.” This assumes that the Black gardeners were good at gardening and enjoyed the activity, when in fact some of them did not (Dunford, 2009). Several Black gardeners associated gardening with a history of necessity that symbolized burden rather than opportunity; buying food at the store was a way of “getting ahead in life” because it implied more financial security. For urban Blacks in North Lawndale, gardening represented practical and functional purposes, whereas for urban Whites, gardening was a luxury tied to aesthetic, ideological, and social relationships (Dunford, 2009). This study illustrates the complexity of community gardens’ social contexts; even though gardens have general health benefits, an ecological perspective that attends to history and varying motivations paints a nuanced and multifaceted picture of how people interact with one another in these unique neighborhood settings.

**Community Psychology and Community Gardening**

In general, community gardens are interesting and complex areas of study, particularly for community psychologists. An ecological framework in the study of community gardens reflects a contextually based understanding of these unique social settings (Trickett, 1998; Trickett, Kelly, Vincent, 1985). Community gardens illustrate the interdependence of people in the various social, physical, and cultural contexts in which they live. Resources (e.g. garden members, events in the garden, and the garden itself) are interdependent and embedded in the history of each garden and surrounding neighborhood. Understanding the historical subtext is essential because the ways in which these settings are created shapes the function of the space and those who garden in it. Moreover, community gardens are often framed as empowerment projects that are capable of bringing different groups of people with a clear diversity of worldviews and histories together in positive ways (Dunford, 2009). These central themes of focusing on context, history, community building through social networks, and empowerment merit particular attention from community psychologists.

**Deep Roots: SCRA Members Cultivate Gardens and Community**

In Fall 2014, the second author of this paper began to create a community gardening course with her colleague Dr. James Cook, a sociologist. There was, technically, a community garden already on our campus, but it had lost all institutional support due to budget cuts and was left fallow. The loss was felt deeply; the garden had produced over a thousand pounds of food two years running for the local food bank and was also a resource for community and recreation for faculty, staff, and students. However, with no supporting office, resources, or coordinator, the volunteers dwindled until only one or two die-hard faculty wound up carrying the entire workload. It was unsustainable.

The first goal of the course was to bring the garden back. It would not be sufficient to simply get some
students in a class to work the land because there would be a lack of volunteers once the semester ended. Instead, the students would learn theories, principles, and strategies from Community Psychology and Sociology. Once familiar with research on community organizing (e.g. creating partnerships, organizing and mobilizing volunteers, community and place identity), the students would put theory to action, creating a sustainable, lasting, and institutionalized process to carry the garden forward past the end of term.

“Cultivating Community: The Garden Course” was offered for the first time in Spring 2016. This spring, the students formed a club, which comes with the institutionalized support of club funds. They created partnerships with the local pantry, schools, businesses, and even the prison to organize volunteers. They voiced their message to local media including a major newspaper and morning radio show, which mobilized unconnected community members to reach out to volunteers. The students also developed plans, including a crop rotation, composting with the cafeteria, a pest guide, and teach-in lessons on gardening and food preservation for future volunteers. The students also worked hard to build a garden located in a lot that the school purchased from the city for $1. The Illinois Division of Rehabilitation Services paid for the internships and the team of students spent 8 weeks working on the garden. We made a short video of the experience available at the following web site: http://ccbmdr.ahslabs.uic.edu/projects/add-us-in-chicagoland-consortium/

August Hoffman, wrote:

At Metropolitan State University, located in St. Paul, MN, we coordinate a very productive community garden with our partner school (Inver Hills Community College) where students from both institutions collaborate and grow a variety of vegetables and fruits. All foods are donated to local food resources serving low income families in St. Paul. Last year, we grew over 1200lbs. An added benefit is that the students from the community college are able to work with upper division psychology students and graduate students from Metro State, which leads to a more successful transfer rate.

The student volunteers are enrolled in courses (typically psychology) at either institution. In my course, I give students the option of a 10 hour volunteer gardening program at the garden or writing a 5-10 page APA style paper on a related topic in psychology (needless to say – the majority choose the garden option).
the school. We had open meetings so that we could dialogue about the plans. With the agreement of the school district, we developed the garden. The garden is now known as the Randolph Street Garden and is run by an amazing community member, Dawn Blackman. You can learn more about the garden here: https://randolphcommunitygarden.com/

Community Gardens Research
Carlie D. Trott, wrote:
For my dissertation project, I designed a climate change education and action program for 10- to 12-year olds called Science, Camera, Action! This project was made possible in part by SCRA. It received a first place Doctoral Dissertation grant. The program combines science activities and games with Photovoice methodology, culminating in climate action projects designed and carried out by the youth. I’m presently running the program with 3 groups of Boys and Girls Clubs kids in Northern Colorado. One group chose to speak at their Town Hall and initiate a local tree-planting campaign. Another is planning a community event and building a website. The largest group is establishing a garden at their Club, including a compost system to save food waste from the landfill and nourish their garden. Since the 16-week program was set to ‘end’ when school lets out in just a couple weeks, a newly-established Garden Club is taking root for the summer and is open to all ages. Even in these beginning stages, they are proud of their work and excited to provide food to Boys and Girls Club families later this year.

Ashley Anglin, wrote:
At the Atlantic Health System, we are part of a funding collaborative called the New Jersey Healthy Communities Network. Our largest initiative is a grant program that funds communities that are taking action to address healthy eating and active living via policy change and improvements to the built environment. We currently fund 43 communities across the state (13 through Atlantic Health) and many of these grantees are working on gardens in many different settings. I provide monthly technical assistance to a cohort of seven grantees. We also conduct evaluations for the different communities and gardens.

Camilla Borsini, wrote:
In this study the aim is to explore the growing phenomenon of community gardens in an Italian town. We choose a qualitative method in order to describe the phenomenon and compare the results with other studies and experiences.

33 participants (21 females, 12 males; average age 36) actively participate in the organization of 3 Community Gardens in Florence. We conducted 20 semi-structured interviews and 3 focus groups to gather qualitative data. The main areas explored were: origin, structure and management of the garden; participation; participants’ expectations; perceived advantages both on individual and community level.

From the content analysis, it emerged that the phenomenon may have a role in promoting individual and collective well-being. Participation in the activities of the Community Garden seems to affect health by increasing a healthy diet, contact with nature, and physical activity. Moreover, the phenomenon may affect psychological well-being through individual and collective self-efficacy. Analysis also suggests that Community Garden may increase a sense of community, developing membership and social bonds, increasing the social capital. Furthermore the phenomenon has an important role towards environmental problems.

Community Gardens in Our Personal Communities
Andrea Solarz, wrote:
Starting this year, I’m the volunteer manager for the community gardens in my condominium development. We have a record 21 gardeners signed up for plots this year. I had a small plot for the first time last year and am still very much a beginning gardener, but when the previous manager solicited for a replacement, I stepped up.

One of my goals is to help develop a greater sense of community among the gardeners this year as there was very little interaction or communication last year once people picked their plots. An ongoing challenge last year was getting people involved in volunteer roles (grounds crew, etc.), but I’m optimistic that increased communication and connection will help to overcome that. We’ll also be collecting produce periodically for delivery to local food banks as a way to share the bounty with others, which should also work to engage the gardeners. So far, there is a lot of enthusiasm for getting started, so the challenge will be to sustain that through the ups and downs of the growing season!

Mary Tauras, wrote:
I’m very grateful to have a fantastic local organization in our city working to increase the number of community gardens for residents (Visit http://www.millcitygrows.org). At my apartment building, we have some gardens also. I’m new to the
Summer 2016          The Community Psychologist

Gardening can be practical (when people need food), transformational (when neighborhoods need community), and even revolutionary (when food systems are no longer just). Gardens are a space where people can gather, where groups can bridge divides, where recreation and community development can both be met. Community psychologists should continue to invest in community gardens in both academic and non-academic ways. Opportunities exist for extensive ecological inquiry into a wide range of topics that are deeply important to community psychologists because of the well-established overlap between community gardens, human well-being, and social justice. Community psychologists will also find opportunities in gardens to increase civic engagement in their courses and communities, as demonstrated by our members.

Bernadette Sanches, wrote:

During the last couple of years, my family and I participated in a community garden in our neighborhood in Chicago, at Hello!Howard. See http://petersongarden.org/. We did it as a way to learn how to grow fruits and vegetables, to participate in something positive in our neighborhood and support the block it’s on, and to get to know our neighbors. The block that the garden is on has a reputation (e.g., gang activity) and the community has been working to improve it. We thought that would be a good way to support those efforts. We also thought it would be something fun to do with our preschool aged children so they can learn where food comes from.

Conclusion
A garden is a natural setting for community psychologists to invest in and connect to communities. Gardening can be practical (when people need food), transformational building so this is our first year, but for the following reasons I am very excited to participate:

- Self-efficacy, mastery, and personal mental health (e.g., spending time outdoors with soil, experiencing appreciation and gratitude for the growth process);
- Having a collaborative process with my loft-mates to decide what to grow and who will do what, when;
- Beautification of our very industrial landscape which signals to our neighbors, police, and local representatives that we care about where we live;
- Contributing to waste reduction (composting), soil remediation, and energy reduction on the transportation side of food systems.

References


Saldivar-Tanaka, L., & Krasny, M. E. (2004). Culturing community development, neighborhood open space, and civil agricultural: The case of Latino community gardens in New York City. Agriculture and Human Values, 21,
International
Edited by Mona Amer

The First Community Psychology Conference in the MENA Region: Elements of Effective Change for the Socio-Cultural Context
Written by Mona M. Amer, Carie Forden, and Andrea Emanuel (Conference Co-Chairs), The American University in Cairo, Egypt

Rich learning experience. Diversity of speakers and practices. Opportunities for networking and collaboration. Hope and motivation for community change. Inspiration. Thus, Tahrir was a fitting setting for this conference, a landmark meeting that challenged psychologists to consider systemic and community-based models and challenged community-based practitioners to consider psychological and scientific methods.

The theme of the conference was “Collaboration for Community Change: Insight, Innovation, and Impact.” We chose this theme both to recognize the groundbreaking work done in communities across the MENA region and also to highlight the central role of collaboration in creating sustainable change.

One of the unique characteristics of this conference was the truly interdisciplinary backgrounds of the participants, including an unusual balance of academics, practitioners, and students. A total of 122 people participated in the conference as presenters and attendees, coming from Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Yemen, as well as South Africa, UK, and USA. They represented community and counseling psychology, community development, social entrepreneurship, public health, human rights, and many other specializations. There were 53 presenters and 22 session chairs and roundtable moderators who brought to life a featured keynote roundtable, three keynote speeches, 34 presentations as part of panels, three roundtable discussions, four workshops, and a poster session.

Although the conference focused on the MENA region, there is no doubt that the gathering was shaped by others within and outside of the region. For example, it was financially sponsored by SCRA, and many SCRA members served as proposal reviewers and presenters.

To launch the conference, the opening ceremony – which was open to the public – featured a frank and personal keynote roundtable conversation with five visionaries who have spearheaded transformative change in the areas of blended learning, sustainable...
community development, drug addiction and HIV prevention, youth development, and renewable energy. These were Seif Abou Zaid, Ragha El Ebrashi, Ehab El Kharrat, Azza Kamel, and Ahmed Zahran. Titled “Our Journeys of Change: Reflections of Egyptian Pioneers,” the keynote session challenged these speakers of diverse ages to reflect more deeply on what gave them faith, inspiration, and the strength to continue working creatively and steadfastly on tackling intractable social problems despite challenges that have led others to abandon the cause.

This roundtable highlighted many commonalities in the activists’ journeys to creating transformative change. They reported that they had stumbled upon their vision: a compelling event led them to recognize that something essential was missing in society or an observation led them to question the wisdom of the status quo. Despite lack of funds, corruption, political obstacles, detractors who questioned the significance of their work, and other complex challenges, they fueled their resistance with their personal convictions. To sustain their efforts and make strides towards success, they leveraged the tenacity in their personalities and support from others around them including teachers, parents, colleagues and the people they were aiming to serve. The concept “ideas will never die, and will eventually spread further,” brought an immortality to their projects, and this was further fostered by the empowerment of people involved – whether children, people in slum areas, or recovering addicts, as well as staff members in their organizations – who carried their projects forward.

Other ingredients for effective change were highlighted by the three 1-hour keynote speakers. The first speech was by psychologist Anthony Naidoo from South Africa, a country that shares many socio-political and historical parallels with the Middle East. He spoke on “Building a Collaborative Community in Changing Times,” sharing the lessons he had learned in developing community psychology in South Africa and encouraging the audience to work in partnership with local communities. He used the metaphor of the footbridge that symbolically links the Alexandria Library to the University to remind us of the importance of building relationships between academia and communities.

Iman Bibars, Vice President of the Ashoka - Innovators for the Public, was the second keynote speaker, with a talk titled “Small is Beautiful: Key Ingredients for Locally-Driven Social Change.” Based on over 30 years of experience working in the field of development, she questioned the evolving fads (for example, currently social entrepreneurship and project scaling) and urged the audience to return to the essence of what makes effective change – interventions that grow from local knowledge, are based in local culture, and are driven by a community’s members.

Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu, whose vision for an intimate regional meeting was one of the seeds that grew into this conference, concluded the conference with his talk on “Multiple Voices, Multiple Needs: Better Practices in Community Collaborations.” Just as the conference began with personal reflections, it ended with the same, with Serdar tracing the insights he learned along his professional journey from the U.S. to Turkey as a developmental-community psychologist engaged in relief work and youth participation. He discussed seven key components of community change, including vision, planning, and leadership.

The individual presentations were organized into thematic panels and were a mixture of reflections on effective models of change as well as results from research endeavors. The presentations tackled timely issues such as refugee well-being and trauma, youth development, violence against women, poverty alleviation, environmental sustainability, and culturally-sensitive health education and promotion (e.g., breast cancer, pneumonia, HIV, sexual abuse). Most of the sessions emphasized the role of partnerships in achieving the aims.

Three sessions were open discussions aimed at promoting the field of community psychology. One session discussed the knowledge and skills that trainees of community psychology should gain to be effective community psychologists. A second session examined local ethical dilemmas and steps towards developing regionally-sensitive ethical standards for community practice. A third session explored the effectiveness of participatory methods in the Middle East. In particular, it was noted that the hierarchical culture and suspicion of outsiders can make participatory approaches difficult to implement.

Four workshops gave participants the chance to work on skills that are particularly relevant to the region: collaborative approaches to addressing violence against women, advocacy and policy work related to public health issues, appreciative inquiry in evaluation, and addressing territorialization in Palestine. Finally, a poster session highlighted fledgling innovative programs and the presenters broke tradition with
standard academic conferences by integrating 3-dimensional materials, quizzes, and other activities.

There is still a lot of work to be done for community psychology to take hold and grow in the region. Currently, there are only two specialized academic programs. Birzeit University in Palestine launched its Master’s program in 2009, and in 2010 AUC enrolled its first Master’s students, complementing an undergraduate community psychology track which had formalized in 2006. The Birzeit program offers an interdisciplinary approach with faculty from psychology, anthropology, and sociology, with an emphasis in critical and indigenous methodologies, whereas the AUC program is housed in a psychology unit and follows the American SCRA practice competencies in developing students’ skills.

Community psychology in the Middle East faces some unique challenges. The conference couldn’t escape political realities; for example, several people (especially Palestinian speakers with Israeli passports) were denied visa entry to Egypt; some speakers were advised to avoid travel due to violent conflict in their homelands such as in Yemen; one of the organizers was interrogated by Egyptian state security regarding the motives and content of the conference; American faculty and students were advised by their universities not to travel to Egypt; and two of the Egyptian speakers were barely able to make it to their session after being detained by the government days prior for their women’s rights work. Also, the culture of institutions supporting research and conference travel is still nascent and thus some speakers were unable to obtain funding for travel costs. Consequently, many speakers joined via Skype or pre-recorded video presentation. Moreover, issues of language (sessions were held in both English and Arabic) and the prohibitive cost of simultaneous translation showed how difficult it is to bridge between communities.

Nonetheless, the rich landscape of local and transnational NGO’s and other civil society organizations, and attention to the region by multilateral organizations, such as United Nations including World Health Organization, renders the region well-poised to host efforts with community psychology perspectives. At the same time, community psychology has an opportunity to grow as a field by expanding its paradigm according to what is learned in this context. Writings about community psychology in the region have already begun to examine those issues (see list of suggested readings below). We hope that this conference marks the first step in creating a supportive community of MENA region scholars and practitioners who have a common passion for creating a better world.

Suggested Readings:


Reflections by Attendees of the 1st MENA Regional Conference on Community Psychology

Hana Fahmy (evaluation consultant, Cairo, Egypt). I was the first graduate of the Community Psychology (CP) master program at the American University in Cairo, in 2012. Being a member of the organizing committee for the 1st MENA regional CP conference, 4 years later, was a dream come true. I joined the committee because I had a sense of responsibility toward the development of the field in Egypt and the region. From being the only student of the CP master program, to questioning what is CP, to being the first graduate of the program, to practicing and promoting the principles of CP, and finally witnessing a well-organized and rich conference. It was of great value to also facilitate a workshop on appreciative inquiry as a powerful evaluation tool, and explain that these strength-based and participatory approaches actually work. It is true! We, the students of the program, spent a lot of hours, in 2011, defining CP and comparing it to other fields, and some of us struggled to explain the field to other professionals through their internships. The conference was the best way to clarify what it is, what community psychologists do, and connected community psychologists together. I attended two important group discussions, one on ethical code and the other was on the core competencies needed for practicing CP in the MENA region and felt that we were making history and developing the field ourselves.

Kamauria Acree (community psychology MA student at The American University in Cairo). The conference was a landmark in the field of community psychology in the MENA region. It was truly wonderful to hear presentations about preventive interventions, evidence-based research, qualitative studies, and much more. It was exciting to see people networking, actively participating in group discussions, and conversing about a certain topic over lunch. Being an African-American international graduate student in Egypt has its own set of challenges, but this conference reminded me of why I even decided to pursue community psychology in Egypt to begin with—to learn, grow, build collaborative relationships, understand social issues, fight oppression, and promote positive health and well-being. Seeing and hearing the speakers present with great zeal and passion reminded me of my own love and passion for community psychology and encouraged me to continue to pursue my heart-felt desires.

Sarah Mitkees (human development and psychology EdM graduate of Harvard University, USA & study of religion MST graduate of Oxford University, UK). As someone who is establishing a career in community psychology in Egypt, attending the first Community Psychology conference in the MENA region has been an enriching experience. I believe this is a first step towards establishing a community of scholars, practitioners and learners who can use Community Psychology to mobilize development efforts in the region, at a time MENA needs such efforts the most. Community development efforts won’t be as fruitful if they merely follow priorities, values and competencies of other societies—mainly Western—without seeing what works and what does not work in the context of the Middle East. It has been an invaluable initiative to start conversations among scholars and leaders in the field as well as aspiring community psychologists, to investigate what works best in development efforts within a MENA context taking into consideration, values, skills and competencies that are of relevance to such work initiatives in the region. I am optimistic to see this conference as a building block towards similar initiatives to follow, shaping and empowering communities and community psychologists aiming to do change in their societies and have a say in what matters most to them.

Dalia Nassar and Lian Derini (community psychology MA students at Birzeit University, Palestine). We are very thankful for the AUC University for the first annual conference for Community Psychology, and the opportunity given to us as Palestinian students to join this conference, we think that this conference is important
for us especially as Palestinians to learn from other experience in the region. It was a pleasure for us to meet important professors in the field whom gave us hope for change. It was also extremely beneficial for us to meet other students and share knowledge with them, we have discussed the differences between Birzeit University and AUC curriculums. Successful stories of women especially gave us more strength to fight the reality we are facing. We suggest the engagement of more youth in the conference, either actives in their areas or students of universities, and the involvement of more Arab universities students. We also suggest that panels has translation since many could not participate in our session.

**Eman Motawi (sustainable development MA and community psychology Diploma student at The American University in Cairo).** Coming from sustainable development and community psychology background, the conference provided me with a vivid experience of different community practices nationally and regionally. It gives me hope of better and ethical practices that include community voice side by side to the expert voice. Keynotes’ spirit motivated me regardless of what they faced of challenges; they kept working with people to create a valuable change. As a Palestinian refugee, I was inspired by the different sessions to pursue my PhD. I want to use service-learning and community based courses as a method to integrate immigrants in their receiving countries. I know that I want to participate in the second community psychology conference in MENA region and I cannot wait to do that.

**Sawssan Ahmed (assistant professor at California State University, Fullerton, USA).** When I found out that a MENA focused community psychology conference was being organized, I was very intrigued. As an Arab American psychologist with Egyptian heritage, I was very interested in learning on what kind of work was being done in the MENA region. I also had not visited Egypt for several years and was curious to see what the climate in Egypt was like post-revolution. A highlight for me was the opening session where organizers from various community programs highlighted their respective programs including a program that used art to empower Egyptian children, one that worked to reduce stigma around substance abuse intervention and one that worked on implementing solar energy and sustainability to Egyptian society. I also enjoyed connecting and learning about the research and community work being done in the surrounding regions of Turkey, Palestine and Saudi Arabia.

**Khalifah Alfahli (lecturer in department of psychology at King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia).** My excitement for the 1st MENA Region Conference on Community Psychology was different than usual interest for other psychology conferences for many reasons, personal and not. The 1st conference came with a title that speaks to the current and recent events in the region “Collaboration for Community Change: Insight, Innovation and Impact”, as we live in a time of radical social change, a sweeping change beyond responsibility of particular persons, disciplines or professions. I believe that community psychology’s theoretical frame and literature can lend itself easily to active agents who seek structural changes through better understanding of social context. On a personal level, the conference was a chance to rediscover my identity as a community psychologist, especially the engagement element of it. This conference offered me a different experience to be involved in a roundtable discussion with community development agents and entrepreneurs, which should take us back to the issues that really matter.

**Shaymaa Hasan Abdelmagid (counseling psychology MA student at The American University in Cairo).** Although my background is in counseling psychology, I was very much motivated to attend this conference and participate in it. First of all, I wanted to present my work on HIV/AIDS related stigma. Secondly, I was excited by the opportunities for learning and professional collaboration that should be present in a first community psychology conference in the region. My contribution was a poster presentation about reducing HIV/AIDS related stigma. My experience was particularly inspiring. In addition to the other sessions I attended in the conference those panel sessions helped in extending my knowledge
about resources in our (and other) communities that might lead to social change in different areas. Additionally, they introduced me to new theory, methods and tools in research and gave me ideas for new programs and effective interventions. In addition to the resources and opportunities they presented, these sessions also helped me to discover a new passion for social change. They focused not only on extending existing knowledge and expertise, but also on growth. Attending the scheduled social activity was also a special experience as well as a good opportunity to meet, collaborate and know some interesting participants. This was a lot of fun and helped to amplify the excitement, enthusiasm and energy of the conference. All in all, the resources and activities in this conference left me with a special experience and presented me with a valuable learning opportunity.

**Alia Afifi (second year BA student at The American University in Cairo).**

They say that the best way to learn a language is through immersion. Putting yourself in situations where language is inevitable is your best shot at learning. Being in a room where everyone spoke the same language, the language of change and (com)passion, was my most valuable and beneficial community learning experience so far. Thanks to those four days of complete and constant inspiration, I came to realize the following. Developed or developing, first or third world country, people all over the world faced the same social and community problems, just in different intensities. I believe Community psychology might be the field in which the issue of generalizability was the least of problems. Studies are easily from the presentation “Small is Beautiful”). Networking with peer philanthropists also opened rapport for possible collaboration, an added benefit that was not expected. It gave me a positive boost of energy to share useful information with others who are just getting started. Overall, I think we are in need of such an event on regular basis to bring into reality the needed societal transformation and community development. Attending the Conference made me realize my need to complement my practice in community initiatives with academic knowledge through enrollment in the community psychology Master’s program.

**Fatema Abou El Ela (community psychology MA student at The American University in Cairo).**

It was a privilege to be one of the organizers of the First MENA Regional Conference on Community Psychology, at a time when I was in my last year in the Community Psychology M.A. program at the American University in Cairo. Being the first of its kind, this conference brought together leaders of the most influential community work in the Arab world, giving learners, like myself, insight into the different practical approaches, social problems and community programs in the field. It was a great opportunity to engage such a diverse group of community practitioners in important discussions about essential competencies for community practice and ethical conduct and dilemmas within the Arab culture. During the discussion on ethical dilemmas, I decided to do my thesis about the important ethical principles in community practice in the region and contribute in developing a
culturally-appropriate ethics code for community practitioners, since most organizations now adopt Western codes that do not conform to our collectivist and conservative culture. Moreover, as an organizer of the conference, I read several ideas and projects in order to help in the selection process. This task taught me about the successful factors of research and programming and made me realize that my research needs to be innovative and effective. I also had many chances to network with community psychologists and practitioners as I operated several sessions during the conference, which was an exceptional opportunity while I am still a student. I aspire to present the research of my thesis in the next community psychology conference in the MENA region.

Amira Ragy Hanna (community psychology MA student at The American University in Cairo). I wanted to attend the conference mainly because it was the first conference bringing together community psychologists from the MENA region. To be honest I did not have particular expectations. But if there is one thing that I got out of the conference, it is inspiration. I was simply inspired just by being surrounded by like-minded human beings and sharing our stories and experiences. Everyone was aspiring to make a change, to be the change that others gave up on. I was surrounded by human beings who still believe in people and communities. It was a confirmation that I was studying something that I love and am proud to be a part of. I am looking forward for the coming conference!

What do Community Psychologists Need to Know in the MENA Region? A Discussion on Training Competencies

Written by Mona M. Amer and Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu

A roundtable session focused on training competencies was hosted at the 1st MENA Regional Conference on Community Psychology, which was held March 2016 in Cairo, Egypt. Our goal from the discussion was to generate ideas for community psychology curriculum development. During the session, titled “Priorities for Community Practice Training Competencies in the Region,” participants identified some of the important theories and skills that were essential to effective community practice within the regional context.

There were many theoretical frameworks that were highlighted as important foundations for the community psychology student in the MENA region. These included the following:

1. Systems perspectives including ecological theories such as by George Kelley, in order to gain a complex understanding of social issues. Systems theories can be broadened to include cultural anthropology or even John Bowlby (attachment as a system).

2. Theories that analyze and explain the distribution of power between different parties, as well as the process of empowerment. These theories are important to explain the political contexts and influences on community psychology work.

3. Social justice models and theories, which are critical when addressing disparities and injustices in the region.

4. Examinations of colonization and its pervasive and ongoing influences on shaping MENA society.

5. Readings by Frantz Fanon, specifically The Wretched of the Earth, to ground students in decolonization movements towards liberation and effective change.

6. Theories on experiential learning and involving the empowerment of people, such as Paulo Freire’s ways of engagement described in Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

7. Collectivism versus individualism models, to be able to grasp the values and implications of living in collectivistic cultures in which beliefs and behaviors are influenced by cultural contexts and not necessarily individual motives. The collectivistic setting could affect community practices differently from how they were developed in more individualistic nations.

8. Examinations of the cultural nuances and differences within the regional cultures in order to avoid overgeneralizations and to understand community and diversity in a more complex manner.

9. Ethnopsychology, to examine one’s own indigenous cultural background and study other cultural perspectives to bridge diversity.

10. Theories about group development and group dynamics, including stages
of change, psychoeducational groups, and peer mentoring approaches, because so much of community work is group-based.

11. Social identity approaches, such as Tajfel & Turner, which provide a better understanding of the underpinnings of group behavior and how people understand themselves in relation to others.

12. Public health perspectives in order to address the disparity between the large number of people who need services and the availability of qualified practitioners. This may include readings by George Albee focused on prevention.

In addition to the theoretical groundwork for community psychology training, the roundtable discussion was also an opportunity to determine some of the key skills needed for effective community practice. These included the following:

1. Being humble and learning how to learn solutions from communities. Gaining skills in how to accept, respect, and appreciate community beliefs and culture.

2. Understanding the community’s needs through participatory approaches. Building trust, bridging with communities, and co-creating solutions.

3. Using participatory approaches in generating and documenting knowledge, such as Participatory Action Research.

4. Using research skills to know what works and doesn’t work in popular community practices (including trends such as micro-financing, fair trade, etc.), taking into account the unique community contexts.

5. Applying research approaches in accurately observing and collecting data to map what is happening. This would apply to all stages of program development, implementation, and evaluation.

6. Structuring a model of change and implementing impact modeling.

7. Knowing how to integrate religious and cultural values and belief systems in the work, including how to acknowledge the influences of collectivism or utilize religious messages to encourage positive change.

8. Effectively managing small and large group dynamics.


10. Learning alternative forms of activism other than political activism (in cases where it is risky or unsafe). Creating advocacy through non-political means.

11. Learning from other approaches to community change such as social entrepreneurship.


In many ways the theories and skills identified by participants echoed the training competencies issued by SCRA. Community practice was seen to rest on ecological and systems perspectives, with trainees encouraged to develop evidence-based skills in designing and evaluating programs.

Participation and empowerment were central. At the same time, the roundtable discussion emphasized the role of culture and collectivism in community work, and the importance of understanding the ramifications of colonialism and inter-group cultural tensions. As such, models from sociological and anthropological traditions were suggested. Much of the discussion centered on the need for students of community psychology to gain skills in working within the contentious and rapidly shifting socio-political dynamics.

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**Living Community Psychology**

*Written by Gloria Levin (Glorialevin@verizon.net)*

“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The intent is to personalize Community Psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners. Prior columns are available online, at http://www.scura27.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.

For this installment, we feature a distinguished community psychologist who has made significant scholarly contributions as well as applying the field’s scholarship to social problems that besiege communities. He attributes much of his success ultimately to the example of resilience and courage of
his parents, survivors of World War II and immigrants to a new country.

Jacob Kraemer Tebes
The Consultation Center
Department of Psychiatry
Yale University
School of Medicine
New Haven, CT
Jacob.tebes@yale.edu

We know him as the highly accomplished director of The Consultation Center at Yale and the editor of the *American Journal of Community Psychology*, but I wager most readers do not know that Jack Tebes was fundamentally shaped by the immigrant experience, if indirectly. Before he was born, his parents and two older brothers had escaped central Europe during and after World War II.

Caught between the Nazis and the Russians, his Roman Catholic, Austro-Hungarian parents became separated. His father was taken with other men of the village to a Russian work camp where he lived for 5 1/2 years, working as a tailor. His mother with her two sons, Jack’s older brothers (ages 9 months and 3 years at the time) were transferred to a Serbian cleansing camp run by Serbian partisans and populated by women, children and old men. Malnourished, she was no longer able to nurse her two young children and so volunteered as a cook so she could milk the goat and bring the excess milk back to her sons.

Desperate to save her sons, one moonless night she escaped the camp with her two young sons and a niece. Eventually, the family reunited in Munich in a displaced persons camp but, not having a German identity, the children were ridiculed in school. Shortly thereafter, the family emigrated to Windsor, Canada where Jack was born. Soon after, the family was able to immigrate to the U.S. (which had recently loosened restrictions on immigration) and relocate to Chicago.

Jack’s parents (having had few educational opportunities) felt strongly that education was the ticket to a good life for their sons. With the help of scholarships from his father’s union, Jack attended a Jesuit college prep school in Chicago and Georgetown University. Inspired by the civil rights movement, he intended to study business and then go to law school to become a constitutional lawyer. However, not enjoying his business studies, he explored other majors, notably philosophy and theology. In his sophomore year, he found his home in psychology. A course taught by Norman Finkel, a clinical psychology professor who was trained in community psychology, introduced him to the field.

At Georgetown, Jack ran a rat and pigeon lab which taught him the intricacies of the principles of learning. He was elected president of the undergraduate psychology students association and organized his Department’s first undergraduate conference with other students. He graduated magna cum laude and was inducted in Phi Beta Kappa. “It was a heady time, and I was a Big Man on Campus, at least in the psychology department.”

He was, therefore, devastated that he did not get into any of the seven clinical or clinical/community psychology graduate programs to which he had applied. After a few days of agonizing over what to do with his life, he picked himself up, drawing from his parents’ examples of resilience.

He decided to stay in the Washington, DC area and work in psychology, while studying to improve his GRE scores. Jack accepted a position in Arlington, Virginia as a Resource Aide in an experimental program for severely disturbed youth. At that time, in the mid-1970s, an omnibus federal law had been enacted that required states to mainstream special education students in public schools. For two years, Jack worked in a middle school, a high school and a self-contained classroom for court-adjudicated youth to teach core subjects and to develop token economies where he put to good use his knowledge of the principles of learning.

With the added confidence and maturity gained from his two years of work experience “in the trenches,” he was ready to reapply to graduate schools. Fortuitously, one of his prior professors went on sabbatical, leaving Jack to housesit his house (and cat) in Georgetown. There, Jack studied for his GREs, learning 30 new words a day and taking GRE practice tests. He was admitted to most of the graduate schools to which he applied.

Jack chose to attend SUNY/Buffalo and was mentored primarily by David Perkins and Murray Levine. His program encouraged students to take courses in both clinical and community. Although most of his student peers were heading toward clinical careers, he was committed to pursuing community psychology in combination with clinical psychology to enhance his impact on solving social problems. During
this time, he attended community psychology conferences where he met some of the authors whose work he had been reading. He obtained his PhD from SUNY/Buffalo in 1984, the same year he completed his clinical internship year at Yale.

Jack knew he wanted an academic career, because he believed it would give him the freedom to pursue his ideas and interests and also would be conducive to raising a family. While he was on internship, a rare tenure-track faculty position in Psychiatry became available at the Yale Consultation Center, for which he was selected.

After a few years on faculty, he met his eventual wife, Debby Kraemer, another SUNY/Buffalo graduate who had recently accepted a faculty position in the Psychology Department at Yale. He took her out to dinner, and she reciprocated afterwards by sending him flowers and a thank you note. “Within six weeks, we knew. We were married 11 months later.” For those struggling to find names that accommodate two professional identities, you may be interested in Jack’s example. He and Debby, both avowed feminists, decided to swap last names for each of their middle names – Jacob Kraemer Tebes and Deborah Tebes Kraemer. They named their two sons Daniel Kraemer Tebes and Jonathan Kraemer Tebes.

In 1999, with Yale as the host, Jack was the local chair for SCRA’s 7th biennial conference which was well attended. He credits Jean Ann Linney for giving him good advice – that, in contrast to the earlier conferences, attendees began to expect better service, accommodations and food, “as high end as possible.” The conference planners also subsidized lower student fees by instituting higher fees for professional members; developed a business plan to turn a profit; and prepared a guide to planning future biennial conferences. In the same year, Jack was elected to Fellow status in SCRA and in APA.

Jack notes that being a faculty member in a medical school is very different than being situated in a psychology department. “The rhythm of working 12 months, without summers off and without semester breaks, is different.” In 2011, he was promoted to the tenured faculty at full professor and, in 2015, he received SCRA’s award for Distinguished Contributions to Theory and Research. Jack’s CV shows that he holds a number of faculty and administrative positions. Currently, in addition to directing The Consultation Center at Yale, he also serves as Chief Psychologist for the Connecticut Mental Health Center where he oversees the work of psychology faculty across 12 sites.

In addition, he directs one of the research divisions in the Department of Psychiatry – the Division of Prevention and Community Research – where he also directs a prevention research training grant funded by NIDA for postdoctoral fellows. Through his diverse roles, he has prioritized systems and strengths-based approaches in clinical and community settings, as well as hiring and promoting a diverse faculty.

Jack’s values of social justice are inculcated in the American Journal of Community Psychology (AJCP), SCRA’s flagship journal for which he has served as editor-in-chief since 2010. When invited to apply for the position, he originally demurred because of his concern that all prior editors had been white males like himself. When selected by SCRA anyway, he emphasized expanding the diversity of the editorial board, incorporating a wider range of methods and types of articles published in the journal (including first person reports) and making the journal more relevant to practice and policy issues. He devotes about two days a week to his editorial duties (usually including weekends) but calls it “a labor of love.” Jack’s pride in AJCP is accompanied by his delight in the editorial team.

Jack agreed to extend his editorial term through 2017 to smooth the transition to a different publisher (Wiley) and introduce new features, including an enhanced social media presence. Recently, Jack (along with Anne Bogat) received a special contribution award from SCRA for negotiating the new publishing contract -- according to the award, “crucial for enhancing the SCRA financially, as journal revenue constitutes the majority of SCRA’s operating budget.”

When asked how he manages his time for the many roles and functions he performs, he says he sleeps only a few hours and focuses on the task at hand. He also delegates tasks, trusting his faculty colleagues to do their jobs as leaders in their own right, and is aided ably by his valued administrative associate, Susan Florio, who also serves as the AJCP editorial assistant.

Good time management is also crucial for Jack because a main priority in his life has always been family. He and Debby (an associate professor of psychology at Southern Connecticut State University) have always built into their schedules specific time for their family life. For years, he reserved Monday and Wednesday afternoons to be with his sons, including coaching their basketball teams in the evenings.
When his sons left home for college, he found more free time. Part of this time he has spent on being Warden (similar to president) of an Episcopal Church to which he belongs in New Haven and supporting community and church initiatives to serve homeless and poor people. For example, most Sunday afternoons he serves lunches to 150-200 persons and helps coordinate a regular clinic and clothing drives. Through his job, he takes on projects to enhance the capacity of organizations that serve marginalized populations to help them evaluate and improve their services, such as enhancing food security and reducing poverty in Philadelphia, PA. Recently, he has thought about ways to bring his professional work in other cities and states to New Haven in order to address some of the challenges he sees as a community volunteer.

Jack’s oldest son, Daniel, age 26, is enrolled in a master’s program in International Agricultural Development at the University of California, Davis, having earlier earned his BA degree at Kenyon College. His passion is sustainable agriculture for small farmers as an approach to improve the environment. To that end, he is working with a Silicon Valley startup company to develop a smart phone app for organic farmers. Son John, age 24, earned his bachelor’s degree at MIT in economics and public policy. His passion is intergenerational poverty with a focus on education. In the fall, he will be enrolling at Harvard’s PhD program in economics.

Jack and Debby are proud that their sons are pursuing the “family business” in their own ways. They have always emphasized social justice in their family. An example of this was when they supported a homeless family for a few years, and had one of the boys in the family live with them for a while.

“Turning 60 this year has concentrated my mind,” says Jack, and he tries to “live life as if I could die tomorrow.” His parents and oldest brother died several years ago, and his other older brother had some health problems that recently were resolved. Ever the mentor, in a 2013 address to graduating psychology interns at Yale, Jack urged them to put their relationships first. “Make your relationships a priority. Unless you do so, your career will make this choice for you without you even knowing it, and there you will be years later with a career and pretty much nothing else of value.”

Public Policy
Edited by Jean Hill

Highlights of SCRA Public Policy Grants
Written by Keri Frantell and Ryan Schooley

The SCRA Policy Committee helps to support public policy and advocacy work that specifically addresses community concerns in the policy arena each year. The projects that are supported through the public policy grants help to target advocacy issues at all levels, with an emphasis on addressing policy concerns of particular community interest and connecting community psychology to these policy concerns. Several wonderful projects have been funded through this program, and some of the work done through these grants is described below.

Post-disaster Home Buyouts and Relocation
Sherri Brokopp Binder and Charlene Baker

Losing one’s home to a natural disaster could arguably be one of the most traumatizing experiences of a lifetime. Survivors of these disasters, whose homes have been destroyed, may choose to or be forced to relocate. Often times, state sanctioned home buyout programs help facilitate family relocation, particularly when areas are deemed to be at risk for future disasters. While most literature has focused on the decision making processes behind an individual’s decision to accept a buyout or not, Binder and Baker aim to address a gap in the literature by focusing on the lived experience of those enduring the buyout and relocation process. Binder and Baker document community perspectives from the beginning of relocation and reintegration processes for homeowners in New York City after the devastation of Hurricane Sandy. By connecting community-based research and community perspectives to policy implementation, these authors hope to influence the national debate regarding the efficacy of such initiatives. These authors engaged in interviews that focused on experiences early in the buyout and relocation process as well as the recovery process for those that chose to rebuild, with an emphasis on residents’ perceptions surrounding barriers and facilitators of integration into a new community, the impact of buyout-related decisions over time, heterogeneity of responses seen within communities, and community level perceptions of...
the buyout program. The researchers aim to translate collected data into academic presentations and a published article, a report for the participating communities, and a white paper with tangible policy recommendations.

**Evaluation of An Innovative School District-Wide Assessment System in San Francisco**  
*Katrina Roundfield and Kaja LeWinn*

The No Child Left Behind Act enacted by the Bush administration in 2001 has not been implemented without challenges and criticisms. Initial backlash led to the creation of a waiver system through which states could attempt to develop accountability measures better suited to address state-specific educational needs. The California Office to Reform Education (CORE) successfully applied for a waiver in 2013 and is transitioning to a measure called the School Quality Improvement Index (SQII), which examines student, faculty, and school-family outcomes more holistically by taking into account dimensions such as socio-emotional competence. The San Francisco Unified School District participated in the CORE waiver and conducted initial assessments in 2014. The grant supported the school district’s efforts to integrate quarterly outcome data and SQII academic and socio-emotional data in an attempt to facilitate data-driven decisions regarding student outcomes. Specifically, the grant supported consultation and data analytic assistance in the form of developing integrative data systems, building district-wide research capacity, and conducting analyses of interest. The project carries implications concerning the link between positive youth development, academic achievement, and holistic approaches to educational reform. By bridging the gap between research and practice in school-based settings, this study has the potential to inform public policy efforts related to educational and youth development.

**Gender-Responsivity in the Juvenile Justice System**  
*Valerie Anderson and William Davidson*

Due to legislative changes in the 1980s (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 2004), juvenile girls have had increasing numbers of contact with the juvenile justice system (Puzzanchera, Adams, & Sickmund, 2010). As these numbers have increased there has been a need to incorporate gender-responsive practice (Walker, Muno, & Sullivan-Colglazier, 2012) and it is critical that policy reflect this need. There is a glaring gap in the literature, though, in what services are available and what services may be needed to treat girls differently than boys. Instead, there is support in the literature for the need for gender-responsive approaches to criminal justice, but there is little empirical support for approaches already in practice. There has been substantial variability in use of the term “gender-responsive,” too, meaning that services that are provided under this umbrella may be substantially different from one another.

Anderson and Davidson utilized an exploratory qualitative design to examine a juvenile court system in Michigan providing services to 300-350 new youth annually. Both researchers interviewed juvenile court personnel and engaged in case discussions (about current cases) with court officers. Over a nine-month period they also observed staffing meetings of juvenile court to gain a better understanding of how decisions are made in the courts. Observations, discussions, and interviews were examined to identify ways in which gender-responsivity is integrated into services, how these services are defined and understood, and how needs assessments of the girls in the court system matched with empirical literature on these needs. It is the hope that this research will help inform policy decisions and SCRA’s influence over policy related to gender-responsivity in the juvenile courts.

**Influencing Prevention Policy Through Effective Communication with Legislators and Stakeholders**  
*Melissa Strompolis, Megan Branham, Heidi Aakjer, and Whitney Tucker*

In another grant-funded study focused on the needs of youth, Strompolis, Branham, Aakjer, and Tucker used surveys to increase understanding of work being done to increase safety for child passengers. Motor vehicle accidents are a significant contributor to childhood injury and death, and in South Carolina where this study took place, the rates are much greater when compared to other states. This study highlights the importance of prevention efforts in community psychology, and the need to work towards prevention-related policy.

The researchers used survey methods to investigate the capacity of Safe Kids Coalitions to engage in advocacy work and their perceptions
of child motor vehicle safety issues. They also used surveys to understand legislators’ knowledge about motor vehicle safety issues, how often they become involved with these issues, and how advocacy efforts can influence their decisions. In-person meetings were also conducted to follow up with Safe Kids Coalitions members and legislators.

This project was used to inform members of the Children’s Trust as well as the public. A policy forum held in 2014 for advocates and community partners allowed the Children’s Trust to provide education on effective advocacy tactics, how to navigate the legislative agenda, and how to recognize legislators who have worked hard to support these issues. The results of these surveys were also disseminated to help encourage advocacy efforts. The research was also shared through social media, websites, and newsletters to help increase awareness of the issues and an understanding of how to effectively advocate for change.

The Affordable Care Act Policy Education, Mobilization, & Evaluation

Neil Boyd,
Brandn Green,
Eric Martin,
and Carl Milofsky

In the ACA Pilot Program at Bucknell University, issues of knowledge, access, and infrastructure of health exchanges were addressed through the development of a mobilizing program to provide a resource for local residents wanting or needing to enroll in health exchange programming. In the initial rollout of the ACA policy, many people who were un- or under-insured lacked information necessary to find and gain access to insurance. Students initially investigated the best ways to provide educational resources for community residents about health exchange options. Training events also prepared service providers and volunteers in how to assist community members. Several infrastructure needs were also found, and the pilot program seeks to ameliorate these barriers by providing enrollment centers within the community and streamlining resources and information.

Researchers also engaged in evaluative research about the pilot program, investigating why citizens utilized in-person support, reviewing personal histories of people who utilized help from the pilot program, documenting the efforts of the pilot program, and surveying human service agencies about knowledge of ACA and ability to deliver effective programming. This project serves to address the need for policy to help make the ACA a more cohesive and effective program.

Over the last several years, many projects have been funded through the SCRA Public Policy Grant Program. Each of these projects has resulted in small-scale interventions that have then helped to inform SCRA of policy-related issues. We look forward to seeing progress from even more grant-funded programs in the years to come.

References


Summer is here! I hope that you are finding some time to enjoy things you love. In this column, I am happy to welcome to Naz Chief, a new Midwest Student Regional Coordinator. In terms of the regions, I am always impressed by the work happening across the globe. This quarter, I would like to highlight the Canadian column. The partnership between a 2-quarter class and town appears to serve both stakeholders quite well. Enjoy reading about it, as well as all the rest of the regional activities.

Australia/New Zealand and The Pacific
International Regional Liaison
Katie Thomas,
mothercarematters@gmail.com,
Antony Street Specialist Centre
Student Regional Liaison
Rahman Gray,
rahman.gray@live.vu.edu.au,
Victoria University

Australia/New Zealand and The Pacific Regional Update
Written by Katie Thomas

Australasian SCRA Social Justice Symposium
SCRA ANZP is offering a one-day symposium in Perth on Monday, August 22nd for students and others interested in globally appropriate and socially just research approaches. The Symposium is entitled: “Global Knowing and Socially Just Research.” A core component of the day will be the establishment of network, mentoring and support links for members. The Symposium aims to be an avenue for creating links with others who have a passion for socially just research. Please email Dr. Katie Thomas for further details and to be placed on the Symposium email list.

The Symposium will provide exposure to a range of community appropriate research approaches and global views. Researchers who have significant experience in the field will present a concise folio of the most powerful techniques or resources for Community Activism/Research or Social Change they have identified over their career and some explanation of their use. By the end of the day attendees will have garnered a “toolkit” of excellent community research tools and a good understanding of their utility and value.

We look forward to gathering momentum, collaboration and solidarity in this event through greater connection. There are very few professional bodies offering the level of inclusion and resources offered by SCRA and for $A10 a year it is a great investment for students who are seeking career and internship opportunities. Together we can do great things. If you would like some flyers for colleagues and friends please send an email to mothercarematters@gmail.com.

To facilitate inclusion in the Symposium the cost will be minimal: $40 per participant and $20 for SCRA members. This is a great value for all but particularly for SCRA members. It represents a full return of the $A20 investment of a 2 year student membership and much return of the $30 “electronic journal” membership for academics. We hope you will join us.

Canada
International Regional Liaison
Robb Travers,
rtravers@wlu.ca;
Wilfrid Laurier University

News from Canada
Written by Sue Weare

Student-Community Research Partnerships for Social Justice and Wellbeing
The 2015-16 academic year marked the second offering of the Student-Community Research Partnerships for Social Justice and Wellbeing (SCRP) internship. This unique program is offered in partnership with the Centre for Community Research, Learning and Action (CCRLA) and the Laurier Students Public Interest Research Group (LSPiRG), both located at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

Back row: Prem Nichani, Dr. Robb Travers, Carter Winberg, Nicole Mathies; Front row: Jamie-Ann Tomin, Ruth Cameron (AIDS Committee of Cambridge, Kitchener, and Waterloo Area), Alannah Mulholland, Sue Weare (CCRLA Associate Director)

The 8-month internship runs during the fall and winter terms each year, and is designed to give
undergraduate students at Laurier an opportunity to make a difference in their community while gaining hands-on experience and skills in community-based research. This year’s cohort of interns focused on the following topics:

- Barriers and facilitating factors experienced by service providers when referring clients for HIV testing
- Lived experiences and well-being of individuals accessing supportive housing programs
- Perspectives of service providers on effectively including girls and young women in extracurricular programming

In teams of 4-5 students, the interns work closely with a professor and research associate to design and implement a research study that addresses a research need identified by their assigned community partner. Over the summer months, the CCRLA Associate Director brokers relationships with local charitable agencies that have expressed the need for research support, and works with them to define the scope of the project. Often these agencies have had some previous connection with CCRLA’s other programs, or with the centre’s faculty, staff, and students.

Interns are carefully selected based on a written application and interview. The program officially begins in September with an intensive in-class introduction to the principles of community-based participatory research, partnership building, values-based leadership, and effective team collaboration. Students receive ongoing training on applied research design, methods, ethics, and proposal writing, as well as concepts and issues related to their specific projects.

During the first half of the program, interns work with their teammates to develop the project proposal, which is vetted by the community partner, and submit a request ethics review. In the second half of the program, interns collect data, complete their analysis, and report back on findings. The internship culminates in an annual mini-conference where interns present their final reports.

While the students gain valuable knowledge, skill, and experience, agencies benefit through access to high quality research assistance at no cost, receipt of a knowledge product that supports their community work, and overall increased access to the resources of the university. This internship encourages students to move beyond the walls of the university and gain hands-on community-based research experience in a real world setting. It is a rare opportunity for students at the undergraduate level to build their knowledge and capacity for community-engaged scholarship. More information can be found on the CCRLA website at www.wlu.ca/ccrla.

From left to right: Nicole Mathies, Jamie-Ann Tomin, Alannah Mulholland and Prem Nichani

West Region, U.S. Regional Coordinators
3rd Year: Lauren Lichy, LLichy@uw.edu; University of Washington at Bothell
3rd Year: Eylin Palamaro Munsell, epalamar@asu.edu; Arizona State University
2nd Year: Emma Ogley-Oliver, eogleyoliver@marymountcalifornia.edu; Marymount California University
Student Regional Coordinators
Graduate: Angela Nguyen, angelanguyen@ucsc.edu; University of California, Santa Cruz
Undergraduate: Brittney Weber, Brittney.Weber@asu.edu; Arizona State University

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,
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).

Southeast Region, U.S.
Regional Coordinators
Sarah L. Desmarais,
sdesmarais@ncsu.edu
North Carolina State University
Winnie Chan,
wchan1@gsu.edu
Georgia State University
Pam Imm,
pamimm@windstream.net
Community Psychologist,
Independent Practice,
Lexington SC

Student Regional Coordinators
Candalyn Rade,
cbrade@ncsu.edu
North Carolina State University
Jaimelee Mihalski,
jmihalski@uncc.edu
University of North Carolina-
Charlotte
Dominique Thomas,
dthomas60@student.gsu.edu;
Georgia State University
Susie Paterson,
University of Miami
Douglas Archie

SE Regional Update
Written by Candalyn Rade

SE ECO 2016
Announcement
“On the Corner of Peachtree and Action: Empowering Communities for Social Change”
October 21-22, 2016
Atlanta, GA

If a tree falls on the corner of Peachtree Road and Peachtree Avenue (yes, this is a real intersection in Atlanta), does it make a sound? A similar philosophical question was asked over a century ago with the answers varying based on one’s knowledge of the unobserved world. Too often there are community issues that are unobserved, avoided, or disregarded. The purpose of the Southeast ECO 2016 Conference is to acknowledge the research and action taken towards social change. From Georgia State’s Sweet Auburn community to international level engagement, we gather to share the strategies, successes, and future directions of the communities we represent. Join us for the Southeast ECO 2016 Conference in the world city of Atlanta, Georgia, home of some of our nation’s greatest civil rights activists.

• Upcoming Dates:
  • Call for proposals: June 1, 2016
  • Proposal submission deadline: September 1, 2016
  • ECO Registration begins: August 1, 2016

For more information visit the SE ECO website: http://sites.gsu.edu/seeco2016

Student Issues
Edited by Sarah Callahan and Meagan Sweeney

Traveling Around
Two Mediterranean LGBT Communities: A comparison between Barcelona and Naples

Introduction

Acknowledge to my professors of Universitat de Barcelona: Ruben David Fernández and Jose Vicente Pestana, who helped me with this research, also to do this international exchange. Thanks to Agostino Carbone - Ph.D at University of Naples - international member of SCRA- and the people who I’ve interviewed (Chiara Piccoli and Antonello Sanino) and all the bisexual people who had participated in this research.

On June 2015, I defended my thesis (MSc. in Psychosocial Intervention at University of Barcelona, Spain) about bisexuality, it was an interesting topic to research because of their situation of invisibility in the community. After that, to increase the knowledge about Mediterranean bisexual community I decided to visit another city with similar characteristics. After a research and comparisons between different cities, on July 2015 I visit Naples (Southern Italy) with the scope to collect information about the local LGBT community and to take part in the Pride Parade.

We normally use tags to create our social identity, and we use it referring to sexuality giving it a high priority (Martin Alegre, 2011).

Bisexual [The Definition of bisexuality that I prefer is by Eisner (2013):”I define myself bisexual
because I think I have the potential to feel attracted romantic or sexually by people from more than one sex, not necessarily at the same moment, in the same way and not necessarily with the same intensity.”

Alegre (2011) says, the normative we compared LGBT situation in with the same intensity.” groups LGBT, bisexual groups are interviewed 16 different bisexual feelings, has bisexual behaviour and in the midst of homosexuality and identity that tries to find its place in both groups more prevalent in society, the existence of biphobia.

So Bisexuality is a sexual identity that tries to find its place in the midst of homosexuality and heterosexuality. Bisexual people have real problems to find their place in society (even in LGTB communities) and also to define themselves as bisexual. Jones (2010) defines the Bi identity as a process, and a difficult identification, because not all the people who has bisexual feelings, has bisexual behaviour and a little part of that people, identifies themselves as Bisexual.

There is a real need to research about bisexuality, to include it as a sexual category and make it as a possibility to be or an accepted sexual orientation in our society.

Our aim is to analyze the social situation of bisexual people in Barcelona and compare this situation in Naples. To extend the research we compared LGTB situation in each city, the social conception about this group. We analyze the possible stakeholders to study the situation from bisexual people and collectives in Barcelona and Napoli.

I interviewed 16 different bisexual people and members of LGTB associations (12 in Barcelona and 4 in Napoli).

**Researching in Barcelona**

Contextualizing to Spain, and specifically in Barcelona, we made a research of bisexual collective from Department of Social Psychology of University of Barcelona. There is a lot of LGBT associations, but no one about bisexuality. Our research started looking for bisexual people linked to these associations to interview them and study their real situation and conditions.

One of the most difficult part was to find the bisexual collective, because there is not an association or group of bisexual people. First of all, we mapped all the LGTB associations in Barcelona; Sinver (University association) and Enrutat, are the most important about bisexuality so we contact them and ask for bisexual people. Social networks were the way to make an open call to all these bisexual people who wanted to collaborate with our research; we received 15 from bisexual people and activists from this sector. Finally we interviewed and analyzed qualitatively 12 people (activists and bisexuals)

Moreover, we based our qualitative research on participatory observation of a LGTB group (Sinver) to find out which is the role of bisexuality in these meetings. We also assist in the Pride day (28th June 2015) to analyze the representation of bisexuality, and the implication and participation of bisexual people in this kind of celebration

**Trip and research in Naples**

Our interest in this city was their similar situation with Barcelona; we want to compare specifically the bisexual collective because of their similitudes. We want to ascertain the situation of bisexual collective and their needs.

I interviewed the presidents of the biggest associations [Antonello Sannino and Chiara Piccoli] of Naples Arcigay (http://www.arcigaynapoli.org) and Arcilesbica (http://www.arcilesbica.it/napoli/) and 2 homosexuals who were on the Pride parade.

All interviews were adapted to the topics of LGBT and more extended topics than only bisexuality because of their inexistence. I analyze all the interviews with the Bisexual topics from bibliography, and adding some topics related to LGT. Pride Day were on 11th July, where I analyze the presence and the attitude of bisexual people in the parade, and also LGT movement; which is their fight, how many people assists to the parade and how the people from street react in front of the parade.

Me with Simona Marino, Councillor for Equal Opportunities of the town of Naples and Prof. of feminist philosophy

**Results and Comparison**

The situation of LGTB groups in Barcelona is very favorable, there are many associations (25 LGTB associations and 1 non-monosexual) and they are very powerful in terms of activism and local interventions. The law in each country influences a lot in their society; in Barcelona the marriage of homosexual people
is allowed and we have a recent law against LGTB-phobia; that encourages LGTB associations to act and react to exclusion situations. However the situation of bisexual people in Barcelona is unfavorable; all interviewees respond to the need of a bisexual group, because they don't feel represented in the rest of associations. But, many of the people attend these associations to feel included somewhere and to participate actively to improve bisexual situation. Since the project carried out, they created a non-monosexual group called “Enrenou”, so that’s an indicator of their situation even in LGTB groups where the B has to be included.

The Pride in Barcelona takes place since 2009, but previously some associations already performed demonstrations on the streets of Barcelona that day. A total of 250,000 assistants and 20 associations represented, but only one bisexual. Their topic was “Stop Bullying LGTBI” including the “I” of Intersexual.

Relating to Napoli, an Italian city, there are more social and religious pressure that influences a lot the social perception about LGTB. Moreover, the homosexual marriage is not legal yet, so that is a point that influences a lot their fight.

There are 11 important LGTB associations; Arcigay is the national association in Napoli (from 1984) born as a Gay and Lesbian association and including T when transgender people reclaim their role in these associations. The B was included with the T, not under a claim of bisexual people.

Despite this, bisexual collective is also invisible; they don’t have any representation in LGTB associations. Throw the different interviews we found this invisible situation, because of the prejudices to this collective from LGT people; bisexual people are seen as a homosexual without coming out. In Arcigay there is only one girl who recognizes herself as a bisexual. Bisexual people have difficulties to identify themselves as bisexual, in one hand for these prejudices and on the other hand because they won't be believed. We also recognized this kind invisibility; some of the bisexual people define themselves as homosexual to be in a comfortable situation. We could find a difference between men a women in Napoli that we didn’t recognize in Barcelona; coming out homosexual being men is more difficult than being women, because in Napoli the figure of the mother in the families are very important, and it’s difficult to imagine a family without the female role. As difficult as being bisexual; men are seen directly as homosexual in the closet and women are seen as curious.

The Napoli Pride was the first one was in 1994 (National Pride) in Rome, and in Napoli was on 1996. But since 2010 Napoli has his own Pride (Carbone, 2010). 20,000 people assisted and all the associations, but no one openly identified as a bisexual (they weren’t represented in the parade). Also we find the possibility to defend being Lesbian, Gay or Trans, but not to be bisexual (you could take posters with these topics (LGT)), so I felt a kind of invisibility or non-representativenes of bisexual collective. Behind the claim of “Amare è un diritto umano” (Love is a human right) they represented and defended their rights, their needs and what they want. An unexpected number of people went from the street and joined us on the pride.

The presence of huge stereotypes and ideology against LGTB in Napoli promotes that situation. Instead of it, Napoli has grown up a lot with their associations, a lot of actions and activist to fight against LGTB-phobia, the main problem are the politic roles, these that in Barcelona are helping this cases of LGTB. This is one of the most important points that affects the evolution of LGTB groups and their acceptation in Napoli; the prejudices.

Arcigay is changing the situation of LGTB in Napoli, they are reclaiming their rights and they fight for them throw Pride day, interventions in schools, with police,... the most difference between Barcelona and Napoli is the topic they are fighting for; from Napoli, they start to fight for their rights (marriage, being parents...) and in Barcelona their fight is against LGTB-phobia or bullying LGTB, a step forward the essential rights. Because the situation of this collective is different, in Barcelona they have achieved the essential rights, but not in Napoli.

In summary, bisexual collective reminds invisible in Napoli and starts to come out in Barcelona, for the same reason of their fight; bisexuality cannot be seen as a sexual orientation if homosexuality don’t have its right yet, it is not accepted for the majority, so bisexuality (out of this dichotomy)
have more difficulties to come out. Through this research we can define the bisexual situation and LGBTB situation in each city, proving the need of a bisexual collective to empower themselves and acting against biphobia and to begin to defend bisexuality as a sexual orientation, not a phase.

References

Rural Interest Group
Edited by Susana Helm, Co-Editors Cheryl Ramos and Suzanne Phillips

The Rural IG column highlights rural resources as well as the work of community psychologist, 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
Rural and Remote Health is an international, electronic journal of rural and remote health education, practice and policy, and is funded by Australian University Departments of Rural Health (ARHEN members) and Australian Rural Clinical Schools (FRAME members), the Rural Health Education Foundation, and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM); it is administered by James Cook University, Australia. The Journal aims to provide an easily accessible, peer-reviewed, international evidence-base to inform improvement in rural health service delivery and health status in rural communities. http://www.rrh.org.au/home/defaultnew.asp

Journal of Rural Studies.
According to the website, JRS “publishes cutting-edge research that advances understanding and analysis of contemporary rural societies, economies, cultures and lifestyles; the definition and representation of rurality; the formulation, implementation and contestation of rural policy; and human interactions with the rural environment. JRS has been published since 1985, and lists its current impact factor as 2.444 (http://www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-rural-studies/, retrieved 4/5/16).

Brief Report:
In reviewing the 2015 roster of Rural IG members, we realized that 30% of the active Rural IG members with known institutional locations beyond the US are located in Australia. Our roster shows that of the 162 active members of the Rural IG, seven members are located at institutions in the Australia: Curtin University, University of Southern Queensland, Charles Sturt University. It should be noted that of the active members, our records include institutional locations for just under two-thirds of the total (96 people, or 59%). There may be other Australia-based members, so please feel free to send your location info so we can update our records. Based on this large representation, we invited submissions from Australia, and are pleased to present a brief report by Melissa Cianfrini, currently a doctoral candidate at the Graduate School of Business, Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia.

Exploring barriers to the skill shortage: A “lessons learned” approach to the mining boom in an Australian regional community.
Written by Melissa Cianfrini, PhD Candidate

The Graduate School of Business at Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia (WA) participated in the Minerals Down Under (MDU) Flagship project headed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). From 2009 to 2012, five universities across Australia collaborated on research focusing on the sustainability of the mining industry. The project was divided into three clusters, with the third cluster investigating the impacts of mining on regional communities in the states of Queensland and Western Australia. It is this cluster which my doctoral research explored the experiences of a coastal community in the Mid West region of Western Australia.

At present over two-thirds of the Australian population live in major cities along the coast (Baxter, Hayes, & Gray, 2011). However for communities located in the hinterlands, the “tyranny of distance” of geographical remoteness implies limited access to services, including
health and social infrastructure. This disadvantage has negative consequences, such as problems with attraction and retention of workers, boredom, and subsequent misuse of drugs and alcohol (Roxburgh, Miller, & Dunn, 2013). In response, government approach to regional development adopts neoliberal policies, which steer communities towards self-reliance and autonomy, while mediating collaborations with stakeholders (Everingham, Cheshire & Lawrence, 2006). These stakeholders include international mining companies, with a majority of mine sites located in regional and remote areas of the country.

Iron ore is delivered from the mine sites to this port for shipment

The main street in the town center

Mining is an important aspect in Australia’s history, however it was not until the last decade that the industry had a significant impact on Australian communities. This was due to the country being the world’s largest economic developed resources of iron ore (Britt et al., 2015), along with Chinese demand for the mineral to fuel economic growth (Garnaut, 2012; Wilson, 2012). This increase in demand for iron ore projected an additional 488,500 positions to be filled in WA between 2010 and 2020 (Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA, 2010). This forecast saw mining companies offering exorbitant wages to attract employees to mine sites, often situated in remote locations in the State’s north west (Hepworth, Chambers & Lee, 2010). The cost of living and housing became inflated, and with some trades earning up to AUS$250,000 per annum, a two-speed economy emerged (Stack, 2011). The effects of the mining boom led to a skill shortage crisis across the country (Cornell & Searle, 2011).

The crisis was considered to be an economic issue in which all tiers of government utilized neoliberal economic policies to alleviate the shortage; however the MDU provided the opportunity to conceptualize the phenomenon from the ecological perspective of community psychology. The study was designed to explore the experiences of a WA regional community, capturing the perspectives of employers, migrant workers, and stakeholders affected by the mining boom. It used the futures-based ecological framework of Causal Layered Analysis (CLA), which acknowledges the complexities inherent in the phenomenon, and with a flexibility to embrace multiple epistemologies, seeks to identify and uproot unchallenged assumptions adopted by the hegemonic society to create an awareness of alternative futures. There are four levels which guide the analysis; including litany (what we say), social causes (what we do), worldview discourse (how we think), and myths and metaphors (who we are) (Barber, 2010, as cited by Bishop, Dzidic, & Breen, 2013).

By applying a community psychology approach with CLA, the data revealed the skill shortage crisis was not the sole making of the mining boom as previously believed. Rather, the crisis was compounded by social issues embedded in the psyche of the community. While the mining boom is now over, the study presented here provides a “lessons learned” synopsis.

A major theme to emerge was drug and alcohol abuse, which highlighted as a significant issue for employers in the community. There were concerns for the accessibility to drugs and alcohol, where some employers reported staff terminated their employment once drug testing was introduced into the workplace, while others highlighted that drugs were the biggest issue with staff retention. The pervasiveness of alcohol permeated throughout all levels of analysis, with a participant from a drug and alcohol outreach service identified a reluctance to stop drinking, as alcohol is entrenched in the social archetype of the shearer and miner.

Alcohol has been an aspect of the Australian identity since the early days of colonization, as currency was in short supply, rum was adopted as payment for convict labor, while spirits were used to barter (Moodie, 2013). It was encapsulated in late nineteenth century poetry and folk songs, with shearing also the subject of Australian folk songs due to its economic contribution to the colonies. One such folk song, the bare bellied-ewe, describes life in the shearing shed. It ends with the shearer in the pub for a drinking
session, with “work and bust” binge drinking after a period of hard work from early colonial times continuing into the present (Moodie, 2013). Alcohol also featured in gold rushes during the 1850s, where an increase in population, high costs of licensing fees to mine, scarcity of food, racial campaigns to remove Chinese miners from the goldfields due to competition and decrease in gold discovery, were factors which contributed to alcohol fueled riots in the goldfields (Wells, 2015).

Issues relevant to the Aboriginal community, according to a State Government department, included illiteracy and cultural issues around work. For example, employed Aboriginal People experienced lateral bullying and were called “whitey”, or “white fella” by their peers, with the expectation to divide their pay among the family. The presence of migrant workers further created challenges for Aboriginal workers, where it was reported by this department that British migrant workers did not realize their behavior was culturally inappropriate towards Aboriginal People in the workplace, causing more to fall out of work and thus perpetuate the skill shortage. Other participants, such as employment agencies, described dealing with aggression from clients (Aboriginal People and non-Aboriginal people) accessing their services, which they believed was due to the threat of losing government welfare support. Employment agencies described themselves as providing support beyond their call, and perceived themselves as unqualified social workers.

In conclusion, while the skill shortage was conceptualized as an economic problem, the evidence suggested social issues compounded the crisis in this community. This is significant as these issues were not addressed by government or community within the context of the mining boom, despite emerging as themes which perpetuated the shortage of labor. Taking a “lessons learned” approach, rather than applying economic solutions to social problems, the study calls for communities to reflect critically on the underpinning themes exposed during the mining boom. Some suggestions include understanding how cultural myths of the past operate in the present, and creating a supportive environment to foster self-efficacy. Sustainable development among Aboriginal People requires recognition of cultural diversity and planning at local grassroots and regional levels (Altman, 2007). Additionally, the formation of genuine partnerships is required to build on the strengths of community by listening to Aboriginal Peoples’ aspirations and mutual respect through equal partnership with non-Aboriginal people (Altman, 2007; Bandias, Fuller, & Holmes, 2012). By understanding the issues to emerge from the approach towards the mining boom and skill shortages, communities can use the experience to their advantage to leverage their own empowerment in creating their own preferred future.

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References


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**Self Help Interest Group**

*Edited by Greg Townley and Alicia Lucksted*

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**Crowdsourcing Mutual-Help Research Funding**

*Written by Christopher R. Beasley, Washington College (cbeasley2@washcoll.edu), Crystal N. Steltenpohl, DePaul University, and Emily Stecker, Washington College*

Although federal support for health research has begun recovering since Great Recession reductions, financing has continued to decline when these contributions are adjusted for inflation (FASEB, 2016). Further, funding is often directed toward research aims of federal administrators and organizations with lobbying resources rather than those of communities. Crafting research toward these goals may limit intellectual flexibility and creativity.

One potential solution for overcoming these barriers is crowdsourced fundraising, or crowdfunding, for research. Crowdfunding is “a collective effort by people who network and pool their money together, usually via the internet, in order to invest in and support efforts initiated by other people or organizations” (Ordanini, Miceli, Pizzetti, & Parasuraman, 2011, pg. 444). This paper discusses crowdfunding, previous applications of it, potential for mutual-help research, suggestions for such fundraising, and a mutual-help research crowdfunding initiative.

Crowdfunding has been used in for various social and research needs. For example, an organization raised over $3,000 to renovate a food pantry serving communities in the poorest congressional district in the United States (Muslim Women’s Institute for Research and Development, 2014). Crowdfunding has been used for mutual-help purposes as well. The Oxford House (OH) system of mutual-help addiction recovery homes, which has raised over $32,000 of $100,000 needed to host their 2016 annual convention, and community psychologists have used crowdfunding toward opening the first Oxford House in Bulgaria. This funding was obtained after just one week of solicitation. Lastly, researchers are also beginning to use crowdfunding. One successful Kickstarter campaign focused on urban youth addressing societal issues using scientific inquiry raised $10,242 of its $10,000 goal (H2O Productions, 2014). Some are students funding dissertations, participation in research programs, or conference presentations (Desalu, 2014; Rose, 2015). Lastly, Map Evansville, an LGBTQ asset mapping project, raised $5,323 of its $4,349 goal (McKibban, 2015) toward a software package for its interactive database and map, a mobile app, window decals for business partners, and website maintenance.

There is need and potential for crowdfunding to be applied specifically to mutual-help research.
These social support networks involve people experiencing a challenge in life helping other people with similar challenges. While some groups are small and/or newly formed networks, others, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and OH, are well-established. Although research has been conducted on these organizations, research goals are typically decided by academics and funding organizations. While this may not be a significant challenge for other types of organizations that lobby for their interests, mutual-help groups often have a mission hyper-focused on individuals’ challenges, not on promoting a research agenda. They also gravitate toward self-sustaining initiatives rather than reliance on government and other organizations. However, these groups do have assets that can facilitate self-sustaining mutual-help research to further their agenda. They often identify strongly with the superordinate goal of the challenge they are experiencing. This salient identity and established social networks have the potential to form a foundational crowd for crowdfunding. Such a campaign could be centered on mutual-help members, alumni, friends and family of members and alumni, and those in the general public who support the organization’s mission.

As with any research, the first step in mutual-help crowdfunding is to identify the study’s goals, which may require objectives closely aligned with the intended crowdfunding audience, so that they are more likely to financially support the campaign. Community-based participatory research (CBPR) models closely align with this goal and can be used as a foundation. For example, an upcoming crowdfunded study uses CBPR for OH research. Its initial goals are to obtain an accurate depiction of OH residents and answer basic research questions. The study has formed a community advisory board, which will provide guidance on fundraising, data collection, data analysis, and communication of results.

After these initial steps, crowdfunding managers should develop key assets to promote crowdfunding efforts. A strong internet presence is essential. Effective websites provide information on the project and/or organization, its history, mission and values, goals, previous media coverage and/or publications, previous successes, and contact information. Ideally, it also describes the key research team and community members involved in the project. Social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter allow organizations to interact directly with followers, share relevant articles, answer questions, and post photos of related activities. Both the website and social media presence should be established before creating and promoting the campaign.

Once a presence is established, crowdfunding managers will need to choose a platform that fits with the CBPR team’s goals. Popular platforms include Community Funded, FundAnything, Fundly, GoFundMe, IndieGoGo, Kickstarter, Rally, RocketHub, and YouCaring. Some platforms, like Kickstarter, strongly encourage or require some kind of product; others only focus on nonprofits; others still will host any kind of project. Additionally, platforms generally operate on two different funding mechanisms: “keep it all,” where the project receives all donations come its way, and “all or nothing,” where if the goal is not met by a certain date, the campaign receives nothing. Others offer either option. Although an “all or nothing” model is useful when raising small amounts of money with conservative goals, “keep it all” models are better suited for larger campaigns with uncertainty about reaching their goal. Given the novelty of using crowdfunding for research, we recommend “keep it all” models for most projects. Some colleges and universities also have their own internal donation platforms and may prefer the use of their own systems for tracking and accounting purposes. From an institutional standpoint, this is one of several challenges researcher may encounter with this new funding mechanism. For our Oxford House research, we are currently working to implement accounting and accountability processes that were not in place before this work began.

After determining a crowdfunding platform, it is important to gather a number of key elements. Crowdfunding websites offer site-specific advice, but regardless of platform, potential supporters will want to know what the project is, its goals and plans, project leaders’ experience, a timeline, and a budget. Most importantly, you are telling a story. This means two things: everything should flow coherently, from goals to anticipated results; and, unlike many academic publications, the campaign should speak to non-academic audiences. Simple, effective language is critical. Do not assume everyone knows the literature or the problem’s importance, but do not flood the reader with too much information. It may be helpful to think of your campaign like a cross between prose and an executive report: purposely short, but lively. Images
and videos about the research team, organization, and goals can be particularly helpful.

After creating the campaign’s page but before going public, it is useful to utilize personal and professional relationships to solicit a few donations, so potential supporters are not viewing an “empty pot,” so to speak. This is similar to the practice of placing money in a restaurant’s tip jar to encourage tips. Utilize these relationships to promote the campaign as well. For example, the planned OH crowdsource campaign will initially solicit funding from the research team and advisory board members’ close social network before going public. After initial funding, campaigns should seek publicity through traditional media and social media. They can send a press release to various university, local, and national news outlets. If you have access to resources in media relations, utilize them to produce a press release. Campaigns will also rely on social networks to promote the campaign. For example, the planned OH crowdfunding campaign will utilize an extensive Oxford House Facebook presence to reach out to members, alumni, family and friends of members and alumni, and supporters of the organization. The campaign will also reach out to the larger AA online network, including social media and an extensive network of forums and websites.

Lastly, we suggest communicating with backers during and after the campaign. For example, we recommend thanking backers for their support and letting them know fundraising results. We also recommend regularly sending project updates, where appropriate. This includes information on press coverage, presentations, publications, successes, barriers, and future directions. Your backers have literally invested into your project and should be included in any major developments. In a sense, they are now a part of your project.

While federal funding has been declining and may not promote the agenda of mutual-help organizations, crowdfunding is an opportunity for research focused on mutual-help organizations’ needs while adhering to their values. Such methods have been used extensively and have potential for meeting research needs. For successful campaigns, we recommend using a CBPR model with community advisory boards to facilitate collaborative research, access to social networks, initial funding. We also recommend a strong internet presence and development of supporting materials such as images and videos to communicate essential information with a community audience. We further recommend publicizing the campaign through traditional as well as social media outlets. Lastly, we recommend ongoing communication with funders throughout the study’s life. The Oxford House crowdfunding study discussed is an effort to apply this emerging research finance model to collaborative mutual-help research.

References


Transformative Change in Community Mental Health Interest Group
Edited by Geoffrey Nelson

Achieving Recovery through Housing and Employment: Moving Towards a Capabilities-Informed Community Mental Health System
Written by Eric Macnaughton, Wilfrid Laurier University

Introduction
There’s been a lot of interest within the past several years in applying Amartya Sen’s (1999) capabilities framework to community mental health, because of its parallels and potential synergies with the recovery movement (Davidson, Ridgway, Wieland, & O’Connell, 2009; Hopper, 2007; Macleod, 2014). This article traces the development of that interest, looks at an arguably “capabilities-informed” approach to housing and support (Housing First), and then proposes that a next step forward to creating a capabilities-informed system would be to support the employment prospects of people with serious mental illness, including those who have been homeless.

The Capabilities Approach to International Development
Sen (1999) describes the capabilities approach in relation to its value in promoting the welfare of citizens in developing countries. Rather than measuring well-being materially, Sen emphasizes how a capabilities-informed approach sees material resources (e.g., income, healthcare, education) in terms of their potential conversion into socially valued “being and doings”, known within his framework as “functionings.” Thus, resources become meaningful to the extent that they support people to live meaningful lives. Equally important, Sen argues, is to address the barriers that stop people from translating those resources into actual capabilities, things like stigma, discrimination, or exclusion from the process of determining how resources are allocated.

The capabilities approach then is as much about the meaning of resources for improving lives as it is about the resources themselves; and it is as much about the process of translating opportunity into outcome as it is about the outcomes in and of themselves.

The Capabilities Approach to Community Mental Health and Recovery
Writing in the context of community mental health, Hopper and others note the similarity of the concept with the notion of recovery (Davidson et al., 2009; Hopper, 2007), and articulate the implications that the capabilities approach holds for operationalizing recovery. As an individual level process, recovery has been described by Davidson and Strauss (1992) as a process of reclaiming an active self beyond the constraints of illness. As an outcome, recovery means having a “a friend, a home, a job and a life,” as survivors of the mental health system so often remind us.

Expressing recovery in the language of capabilities, Hopper (2007) argues that an essential question is whether the resources provided by the mental health system (including the interventions offered by practitioners) are understood by people with mental illness as enabling the valued “beings and doings” that Sen talks about. In plain language, the implication is that people with mental illness will engage with and benefit from interventions that they understand to help them move towards the kinds of lives they wish to live. Most fundamentally, then, recovery is about agency and choice: about providing support in a way that enables people with mental illness to choose what those resources look like, so they have the opportunity to live the kind of lives any of us would wish to live.

Capabilities and Housing First
Sam Tsemberis describe the origins of the Housing First model in the context of his previous work as a hospital psychologist, developing a program for hard to engage street-involved people with mental illness. When asked what they wanted, the majority of them wanted “housing first” (Tsemberis, Guleur, & Nakae, 2004). Interviews with Housing First participants conducted in the Canadian multi-site At Home/Cher Soi study affirm this, and help explain this desire, documenting how, for participants, housing represented a chance to “get my life back”. This often meant reclaiming significant relationships, or valued roles as parent, worker or artist (Polvere, Macnaughton, & Piat, 2013).

As Padgett (2007) suggests, by leading with housing we foreground “ontological security” and provide the safe space for people to reclaim selves. In contrast, by foregrounding treatment (i.e. the “treatment first” approach), we contribute to stigma and loss of self (Padgett, 2007). In Sen’s terms, Housing First works as an intervention because it is understood by participants as helping them live the kinds of lives to which they aspired.

Capabilities: A Wider View
As Sen suggests, however, even when offering valued resources, there are still significant barriers hindering people from translating these into meaningful changes in their lives. As At Home/Cher Soi
and other research (Yanos, Barrow, & Tsemberis, 2004) shows people coming off the street and out of survival model get to the point where they wonder “what’s next?” One particular gap is in the area of employment, a domain where evidence-based interventions exist but are not widely implemented. In the homelessness context, providing supported employment can help participants move beyond the “what’s next?” question, and translate the resources such as housing and support into more meaningful lives in the wider community. In the broader context of the wider mental health system, Dunn, Wewiorski, and Rogers (2008) document in the words of consumers, the significance of employment to the recovery process. Despite this significance, evidence-based supported employment is rarely implemented, with one study suggesting that less than 5% of people with serious mental illness have access (Drake, Bond, & Essock, 2009).

**Conclusion: Moving Towards a Capabilities-Based Mental Health System**

The question arises, then, of how to move in this direction whereby our systems and interventions promote recovery in the wider sense? That is, how would we move closer to the vision Hopper articulates, guided by the capabilities framework as suggested by Sen. In too many communities, the “what’s next?” gap exists for people with serious mental illness. At the same time, we have an evidence-based intervention (IPS Supported Employment) that works, but which has not been widely implemented. As community psychologists in community mental health who value recovery, and who have a font of evidence to draw upon, let’s think more about what we can do to help.

**References**


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