There are defining events in the life of every community. Occasionally such events come and go with little notice. More often, they are powerful because they are widely discussed and acknowledged to be important. Such events shape how people think about, understand, and narrate what their community stands for, and what it means to be a member of that community. For community psychologists these occasions provide unusually rich opportunities to learn about and engage in the community.

My community experienced such a defining event recently—a terribly tragic event—the likes of which occur all too commonly in communities throughout the country. One of our children, an unarmed fifteen-year old African American boy, Kiwane, was shot and killed by a local police officer responding to a reported residential break-in. Occurring as it did in the context of a long history of strained relations between the local African American community and the police, this event has taken on meaning far beyond the specific incident. And, of course, like many cases involving white police and African American males, the case is narrated quite differently from different points of view.

Today, three and a half months after the incident, a month and a half the state’s attorney determined the fatal shooting to be accidental and exonerated the police of any criminal wrongdoing, critical facts remain unknown. Only two police officers and the two boys involved were direct witnesses to the incident. Kiwane is dead. A second suspect involved in the incident, Kiwane’s friend Jeyshaun, is charged with aggravated resisting arrest and is not talking, heeding the advice of his defense attorney. Thus, the community must rely on the police reports. Fueled by distrust of the police and city officials to whom the police must answer, conjecture, accusation and polarization fill the void left by the absence of solid information.

Some facts are undisputed and clear. The neighbor who called police to report the suspected break-in said he saw African American males “prowling around my neighbor’s house … and I know those guys don’t live there and I seen them trying to find a way to get inside the house, pushing on windows, walking around to the back of the house, going around to opposite sides of the house, trying to find a way to get inside … I knew they were trying to break into the house, I mean I there wasn’t nobody there, so I kind of figured they were trying to break into the house, that’s what made me give you people a call.” It turns out that the site of the reported break-in was the home of Kiwane’s good friend, Isaiah. Kiwane had slept in the house almost every weekend in the year leading to that fateful day, the year following the death of his mother to pancreatic cancer. On the day of the shooting, Kiwane had eaten breakfast in the house, having slept there the previous night, and according Isaiah, every night prior for about three or four weeks. On the rainy afternoon of the shooting, Kiwane had returned to the house afterschool with another friend, only to find it locked. It does not appear that Kiwane and Jeyshaun were aiming to burglarize the house, after all. The burglary charges have been dropped against Jeyshaun. Rather it appears the boys were simply seeking shelter from the rain.

By the reports of the first two officers on the scene, when confronted by the officers in the back yard of the home, the boys did not throw punches but resisted the officers’ commands. The degree of resistance is ambiguous from the record. The officers approached the scene with weapons drawn. When the boys did not comply with commands to get down on the ground (ground that was drenched by two days of steady rain), each officer
took hold of one of the boys to force him down. Kiwane reportedly twisted away from the officer holding him. The officer involved “could not recall” details surrounding the discharge of the gun. He reported: “We yell for them to get down, they’re not. The one I’m dealing with, uh, hands are going in and out of pockets… I remember trying to put my hand on his shoulder and pulling him down. Get down on the ground. He moves, twists. Something happens where I no longer have a hold of him….we re-engage…. I remember trying to get him down on the ground….and he gun goes off….He falls down….on his back right there at the back door. I can see that he’s starting to bleed. I lift up his shirt. I see where the wound is and I immediately put my hand on it, kept pressure on.” “Obviously there is a lot going on because I didn’t actually know if they actually made entry [to the house] or if there was anybody else in the house so I’m trying to keep attention on the house in case there is…somebody else in there and again the thought process that was running through my mind when…he [the first officer on the scene] said “Stop I will shoot you” what did he see? All of the sudden my awareness is heightened…because I don’t know if he see somebody else inside or if one of them is armed with a gun.” The officers were called to a very difficult and potentially dangerous situation. Fear for their own safety appears to have contributed to the tragic outcome. 

Reactions to both the loss of Kiwane’s life and the findings of the state’s attorney have been very intense. Beyond the deep grief felt by loved ones and the broader community, there has been reasonable outrage. For many, the tragedy epitomizes the consequences of years of mistreatment of African Americans by police and the failure of officials to address past complaints about police community relations. These citizens anxiously anticipated this tragedy—believing it was all but inevitable. There is much to be said about why Kiwane and Jeyshaun did not submit to inevitable. There is much to be said about this tragedy—believing it was all but inevitable. There is much to be said about why Kiwane and Jeyshaun did not submit to police community either has their own direct experience or knows someone who has experienced harassment from the police or who has been treated by them with suspicion and distrust. Without significant change, they argue, this tragedy will almost surely repeat itself. Not surprisingly, many African American parents are griped with fear that their child might be the next victim. Calls have been made for the firing of the officer involved, of the police chief, and of the city manager who has kept the chief in leadership. Calls have been renewed for the creation of a citizen review board to examine future complaints against the police.

How community residents and leaders react to a crisis like this one reveals much about the social structure of the community, shedding light on the informal networks and structure of relations in a community. Sometimes they foment new connections at the same time they strain or break others. They can galvanize weak ties into strong alliances, moving people to challenge situations that they might otherwise grudgingly accept. For concerned citizens of all stripes community crises present moments of opportunity for involvement.

For community psychologists (and for me particularly as a community psychologist who is also serving as the chair of the city’s human relations commission) such crises present new avenues for collaborative community problem solving and policy involvement. Like many in my community I have been consumed with the events surrounding Kiwane’s death. Like all involved in community work, particularly those committed to a collaborative approach, community psychologists do not always get to pick and choose the timing and nature of their involvements. Moments of opportunity must be recognized and not squandered. Old plans must sometimes be put on hold and new ones developed.

While old fractures are unlikely to heal completely, I am happy to say that our community is actively struggling to make sure that Kiwane did not die in vain. With broad participation from many segments of the community, we are searching out and seizing opportunities to use data to improve practice and policy. We will gather and analyze new local data (e.g., on use of force, tasers, police complaint processes, racial disparities, hiring and training of officers, public education), and we will work to place this event and our local data in a broader empirical context. We are working toward building trust through greater transparency in police policy and practice, more frank and open communication about police-community relations and issues, and by moving beyond discussion to meaningful action. At times like these I am reminded why I am proud to be a community psychologist.
Welcome to our first 2010 issue, our second issue overall. Thanks to everyone for their kind and supportive comments regarding the first issue. Also, David Jackson (Associate Editor) and I truly appreciate your assistance with following the guidelines and deadlines. This is all part of our effort to provide as effective and timely a document as possible. To that end, we are also involved with the discussions regarding SCRA’s electronic update to determine the role of the TCP in that forum.

Speaking of roles, the current issue features a number of articles that continue the quest to more clearly define who we are as community psychologists. The “Community Practitioner” column takes this challenge head on by identifying ways that community psychologists can apply their skills, particularly outside of academia. This includes formalizing the Values Proposition that was discussed in prior TCP issues and providing concrete information on employment opportunities in various sectors. Having worked as a community psychologist for a variety of state government agencies my entire career, I can personally attest that there are many employers who appreciate our diverse skill set and our ability to work with most anyone and in practically any setting. If you have similar “real-life” examples, please share them with the Community Practice Group.

One group in particular that would likely appreciate input on job opportunities are those currently in training, the future community psychologists. Those pursuing their graduate studies in community psychology have been a very active, innovative, and motivated group. A special thanks to Fernando Estrada and Lindsay Zimmerman for their great work on the “Community Student” column.

Another way that we can get the word out about community psychology is through the presentation of our published work. This serves as a reminder that we are still searching for a permanent Book Column Editor. This is an extremely critical column because it highlights the latest in the field of community psychology, which may become must-read classics. In the meantime, we will continue to feature guest editors until we are able to fill this essential role. Please contact me at mariachu@hawaii.edu if you are interested.

Happy reading!

Maria B. J. Chun
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa
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Liesette Brunson,
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Vacant
Latin America
Vacant
Interest Groups
AGING
The Aging interest group focuses on the productive role of aging in the community and the prevention of mental health problems in the elderly.
Chair: Margaret M. Hastings,
(847) 256-4844,
margaretmhas@earthlink.net
Children, Youth & Families
The Children, Youth and Families interest group facilitates the interests of child and adolescent development in high risk contexts, especially the effect of urban poverty and community structures on child and family development.
Chair: Richard N. Roberts,
(435) 797-3346
Community Action
The Community Action interest group explores the roles and contributions of people working in applied community psychology settings.
Chair: Bradley Olson,
(773) 325-4771
Community Health
The Community Health interest group focuses on health promotion, disease prevention, and health care service delivery issues as they relate to the community.
Co-chairs: David Lounsberry,
(415) 338-1440,
dlounsbe@aecom.yu.edu
Shannon Gwin Mitchell,
(202) 719-7812,
sqwinnmitch@gmail.com
Disabilities
The Disabilities interest group promotes understanding of the depth and diversity of disabilities issues in the community that are ready for research and action, and influences community psychologists’ involvement in policy and practices that enhance self-determination, personal choice, and full inclusion in the community for people with disabilities.
Chair: Tina Taylor-Ritzler,
(312) 413-4149, tritzler@uic.edu
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,
& Transgender (LGBT)
The LGBT interest group increases awareness of the need for community research and action related to issues that impact LGBT people, and serves as a mechanism for communication, collaboration, and support among community psychologists who are either interested in research/service/policy related to LGBT people and communities, and/or who identify as LGBT.
Co-chairs: Richard Jenkins,
jenkinsr@nida.nih.gov
Maria Valente, valent60@msu.edu
Organization Studies
The Organization Studies interest group is a community of scholars who are interested in community psychology themes (e.g., empowerment, ecological analysis, prevention, sense of community) in organizational contexts, and in importing organization studies concepts, methods, models, and theories into community psychology.
Chair: Neil Boyd,
(714) 512-3870,
Boyd@lycoming.edu
Prevention & Promotion
The Prevention and Promotion interest group seeks to enhance development of prevention and promotion research, foster active dialogue about critical conceptual and methodological action and implementation issues, and promote rapid dissemination and discussion of new developments and findings in the field.
Chair: Monica Adams,
amadas8@depaul.edu
Rural
The Rural interest group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.
Chair: Cécile Lardón,
(909) 474-5781,
c.lardon@uaf.edu
School Intervention
The School Intervention interest group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.
Co-chairs: Paul Flaspohler,
flaspopa@muohio.edu; Melissa Maras,
marasme@missouri.edu
Self-Help/Mutual Support
The Self-Help/Mutual Support interest group is an international organization of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help groups and organizations.
Chair: Louis Brown,
lb12@psu.edu
The Coalition for the Study of Health, Power, and Diversity (CESPYD) located at the University of Seville, Spain, Department of Psychology, has as its primary mission to develop a psychology of liberation of the process of migration. To carry out its mission, the coalition sponsors several community-based research projects designed to increase the power, health and wellbeing of low-income immigrants, who are among the most disenfranchised groups in Europe. European social policies call for the development of explanatory models, methodological tools and practices to address the needs and challenges faced by immigrants. We particularly work with Moroccans in Andalusia, one of the most oppressed ethnic groups in Southern Europe.

Since 2008, CESPYD has included a group of investigators from the Universidad de Sevilla (see CESPYD logo in Figure 1) and it belongs to the European network HOME (COST, IS0603; Health and Social Care for Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Europe). This network includes more than twenty universities around Europe financed by the European Union, representing one of the most solid forms of support and cooperation between a multidisciplinary group of European scientists involved in this field.

The mission of the network is to increase the quality and coherence of European scholarship on migration, especially related to health, well-being and the need to adapt community services to the new multicultural social fabric. Our activities are funded by the Commission of the European Communities, the National Plan of Investigation of the Ministry of Science, the Spanish National Fund of Sanitarian Investigation, managed by the National Ministry of Health, the General Board of Migration Politics and the Regional Health Ministry of Andalusia.

CESPYD maintains a close collaboration with other groups and centers nationally and internationally. Outstanding is the relation with the Universidad y Compromiso Social (University & Social Commitment [UyCS]), an initiative which encourages the creation and the harness of academic knowledge to impel a better society, linking communities and social movements with university settings. It also maintains a fluid collaboration with research institutes on an international level, such as the High Institute of Applied Psychology (ISPA) at Lisbon, the University Federico II at Naples, the European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations (ERCOMER) at the Utrecht University, the European Centre for the Study of Migration & Social Care (MASC) at the University of Kent and the Center for Capacity Building for Minorities with Disabilities Research (CCBMDR) at University of Illinois at Chicago.

CESPYD is coordinated by community and experimental psychologists from the Universidad de Sevilla and Almería who work with a group of multidisciplinary partners including nurses, social anthropologists, psychologists and community activists. CESPYD functions as a center in which internal operation is based on collaboration, synergies between disciplines, fostering effective communication and utilization of resources. Our work style promotes the development of innovative programmatic capacity by establishing useful and realistic goals driven by community needs and culturally competent interventions. Our format of collaboration allows us to fill gaps related to research on intercultural contacts and challenging community experiences of immigrants (e.g., discrimination, poverty and social fragmentation). At CESPYD we seek to involve community members in different phases of the research collaboration. For instance, one member is AMAL, a grassroots organization created by and composed of Andalusian Moroccan women, whose main goal is to empower and facilitate the integration of immigrant women. CESPYD researchers and community partners employ a collaborative and reflective methodology linking research and action and facilitating the empowerment process of participants and different stakeholders. The professionals and investigators are utmost sensitive to the multicultural transformation of the social fabric their training, research and service activities are destined for. The vulnerable populations we work with have brought about changes and critical awareness within us as we incorporate values based on the diversity and multicultural background of the participants.

Regarding theoretical orientation, CESPYD impels studies dealing with the integration of immigrants from the perspective of the psychology of liberation assuming the values of equality, social justice, well-being, self-determination, and respect for diversity (Hernández-Plaza, García-Ramírez, Camacho & Paloma, in press). Herewith we try to shed some light on the fact that acculturative frameworks are failing to explain these issues, due to the inapplicability of acquired knowledge to the real practice of immigrant integration. From the mainstream cross-cultural perspective, acculturative integration is an individual process, which implies the acquisitions of the new culture while maintaining one’s cultural heritage. Therefore the individual focus of acculturative frameworks is severely challenged by conditions of asymmetrical intergroup relations and unequal economic, social and political power that many immigrants must face within local contexts. Our approach underscores acculturative integration as the process by which newcomers become accepted in the new society through a reflexive and evaluative process, changing their social references, rebuilding their social and personal resources, and participating in their communities. We see acculturation integration as a multilevel and multidimensional process of psycho-political empowerment, a process of self and citizenship construction (García-Ramírez, de la Mata, Paloma, & Hernández-Plaza, 2008).

Below we present a brief description of one of several projects and describe the development of a new Masters program.

A European vision of cultural competence: Differences, sensitivity and health literacy

Disparities in health care are one of the main challenges in the international
community and the level of cultural competence of its providers has become an emergent research topic. In European settings, health care is a controversial topic due, in part, to the existing paternalistic and stigmatizing services provided to low-income populations. A new vision based on differences, sensitivity and health literacy is emphasized among European health care stakeholders in which differences are seen as normal, equality as a value and negotiation as core strategies. This approach suggests a vision of ecological empowerment according to the values and assumptions of community psychology. Concerning health care systems, this vision requires universal availability, accessibility, acceptability and sufficient quality. As it relates to providers, it implies the competence to perceive and comprehend individual-life worlds in specific situations and in various contexts, and hence to assume appropriate forms of action. It also involves the health literacy of people and patients, which implies the active participation to seek out information and the entitlement of health care, including the capacity to contribute actively in its creation.

At CESPYD we are developing and testing best practices at improving the cultural competency of health care providers and enhancing their ability to foster consumer health literacy and consumer psychopolitical empowerment (García-Ramírez, Albar, Acosta, & Bocchino, 2009). This project is being carried out at the emergency room of the Hospital “Virgen Macarena”, Seville (Spain) by community nurses, psychologists and community organizers belonging to CESPYD. Based on a participatory action research approach, this project is building: 1) critical awareness among health professionals of their personal and organizational limitations and exploring strategies to overcome them; 2) collaboration with migrant communities and key stakeholders; and 3) user’s health literacy through information materials, training workshops and volunteer participation.

The official Master of International Migrations, Health and Welfare of the Universidad de Sevilla

CESPYD is taking a lead role in the implementation of an official postgraduate program “International Migrations, Health and Welfare: Models, Strategies and Interventions” at the Universidad de Sevilla. This program, which will be launched in Fall 2010, is designed to train students in engaging in culturally sensitive research and practice aimed at understanding and addressing the health and welfare of migrant populations. In the context of achieving this goal, we are participating in the consortium of European universities, creating a curriculum development project on health and social care for immigrants and minorities coordinated by David Ingleby (University of Utrecht). The network brings together a group of experts on diversity and health, belonging to 16 scientific and professional European Institutions, the University of Utrecht being the coordinating entity.

Many recent political declarations by European and global intergovernmental organizations have stressed the urgency of tackling issues concerning the health of migrants. The most recent of these, the European Commission Communication Solidarity in Health: Reducing Health Inequalities in the European Union, included migrants and ethnic minorities among the vulnerable groups to which particular attention should be paid. Virtually all political statements and media declarations concerning migrant health describe the need for consumer health literacy and cultural competency of health care and social service professionals (e.g., psychologists, nurses, social workers, physicians among others) as the most urgent and serious problems.

Future

CESPYD fosters the study of challenges that currently present the human exoduses from the perspective of the psychology of liberation. This perspective can enrich the international agendas of research and social policy, conducting research anchored in the communities we collaborate with, oriented to achieving social justice and well-being for all. Engaging in the psychology of migration, from an empowerment and participatory approach, is an urgent and necessary task. Our goal is to establish solid links with other groups, institutes, disciplines around the world which seek to promote multicultural citizens and fair multicultural communities for migrants. For more information about CESPYD visit our Web site at www.cespyd.org.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Manuel García-Ramírez, Facultad de Psicología, Departamento de Psicología Social, c/Camilo Jose Cela s/n. 41008 Sevilla, Spain. Email: magarcia@us.es

Some new papers of CESPYD referenced

in the article


The Community Health Interest Group

Edited & Written by Shannon Gwin
Mitchell & David Lounsbury

Our special issue of the American Journal of Community Psychology was published in December 2009, representing the bulk of our Community Health Interest Group activities over the past two years. In our TCP column this month we would like to present a brief overview of our introductory article from that special issue on social ecological approaches to community health research and action.

Overview of Introductory Article

Social ecological research and interventions are ideally suited for addressing the complex community health problems we face, in that they are systems-oriented...
and can provide insights into the dynamic interactions of individuals with their environment. In recent years social ecological research has received increased attention from scientists across a variety of fields. Not a surprising fact given the far-reaching theoretical roots of this model.

For more than 40 years researchers have focused on defining context as something distinct from, yet influencing (and being influenced by), the people occupying that space. Barker’s group (1964) focused on defining the ecological environment and selecting units of interest, while Sarason (1972) explored the creation of settings. Kelly’s research (1966) identified the four key principles of ecology (interdependence, cycling of resources, adaptation, and succession).

The mutual influencing nature of settings and behaviors was the focus of Lewin’s early research (1936), including the famous formula $B = f(P,E)$, ‘Behavior is a function of Person and Environment.’ Two of Lewin’s former students, Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Barker (1973), also examined the reciprocal influence of settings and behaviors, and contributed to the theoretical foundation by developing ecological systems theory and behavior setting theory, respectively.

Finally, our current conceptualizations of social ecological theory are guided by our understanding of the dynamics of systems change, including how some settings change (Sarason, 1972) while others remain fixed (Watzlawick, Weakland, & Fisch, 1974).

The 14 papers presented in the special issue address a variety of community health issues present in some very diverse settings, yet a number of commonalities were apparent. All of the papers examined relationships between/among multiple ecological levels. All manuscripts also described or assessed the dynamics of change, including change at the individual, organizational, family, and/or community level.

The complexity of the problems being addressed was evident in the methodological approach and analytic techniques used by the contributing authors. All papers applied multiple methods in their analytic approach and nearly all used at least one qualitative method in their data collection and analysis. The scope of the community health issues addressed in the papers also necessitated the engagement of multidisciplinary teams of researchers and practitioners.

Three substantive themes served as the organizing framework for the articles included in the special issue: 1) understanding and preventing violence in the community; 2) implementing community-focused mental health and substance abuse interventions; and 3) promoting individual health and designing healthy environments.

We gained further insight about the utility and challenges of applying a social ecological approach. In particular, we noted that adequate conceptualization of the structures and processes that define a system of interest often requires a significant investment in exploratory or formative research. Similarly, we found that participatory involvement seems to be integral to effective social ecological research. The majority of the work presented in this special issue demonstrated how effective execution of social ecological health programs required the involvement of multiple stakeholders, such as families, schools, churches, health clinics, and other community-based organizations.

We also learned how a social ecological perspective forces different kinds of research questions, different, that is, from a purely clinical perspective or even a purely public health perspective, where the focus is almost always exclusively on the individual, or the patient, and how he or she can be treated, or cured, or immunized. Specifically, a social ecological approach also demands careful consideration of the unintended consequences of one or more interventions, in the near or long-term future as well as careful assessment of readiness for change among individuals, their families, schools, or workplaces (Goodman, Wandersman, Chinman, & Imm, 1996). Finally, as many of the authors featured here write, a social ecological approach can help to clarify what is and what is not within the scope of individuals’, families’, or communities’ control.

For more about each of these points, please refer to our full article and the other featured manuscripts. We welcome your comments and feedback. And for more about planned CHIG activities, please contact either of us by e-mail: David (david.lounsbury@einstein.yu.edu); Shannon (sgwinmitchell@gmail.com).

References


The Community Practitioner

Edited by David A. Julian

Introducing a New Editor and Reflecting on the Last Seven Years

Written by David A. Julian

It is my pleasure to introduce Susan Wolfe as the new editor of the “Community Practitioner.” Susan will be assuming the editorship beginning with the Spring 2010 issue. As Susan begins planning, I want to reflect on developments since the publication of the first issue of the “Community Practitioner” in 2002. The proposal to publish the “Community Practitioner” was first discussed at a meeting at the 1999 Biennial Conference in New Haven convened by Maurice Elias and Bill Berkowitz.

At that time, the conversation focused on starting a “practice journal.” According to Bill’s meeting summary, “It would be: 1) desirable to do; 2) challenging to do; 3) feasible to do; and 4) worth pursuing with collaborators.” Dan Fishman suggested that the primary goal of the new journal should be to “inform practitioners about ‘best practices’ for effecting community/system...
change.” After considerable discussion via the listserv, the “Practice Journal Planning Committee” submitted a report to the SCRA Executive Committee in 2000 with four recommendations:

1. A new practice journal in community psychology should be developed and published by SCRA;
2. An electronic format is the best option for the new journal;
3. The new journal should be published under the auspices of the American Journal of Community Psychology and editorial decisions should be made by individuals working in applied settings; and
4. The Executive Committee should recruit a committee to begin implementation of the prior recommendations.

Fast forward to the Winter 2002 edition of The Community Psychologist when the first issue of the “Community Practitioner” was published. This issue included three articles. Berkowitz described a community organizing model used to bring people together in Concord, Massachusetts. Bean et al. described a process for enhancing relationships between schools and social service agencies, and Jason and Holbert addressed challenges in writing a grant to fund affordable housing for individuals with specific medical disabilities. From 2002 to 2006, the “Community Practitioner” published several case studies describing practice issues or experiences of practitioners in various settings.

For example, Fryson published an article in 2004 and a follow-up in 2005 describing his experiences as a high school principal in Australia. In addition, Hazel et al. (2006) published what might be described as a “call to action” during this period. Their article and accompanying commentary suggested that we have neglected our practice:

As a society and as a field, we seem to lack a systematic understanding and explication of our practice. In our attempt to legitimize our field, we have overemphasized our science and neglected our practice. This may have been necessary, but it is hardly sufficient for the growth of our profession (p. 42).

Hazel et al. (2006) claimed the field lacked an agreed upon definition of practice, case examples of community psychology practice, a comprehensive list of skills/competencies related to practice and an understanding of skills taught in community psychology graduate programs. This perspective led to the publication of a definition of community psychology practice in 2006. In 2007, several of our international colleagues addressed competencies and training methods and later in 2007, Scott introduced 11 core competencies including advocacy, assessment, capacity building, collaboration/consultation, communication, computer literacy, cultural diversity, group process, interventions, professional development and research.

Future editions of the “Community Practitioner” may focus on many of the core competencies proposed by Scott. Finally, a joint publication of the “Education Connection” and “Community Practitioner” addressed issues related to graduate education in 2007. One might argue that the announcement of the launching of the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice by Francisco et al. in 2009 represents the culmination of effort over the last seven years (see the recommendations to the Executive Committee above). According to Francisco et al.:

The journal is committed to engaging and expanding the practice community and its broader social impact by offering a new opportunity to community practitioners from a variety of backgrounds and professional affiliations for collaborative development to increase skills and exchange information, ideas and resources (p. 45).

The most obvious lesson learned during this period relates to perseverance. The proposal to publish a practice journal evolved from an idea (1999) to a section of The Community Psychologist (2002–2009) to a new e-publication. While definitions and lists of skills have been proposed in the past (Julian, 1997), this evolution represents significant progress. A second lesson learned involves the power of advocacy. Beginning in 2006, several practitioners addressed the definition of community psychology practice, practice skills and implications for graduate training. Hazel et al. (2006) call to action provided a strong rationale for incorporating practice into the mainstream of community psychology. This content proved persuasive as members of SCRA considered the status of community psychology practice. Finally, it is important to note that in the coming months the “Community Practitioner” may address potential employment opportunities for community psychology practitioners and the value that community psychology might bring to potential employers. It would appear that Susan will have many opportunities to add important content to the practice conversation.

**References**


**An Invitation to Join SCRA’s “Practice Group”**

**Written by**

**Gloria Levin**

By joining SCRA’s activist Practice Group, you’ll be in a “virtual huddle” with the field’s practitioners, aligned with the one SCRA group that strives to assure that the practice role is visible and widely promoted, within and outside SCRA. To join the group, you need only ask Tom Wolff (tom@tomwolff.com), the convener, to add you to the email list. You will then be able to join (or create new) workgroups and discussions and thus contribute to practitioner-oriented resources being developed by the Practice Group.

**Disabilities Action**

**Edited by Tina Taylor-Ritzler**

**Calling for Full Participation of People with Disabilities: Recommendations for Community Psychology Programs and Conferences**

In this issue we challenge all members of SCRA to promote the full participation of people with disabilities in all facets of our profession. For too long, some people with disabilities have felt sidelined and excluded from our association, leading some to leave the association. In response, members of the
SCRA Disability Action Group raise a call for all of SCRA to adopt practices that may facilitate the full participation of people with disabilities in the two important spheres of influence: 1) programs where community psychologists are educated and prepared to contribute to science and practice in the service of community; and 2) conferences where we gather to exchange ideas and advance our profession and work.

To assist with this challenge, we provide two commentaries. The first, by Alberto Guzman, a Disability Studies scholar, focuses on ways faculty can increase program and teaching accessibility for students with disabilities. The second, by me, Katherine (Katie) McDonald, and Alberto Guzman, includes recommendations for increasing the accessibility of our conferences. I urge you to consider these recommendations so that we may all work together to strengthen SCRA by ensuring that all talented individuals have the opportunity to participate.

A Call for Universal Design within Community Psychology Programs

Written by
Alberto Guzman, University of Arizona

In the U.S. today, most accredited universities have legal responsibilities regarding the provision of educational services to students with disabilities under two federal laws, Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Here, I suggest that Community Psychology faculty adopt universal design as a guiding framework in order to promote the full participation of people with disabilities in their programs.

Universal design refers to creating environments that are usable and effective for all people without the need for adaptation (see Center for Universal Design at http://design.ncsu.edu/cud/). As life expectancy has risen and medical technologies have increased survival rates for those with significant injuries, illnesses and disabilities, there has been a growing interest in universal design. Our built environment includes many examples of universal design, such as cabinets with pull-out shelves and kitchen counters at several heights to accommodate different tasks and postures. Here, I invite faculty to consider how they might apply universal design principles within community psychology programs to the benefit of all students.

A note about context. As members of U.S. society, we have all been and continue to be, among other things, socialized by media, politics, religion and the medical professions. The message that society continually sends us is that people with disabilities have a problem or limitation (Hahn, 1985; Imrie, 2004; Oliver, 1996). The idea often conveyed through these channels is that if students with disabilities overcome their deficiencies, they will have an opportunity to succeed. We have also been socialized to believe in rugged individualism, that we should all be able to pull ourselves up by the proverbial bootstrap. Both of these beliefs challenge our ability to adopt a universal approach to accessibility within education.

I recognize that there will always be individual students with disabilities who will require one-on-one attention. Reasonable accommodations are essential and will always be needed (Block, Loewen, & Kroeger, 2006). However, when faculty exclusively or predominantly address student accessibility issues from an individual perspective, they are likely to: 1) limit the opportunity to change incorrect assumptions regarding disability and students with disabilities; 2) sustain barriers that are likely to negatively affect future students; and 3) send the message that the student is the problem or, at minimum, that the problem resides within the individual student and not within the university environment. Reframing accessibility in ecological or universal terms calls us to focus on universal environmental design.

I recommend considering universal design principles in three areas:

1. Recruit all qualified students: Ensure that application materials are accessible to students with different types of disabilities. Collaborate with your admissions department and disability services office to ensure accessible web and print promotional materials.
2. Ensure that course materials meet universal design principles. Check the accessibility of the print and Web materials that are used in your course. Access to information on the Internet or in print is a major barrier for some students with visual and learning disabilities. Print materials should be available in alternative formats. Specifically, students should be offered materials in Braille, large print (font size 20 or larger), and/or electronic formats (print or audio). Ensure that all graphic images are described for individuals with visual disabilities (including low or no vision). Also ensure that pdf files are readable by screen readers that are used by individuals with visual disabilities and that all websites that students must use are accessible. The Consortium Web Accessibility Initiative (www.w3.org/WAI/) website includes a framework that may help you build and test materials. Another resource related to accessibility in classrooms is the DO-IT program website (http://www.washington.edu/doit/).
3. Ensure that instructional methods meet universal design principles. Instructional methods should be selected to meet the needs of students with diverse learning styles. For example, consider that students have diverse backgrounds (e.g., ethnicity, language, socio-economic status), strengths (e.g., learn best through seeing, hearing or touch) and needs (e.g., disability or language barrier; see CAST Universal Design for Learning at www.cast.org/). As such, universal design principles suggest that faculty use direct (e.g., lecture), indirect (e.g., case study), experiential (e.g., practicum, role playing), independent (e.g., independent projects) and interactive (e.g., group projects, brainstorming) instructional methods. In addition, consider the need for sign language interpretation, and real time captioning.

Universal design should be considered as a guiding framework as it addresses accessibility issues within the environment. Universal design is a new concept; it can be difficult to achieve and is a radical departure from the way teaching is typically delivered. However, redesigning the environment to fit the largest number of people makes for an environment that is responsive and adaptable to individual differences (Block, Loewen, & Kroeger, 2006). This approach may allow all students to participate in an environment that is flexible and responsive of their differences: an environment that allows all of us to go in through the same door and travel the path together.
Promoting Accessible Community Psychology Conferences

Written by
Tina-Taylor-Ritzler, University of Illinois at Chicago; Katherine McDonald, Portland State University; and Alberto Guzman, University of Arizona

Community psychologists are involved in the planning and implementation of many conferences, including, among others, the SCRA Biennial and regional ECO conferences. We offer recommendations for improving the accessibility of conferences in four areas:

Site Accessibility: Many issues must be considered in determining the physical accessibility of a conference site. We recommend that conference planners consult with people who have expertise in this area. To obtain a local resource, please contact the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (www.aucd.org).

Promotion and Accommodations: All promotional materials (print and web) should be accessible. In addition, proposal submission and registration materials should ask registrants to indicate any disability accommodation needs for all aspects of the conference (e.g., materials in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, electronic text or audio formats, sign language interpretation or captioning). This information will allow organizers to plan to meet the needs of attendees and communicate with attendees with disabilities about how accommodations may be provided.

Conference Presentations: Guidelines for conference presentations (and proposals) should clearly indicate that all presenters are required to deliver accessible presentations. This includes having materials available in alternative formats, and having presenters verbally describe figures and tables. PowerPoint presentations should include explanatory notes when the information is not self explanatory or when additional information is presented orally to facilitate understanding for attendees who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Social Functions and Meals: Site accessibility, transportation, and menu planning should be taken into account when planning social functions and meals.

We encourage planning teams to proactively address disability accommodation issues as these can enhance the conference experience of all attendees. Including individuals with disabilities on program planning committees is one way to promote full inclusion. Additional information about conference accessibility is available through the Center on Disabilities Studies (www.cds.hawaii.edu/main/downloads/publications/modelforaccess/pdf/final.pdf), APA (www.apa.org/pi/disability/speakersguidelin.html) or by emailing Tina at tritzler@uiuc.edu.

References

Education Connection
Edited by Jim Dalton & Maurice Elias

In this column, Sylvie Taylor (who received the 2009 SCRA Outstanding Educator Award) provides a distinctive, valuable teaching resource: a discussion of useful documentary films for teaching about social and community issues. Sylvie discusses video resources and provides three examples of documentaries that are widely available and that generate student interest and discussion. Sylvie has posted a comprehensive list of these video resources on the SCRA website: www.scra27.org/resources/education/teachingcp/videosou

Teaching Community Psychology through Documentary Film: Some Practical Ideas and Film Recommendations

Written by
Sylvie Taylor, Antioch University, Los Angeles

Courses in community psychology introduce complex concepts and issues that can be elusive to our students. While our discipline has a number of excellent textbooks and a rich and varied literature to draw upon, it is often difficult for students to appreciate and fully understand the nuanced complexities of community psychology principles such as empowerment and practices such as community organizing. For some students, limited exposure to sociocultural and socioeconomic diversity may further interfere with their ability to fully appreciate and comprehend some material. Documentary films can serve as powerful tools for teaching community psychology. They offer us, albeit for a brief time, the opportunity to become immersed in a community, to see how people live their lives, and to bear witness to the challenges they face. Furthermore, documentary films provide excellent illustrations of the trials, tribulations, and triumphs experienced by people working to create meaningful, sustainable change within their communities. The past decade has seen a dramatic rise in the production of documentary films, many of which contain subject matter relevant to the teaching of community psychology.

Where to Find Films
Most faculty will find documentary films are readily accessible through large university and public library systems and inter-library loan. Netflix, the online movie rental site, now maintains a sizable library of documentary films and many of them are available to view online at no extra charge to members. Amazon.com has a substantial collection of documentary films available for purchase. The Public Broadcasting System (PBS) now produces five documentary film series exploring the human condition including: American Experience (a history series that features people and events that shaped U.S. History, past and present), FRONTLINE (public affairs films exploring critical issues of our times), Independent Lens and P.O.V (both featuring independent films), and Wide Angle (international current
affairs). Many of the films in these series are available for viewing online and videos are available for purchase through www.shoppbs.com. Cable channels, HBO and Cinemax, both produce critically acclaimed and award-winning documentary series. In addition, several documentary film distributors have excellent collections of award-winning films relevant to community psychology subject matter: Docurama (www.docurama.com); New Day Films (www.newday.com); and Bullfrog Films (www.bullfrogfilms.com).

Three Film Recommendations

Below is a sampling of some of the most inspiring films that I have used in community psychology courses. These films consistently garner positive feedback from students and serve as the springboard for endless hours of discussion and debate both in class and beyond. They provide excellent examples of community psychology concepts and practices, and illustrate the impact that successful community initiatives and interventions can have on individuals and communities as a whole.

The New Heroes: Their Bottom Line is Lives (2005, 4 – 1 hour programs): This four-hour series, hosted by Robert Redford, originally aired on PBS stations in 2005. It features the stories of 14 social entrepreneurs from around the world, working to enhance the quality of life of poor and marginalized people through education, employment, health care and violence reduction. What makes their stories so compelling are the innovative ways in which they tackle the problems found in the communities they serve. The first hour, Dreams of Sanctuary, features social entrepreneurs working to provide shelter and support to some of the world’s most dispossessed individuals. Segments in this hour include: Moses Zulu’s school and home for children orphaned by AIDS in Zambia; Mimi Silbert’s work with individuals who are homeless, addicted to drugs, or former convicts through the San Francisco-based Delancey Street Foundation; and Kailash Satyarthi’s efforts to eradicate slavery in India through the creation of child-friendly villages and the sale of a line of carpets made without forced labor. The second hour, Technology of Freedom, features “compassionate capitalists” who have created businesses to maximize human benefit rather than profits. Segments in this hour include: Martin Fisher and Nick Moon who invented an economical water pump to support subsistence farmers in Africa; Fabio Rosa, a Brazilian cowboy who takes on government monopolies to bring electricity to rural areas of Brazil; and Govindapa Vin Kataswami (Dr. V.) who along with his partner David Green are using industrial techniques to bring sight-saving surgery to India’s poor. The third hour, Power of Enterprise, features social entrepreneurs working to alleviate poverty by creating innovative economic and employment opportunities. This episode spotlights: Muhammad Yunus (“the banker to the poor”) whose Grameen Bank has provided 4.7 billion dollars in loans to 4.4 million families in Bangladesh; Albinia Ruiz Rios who helps residents of the jungle city of Pucallpa, Peru to create small businesses that clean up the garbage contaminating the ground water and causing disease in poor neighborhoods; and Maria Teresa Leal, who runs the Coopa-Roca sewing cooperative, a fair labor shop, in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, that creates high-fashion clothes seen on runways around the world. The final hour, Power of Knowledge, chronicles efforts to educate children who have been denied education and left to their own devices. Segments in this hour features: Sompop Jantraksa who runs a school for young girls in Thailand in an effort to save them from being sold into prostitution; Dina Abdel Wahab who runs schools across Egypt for children with disabilities for whom there are no educational opportunities; and Inderjit Khurana who runs schools on the platforms of train stations in Calcutta, serving children who beg in order to survive. Each segment provides unique insights into the living conditions of the world’s dispossessed and innovative programs to address their plight. Visit http://www.pbs.org/opb/thenenewheroes/about for information on how to obtain this film.

Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street (60 minutes): This inspiring film chronicles the decade-long struggle of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) and community members of the Roxbury section of Boston to transform their neighborhood, which was one of vacant lots used for illegal dumping, red-lining by banks, and misguided city planning. Through retrospective interviews with community residents, activists, organizers, and city officials, the film highlights the grassroots community organizing efforts of this multi-ethnic (African-American, Latino, Cape Verdean, and European-American), low income community. The efforts of community residents include organizing against illegal dumping, clearing a neighborhood park of drug dealing, and supporting youth in the community by involving them in the design of a community center. The most daunting effort taken on by DSNI was the fight against City Hall for greater control over vacant land in the community. Through their efforts DSNI became the only community group in the nation to win eminent domain power over vacant land in their community, paving the way for the development of high quality, affordable housing in the neighborhood. The film provides outstanding examples of community organizing, coalition-building, and strategies for multi-ethnic and multi-generational inclusion. This film is a powerful exemplar of community and individual empowerment that allows students to witness the transformation of a community and its residents over a decade. Available from New Day Films [www.newday.com].

Living Broke in Boom Times: Lessons from the Movement to End Poverty (73 minutes): This film chronicles the decade-long efforts of the movement to end poverty, condensing three documentary films (Takeover, Poverty Outlaw and Outriders) showcasing the community organizing efforts of poor, unemployed, and homeless people across the country. The film features wrap-around commentary from key activists in the movement, Cheri Honkala, Willie Baptist and Liz Theoharis, who discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their organizing efforts and lessons learned. Excerpts from Takeover follow the efforts of homeless people in eight cities across the U.S. to occupy abandoned HUD homes on May 1, 1990. The goal of the occupations was to draw attention to the plight of homeless people throughout the country. While takeovers led to numerous arrests, in some communities, these efforts led to increased availability of affordable housing. Poverty Outlaw explores the lengths to which a woman must go to survive when the tenuous safety nets for the poor fail. Lauded as a “survival guide” for poor women, the film depicts the harsh realities faced by poor women, especially those with young children, and the difficult, sometimes illegal choices they must make to survive. Outriders chronicles the Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign New Freedom Bus Tour in which a bus load of poor people traveled the United States to document human right violations experienced by poor and homeless people. After 10,000 miles of travel, the organizers presented their findings
I have posted an annotated guide of films that I have personally used to teach community psychology courses over the years on the SCRA site. The films depict communities facing a variety of challenges including chronic poverty, unemployment and underemployment, violence, substance use, gentrification, and more. Some of the films are mere depictions of community issues that can serve to set a context for discussions about community psychology approaches to the issues presented. Others depict citizens organizing themselves to transform their communities through grassroots movements, partnerships with businesses, local government, and philanthropic organizations, while others depict communities organizing to take on corporations, and government entities. In addition, the guide provides suggestions for effective use of films in the classroom, and an extensive listing of film sources.

Happy viewing!😊

International

Edited by Serdar M. Değirmencioğlu

News from the International Committee

The 7th European Congress on Community Psychology (ECCP) took place in Paris (October 29–30) with more than 300 participants from 32 countries and 180 presentations. The event ran smoothly and was a success. Below you can find three accounts, written by Thomas Saïas (head of the Organizing Committee and President of the French Association of Community Psychology), Jacqueline Akhurst (UK) and David Fryer (Australia).

A Major Step

The congress was the very first event in community psychology (CP) to be hosted by the French Association of Community Psychology (AFPC), which has been in existence for 3 years. The theme, “common values, diverse practices” was chosen to address the common roots of the main CP streams in Europe: The critical CP movement, the health promotion and prevention movement and the local development movement.

The keynote conference was given by Denise Jodelet (Paris), known for her extensive work on social representations, on her perception of the epistemological and historical roots of CP. Conferences were presented by Cathy McCormack, a Scottish activist who spoke about her book *The Wee Yellow Butterfly* with David Fryer, the new ECPA president. José Ornelas (Lisbon, Portugal) gave his lecture on the political aspects of CP, as a science and a social movement, and Pr Saul Fuks (Rosario, Argentina) talked about the challenges and development of CP in South America.

The best presentation award was given to Sylvie Jutras (Montreal) for her research on neighbourhoods as ecosystems promoting well-being in paraplegic and tetraplegic inhabitants. The best student presentation award winner was Stefanie Salazar (French Guyana) for her presentation of a participatory research action in Amerindians in French Guyana. The best poster award went to Sylvie Hamel (Québec) for her appreciation of participatory research for social and community development.

The Organizing Committee was supported by a motivated team of psychology students. This provided a relaxed atmosphere. Eight sessions were run simultaneously, with English-French translation in the main rooms, allowing most of the French professionals to access CP contents for the very first time.

The congress gave the credibility CP needed to implement its frameworks and practices in the field of psychology in France. Psychology in France has been characterized by a focus on clinical psychology and psychoanalysis. The need for a community (and critical) psychology has been raised in professional circles since the late 1990s and our hope is that CP will fill this gap. (Final program, abstracts [now] and proceedings [soon] can be downloaded at www.eccp-paris2009.com.)

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Reflections on the 7th ECCP Conference

A central theme of the congress was the potential political role of community psychology (CP). This became apparent from the opening address by the outgoing ECPA president, Wolfgang Stark. As a newly established CP association in France, the substantial support for the conference from within France, from other European countries, and indeed with delegates from each of the other continents, signalled the growing substance of CP in Europe. The increasing acknowledgement of CP by mainstream psychology is “political,” and CP has the potential to question the dominance of individual-focused practices. Stark referred CP’s “power of linking,” across disciplinary boundaries, between practice and theory, and between an analysis of the past and planning ahead. Common ground in promoting social justice and challenging inequities at multiple levels and contexts were highlighted, and a number of papers described the importance of learning communities for social change.

A recurring question exploring the nature of CP came from delegates from diverse workplaces and interests, since for many this was a first encounter with the debates in CP. Denise Jodelet’s keynote emphasised the importance of being able to “live with” the uncertainty of practice that is open to questioning and the need to be responsive to the organic nature of the work. She emphasised the urgency to re-define the forms and properties of the term “community,” in this era of global change and rapid communication. This was illustrated by papers examining the nature of online communities and levels of engagement. Jodelet also noted the impact of power dynamics (and that findings might be suppressed or access denied, should these not conform to dominant discourses). Examples from work with disenfranchised people illustrated the limitations of both academic ‘ways’ of communicating and traditional research tools, and highlighted preferred ways of gathering data in partnership with groups.

A number of presentations captured the idea that we should “seek playful forms that generate serious results” when working with silenced groups. Creative use of forms of photo-voice, video footage, magazines, meetings over tea or lunch, and accessing parents’ views through children’s homework tasks, were all examples of responsive problem-solving. Papers described group interventions through singing, art appreciation and art-making, and community activism, where local groups took greater control of decision-making affecting their lives.

One of the challenges for delegates new to CP is to develop more critical views of
dominant models of psychology and healthcare practice. Cathy McCormack illustrated the way that psychologists employed by local authorities try to impose particular models on those who have been marginalised or discarded by the labour market. The risk is that ideas from psychology are used as a “weapon” against the very people they desire to serve. This echoed Jodelet’s warnings about “treating” a “community” without immersion in the group or uncovering the root causes of the distress experienced. Dominant discourses may also promote negative images of individual and group capacity. Local management structures and the attitudes of those whose employment is supplied through the provision of so-called services may all create barriers to problem-solving. McCormack highlighted the problem of trying to treat the symptoms of the failure of capitalist and market-driven economies, and countering the myth that “money will trickle down to the poor.” Instead, she noted that the money has gushed upwards, with an ever-increasing gap between the wealthy and poor. The challenge is the way psychology has been used as a means of individual oppression, rather than as an ally focusing on solutions at a social level.

The ‘place’ of CP within mainstream psychology was discussed by Ronelle Carolissen (South Africa), where there is the risk of CP being sidelined by the power dynamics in who gets to speak for and about CP, particularly in psychology departments. It is vital to strengthen discourses, by drawing from critical psychology, to retain academic credibility. These concerns were illustrated by Angela Fedi’s (Italy) discussion of concepts related to participation: as a value, giving people a “voice,” as a need-based activity, an expression of belonging and as a right. She described the use of “open space technology” in order for community members to decide on the nature of research to be undertaken, but also cautioned about distrust of academics’ motives and willingness to give away their traditional decision-making powers. There was discussion of the risks of integrating CP into the training of applied psychologists (such as dilution or marginalisation); however, CP stand-alone modules and programmes run risks of being silos, working against the opening up of communication and multi-disciplinary engagement.

The conference concluded with David Fryer, the new ECPA president, suggesting that there are a variety of community psychologies. He challenged CP to move forward in Europe through engagement in contemporary issues. He drew on the early work of Marie Jahoda as an inspiration for CP, and summarised the conclusive evidence about the effects of unemployment on mental health, in the context of the highest unemployment figures in the UK since 1971. He reiterated the dramatic growth in income inequalities, particularly in the UK and USA (see www.equalitytrust.org.uk ). The political becomes personal when unemployment preserves the status quo, keeping many in poverty, engaged in degrading rituals related to access to benefits, and criminalising those who have little hope of access to work. Fryer encouraged delegates to draw on subjugated literatures outside of mainstream Anglo-Saxon psychology; to challenge disciplinary oppression and to develop and enact politically progressive critical CP. We look forward to the next ECPA conference in York (England), in 2011 to evaluate progress in these endeavours.

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Psychological Toxicity of the Everyday World

The psychological toxicity of the everyday world for many people around the world was shockingly brought home at the 7th ECCP through the diverse manifestations of oppression addressed by presenters: the bullying, maltreatment and abuse of children and young people on the streets, in schools and in their homes; misogynistic gendered oppression, sexual abuse and violence; ethnocentrism, Islamophobia, racism and contemporary colonisation; increasingly disabling practices, the inhumane treatment, oppression and human rights violations experienced by people labelled as mentally ill around the world, homelessness, immobilising housing, psychologically toxic employment and unemployment; and deepening poverty and widening material and health inequality.

Moreover, community activists emphasized, more than is usual at CP conferences, the roles of psychology—including CP—in oppressing people. Scottish community activist, Cathy McCormack, graphically made clear the nature and scale of human suffering, hardship, injury and death of people in working class ghettos around the world where the “war without bullets” is being waged. She quoted from her book, The Wee Yellow Butterfly, “I started to realise that there really was a war going on but that it was being fought with briefcases instead of guns” (McCormack, 2009, p. 78 |Argyll Publishing Glendaruel). It became increasingly clear as the conference progressed, that those briefcases are not only frequently being carried by community psychologists but that those briefcases are often stuffed with ideologically problematic research “knowledges” and policy recommendations invented and legitimated by community psychologists and other acolytes of the psy-complex.

As the conference gained pace, it became increasingly clear that a progressive reconstruction of community psychologies and their organisations is an urgent necessity because: the scale of the problem is so vast; the need for progressive action is so urgent; psychology, including CP, is so much part of the problem rather than solution; and CP networks and associations so frequently reproduce problematic reactionary forms of “psy.” Reconstructed community psychologies must not only critique and go beyond mainstream psychological disciplinary traditions but also reflexively turn the critical gaze on disciplinary ideologies, theories, procedures and practices of mainstream Anglo-European-United Statesian CP. They must uncover and resist the interconnected conceptualisations, practices, procedures, technologies and ideologies which constitute elite “psychology,” popular “psy” and CP. They must be appropriate for, and effective in, times of individual, social and community obliteriation by contemporary forms of neo-liberalism, globalization, colonialism and social and economic apartheid. They must uncover and reconstruct the interconnections between subjectivity and social power, and contribute meaningfully to the collective task of progressively transforming social reality.

At this Congress, the ECPA pledged itself to making progress towards these goals over the next two years.

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Questions, comments or suggestions for the International Committee? Try serdardegirmenciglu@gmail.com.
The historical roots of community psychology are in the community mental health movement of the 1960s in which care for persons with severe mental illness (SMI) was shifted from mental institutions to the community. Yet, 45 years later, little is heard in our field about this special population. Alicia Lucksted is an exemplar of a community psychologist who has devoted her career to advocate for persons with severe mental illness.

Featuring: Alicia Lucksted, Ph.D.

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(Author photo)

The historical roots of community psychology are in the community mental health movement of the 1960s in which care for persons with severe mental illness (SMI) was shifted from mental institutions to the community. Yet, 45 years later, little is heard in our field about this special population. Alicia Lucksted is an exemplar of a community psychologist who has devoted her career and much of her civic life to this population, specifically advocating for consumers of the (primarily public) mental health system. “Community mental health embodies the very principles and paradigms of community psychology,” she claims. Furthermore, she is intrigued by the SMI population because these illnesses (depression and schizophrenia) offer a profound window into human nature, representing an extreme end of a continuum of normal behavior.

Thus, Alicia’s path to the field of community psychology was via Community Mental Health.

Alicia claims her concern for social justice issues is “hard wired” in her, and she has focused that concern primarily on the stigmatization of persons with SMI. She cites the earlier catchment area studies which found a large number of people within communities with untreated mental illness. “Those people were marginalized, at that time, just trying to make it through life, without resources, including no professional supports or treatment.” She notes that the stigmatization has lessened somewhat over the years, as the public has become more educated. “Nowadays, it’s a little easier for people to be ‘out,’ as to having been hospitalized or having received treatment for a mental illness, especially for clinical depression. While schizophrenia is much less common than depression (only 1% of the population is diagnosed with schizophrenia), 1% is still a substantial number.”

Even as a child, Alicia was upset by injustice, stereotyping and prejudices. She assumes her political beliefs developed partly as a reaction to her father, a traditional, conservative Catholic and an FBI agent, to boot. “We butted heads a lot when I was growing up.” Her parents divorced when Alicia was 8, and she and her brother Christopher were raised in Detroit by their father, the more economically stable parent at the time, when their artistic, open-minded mother (with whom Alicia is close) moved to Florida.

Alicia was enrolled in gifted and talented (she claims they are really “young and restless”) programs. She learned of the field of psychology in high school and conducted a survey of children of divorced parents as an independent study. In general, however, she “hated high school—it’s hard to be ‘smart’ in high school—I could not wait to finish high school and get out of my house.”

She became politically active for the first time while attending the University of Michigan as an undergraduate. Very active in the student housing cooperative council on campus, this group constituted much of her social world in college. She also was active in the campus anti-racism movement as well as with a movement against the University’s effort to invoke a student code that extended beyond academics. She characterized the code as “hateful, replete with paternalism, and an effort to squash student protest.”

During college, she began a romantic relationship with a politically active lesbian. “Until then, I was amazingly ignorant of same-sex issues,” but she was thrust into gay politics by her association with her partner. They were embroiled in a student protest action that stemmed from arrests made under Michigan’s sodomy law. She studied the underlying law and court decisions so as to counter negative articles being written by a journalist at a Detroit newspaper who was covering the student protests. She was quoted by name and identified as a lesbian in the newspaper. After her father read the article, they argued about the issues, and she was offended by his attitudes, personalizing his disdain for gay people. “To this day, we do not discuss my sexual orientation.”

She was exposed to clinical settings via the University’s services learning programs, at a State hospital and at a mental health drop-in center. Her senior thesis evaluated a community treatment program that focused on consumers’ satisfaction. Nearing graduation, she applied to only two Ph.D. programs, aiming high (Yale and Berkeley) but was rejected by both. She moved to Vermont with her partner, working as a baker, but she also volunteered on two University of Vermont research projects with the clear intent of obtaining good references for re-applying to graduate school. One of the projects, a self-help program for rural women, was supervised by community psychologist Lynn Bond. (Alicia “discovered” the field of community psychology, however, by reading an APA book on the different fields of psychology. “It fit with my world view, especially as to the overlay of culture.”) Considering clinical programs too individually focused, she applied to nine clinical/community hybrid programs. She chose the University of Maryland, because of its well-regarded program and because she would be able to support herself through assistantships there so she would not be in debt upon graduation. Also, the campus’ location near Washington, DC offered good employment prospects for her partner. However, they were excluded from married student housing; the State had not yet enacted a nondiscrimination law for gays.

At Maryland, she selected Dr. Bob Coursey as her mentor since they shared a focus on mental health consumer rights. “He was a genuine person who treated his students as colleagues.” While she realized that no one person could cover all her mentoring needs, she nonetheless missed having a mentor who would look out for her subsequent career path. She acknowledges as a recent
problem that she is seen as self reliant and competent “so, especially in under-resourced settings, no one recognizes that I need help,” compounded by her reluctance to ask for help.

Alicia learned a lot during her practicum/externship at a rural comprehensive CMHC. She also worked at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, DC. “It was a creepy asylum style hospital, and the physical plant was run down.” Her clinical internship at Boston City Hospital had a multi-cultural framework. “The people were great, and the program was challenging,” with a placement at a comprehensive health center. However, NIH cut training grants to $12,000 per year, not enough to support herself in expensive Boston. She returned to Maryland to write her thesis (which SCRA awarded with honorable mention in 1999’s Dissertation Award competition), a qualitative study of psychological empowerment of severely mentally ill persons, although the clinical/community program at Maryland had, in the interim, been shut down. That program had been (over optimistically) touted as five years in length, but her stay was almost eight years (she received her Ph.D. in 1997), mostly due to her involvement in many outside causes. One, with which she’s still active, is defending abortion clinics by protecting clients from harassment from anti-choice protesters. She also was (and continues to be) active in mental health consumer advocacy organizations in Maryland while a graduate student.

Her goal, post graduation, was to work at a comprehensive community mental health center (CMHC), believing that setting would provide opportunities for clinical work, program evaluation, community assessments, etc. However, just at that time, the federal government withdrew financial support from CMHCs, and they were dismantled, most converted to private outpatient clinics. “This was the end of the comprehensive CMHC movement. It was no longer a viable career option for me. I felt as if my ship sunk, just as it was approaching the harbor!” She took courses in managed care, to better prepare herself for the paradigm shift in the delivery of mental health services for the future.

The huge changes in Maryland’s health care delivery system resulted in a bleak job market for a beginning Ph.D. Instead, she accepted a services research and policy-oriented postdoctoral research fellowship in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania. Her then-partner lived in Baltimore, so Alicia constantly shuttled between the two cities on the train. When the travel became too stressful, she declined the second year of the fellowship and relocated to Baltimore.

She applied to organizations in Baltimore that might offer clinical/community-oriented opportunities, either service or research-oriented, working on SMI issues. She communicated to potential employers that she was flexible on salary, not wanting her Ph.D. degree to price her out of the market for jobs she was seeking. “Employers were lowering job qualifications, so masters-level persons were hired for responsibilities that were earlier assigned to Ph.D.s.” With the help of her postdoctoral supervisor, she secured a position at the University of Maryland’s School of Medicine to coordinate mental health services research.

Her position as a research project coordinator gave her some flexibility to develop her own areas of interest. In the beginning, she held a staff position so was under no pressure to “chase grants” in the soft-money research environment. Later (1994) appointed to a faculty position as Assistant Professor, her job still provides some autonomy. “I can work on whatever I want as long as I get funded. I try to combine useful ideas of my own with the reality of grant-funded initiatives. I am privileged that my job puts me in touch with issues of social justice. I’m not working just to pay bills but also have the opportunity to contribute to the social good.” She also holds a position at the Veteran’s Administration under an exchange agreement with the University. One current area of work for her is the current emphasis on evidence-based practice. “While I agree that practice should be based on what works, the problem comes in when deciding what constitutes effectiveness and evidence. Also, since this is predicated on prior, hard data, promising approaches that have not yet been rigorously evaluated with research findings are not supported. Thus, many innovative ideas are lost.”

Alicia’s paid job and her volunteer activism in mental health advocacy are complementary. She serves on multiple committees and Boards of organization that serve the SMI population, believing “they keep me current on community networks and in touch with real-life issues.” (See the consumer self help initiative, www.onourownmd.org, with which she is active.) Through this service, Alicia is continually reminded of the frequently heroic coping skills of persons with SMI. To keep her in touch with the experiences of her own research subjects, especially as to informed consent procedures, she routinely volunteers to be a subject in research studies around Maryland’s professional campus. Alicia was awarded (2007) the “Heroes in the Fight” Award for contributions to services for people with serious mental illnesses from the local National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) affiliate.

Her outside, “street level,” activism centers around two areas: abortion rights and Afghan women. She has, for 19 years, been a member of a group (www.wacdtf.org) that actively defends abortion clinics in Maryland. She regularly carpool to a small town in Maryland to defend a clinic there. “My strengths are political work, especially grassroots organizing; public speaking; and behind the scenes logistical and infrastructure work.”

In the late 1990s, Alicia closely followed news of the plight of Afghans at the hands of the Taliban (embarrassed about U.S. complicity in prior actions against that beleaguered country.) Wanting to help in “some undefined way,” she came upon a website for The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan, (www.rawa.org) and emailed to offer her help. This led to her organizing a network of U.S. supporters of RAWA and later to get involved with the Afghan Women’s Fund of Women for Afghan Women (www.womenforafghanwomen.org) and Rubia (www.rubiahandwork.org) -- all of which work with women and communities inside Afghanistan and in refugee communities in Pakistan.

A high energy person, Alicia is constantly confronted by worthy causes and injustices that concern her. She has learned to protect her time and thus, her health.

This was the end of the comprehensive CMHC movement. It was no longer a viable career option for me. I felt as if my ship sunk, just as it was approaching the harbor!
having experienced two episodes of cancer, three years apart, involving surgery and chemotherapy. (Fortunately, she had the less virulent form of ovarian cancer and has been cancer free for six years.) On the other hand, Alicia has more discretionary time than most people because “I do not have children and do not own a TV which is a big time sink.” She makes time to socialize, do “urban hiking” (aka walking), cook for crowds, read, and do crafts work.

Alicia has held prominent positions with the Association for Women in Psychology (AWP) for a decade, including three years as National Spokesperson. She currently serves on APA’s Committee for LGBT Concerns. Her involvement with SCRA has primarily been through biennials and the LGBT interest group (which she chaired for five years). Although she considers community mental health services with SMI populations to be a neglected domain of community psychology, she does present her work at SCRA’s biennial meetings so as to keep the area alive and current within the field.

Regional Update

Edited by Bernadette Sánchez

Since the last issue of TCP, we have a number of new regional coordinators that we would like to welcome. Sharon Song has joined the Midwest as a regional coordinator along with Valerie Anderson, Abigail Brown, and Jessica Hunnell as student regional coordinators. Also, the West has two new regional coordinators: Joan Twohey-Jacobs and Dyana Valentine. Welcome to all of you and thank you for joining us!

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We are pleased to announce the first ever national Canadian conference on community psychology planned for May 20–22, 2010 at the University of Ottawa! This conference is an outgrowth of the Ontario-Quebec student conference on community psychology which has involved the participation of four universities (Université Laval, University of Ottawa, Université du Québec à Montréal, and Wilfrid Laurier University). At the last conference in 2008, it was decided by attendees to organize a larger conference inviting participants from across Canada. The theme of the conference is “Community Psychology in Canada: Celebrating our Past and Looking to the Future.” For this conference, we have invited many of the original pioneers in community psychology in Canada to participate on a series of panels examining research, training, and practice in community psychology. We are asking them to reflect on their own work as well as on directions for the future of community psychology. To date, the Canadian “pioneers” who have agreed to participate include: Ed Bennett, Camil Bouchard, Ben Gotlieb, Jerome Guay, Pat O’Neill, Ed Pomeroy, Pierre Ritchie, Bruce Teft, and Richard Walsh-Bowers.

In addition to the panel sessions involving Canadian pioneers, we are also organizing as part of the conference a series of concurrent sessions, a poster session, and a visioning session on growing community psychology training in Canada. Past Ontario-Quebec conferences have averaged 60–70 attendees. We expect that expanding the conference will attract 100–120 attendees.

The Canadian conference serves as an important vehicle for the small community of CPer’s (faculty and students) to get together, network, and develop collaborative research and practice projects. We look forward to seeing you in Ottawa!

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Greetings from the Northeast! We have been busy planning an excellent SCRA program at the upcoming Eastern Psychological Association conference. We solicited proposals in October and are pleased to announce that, in addition to a keynote speaker, we have several exciting paper, symposium, and poster sessions planned for 2010’s EPA program in Brooklyn, NY, on March 4–7, 2010. In addition to several posters scheduled throughout the conference, we have two paper sessions scheduled on Friday, March 5. The first of these will be on parenting, and the second on research with diverse underserved populations, including Hasidic Jewish, refugee, and other underserved populations. Our program also includes two symposia, both also to be held on Friday, March 5. Heidi DeLoveh, Adriana Pilafova, and Aliya Chapman, all from George Mason University, will present on how clinical psychology graduate students can get involved in community psychology. This topic was warmly received at prior EPA conferences, and we are pleased to again offer a symposium on this topic as part of our program this coming year. Kathleen Dockett, Robert Banks, Melinda Montgomery, India Thomas, and Evelyn Lieb from the University of the District of Columbia will also present a symposium on HIV/AIDS prevention efforts on college campuses.

Finally, we are very honored to have Dr. John Draper give a keynote address on his work with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline Network on Friday, March 5, from 9 am–10:20 am. Aside from having a private practice in New York City, Dr. Draper is the Director of the federally-funded Lifeline Network, administered by Link2Health Solutions, a subsidiary of the Mental Health Association of New York City. Since September 2004, Dr. Draper has overseen all aspects of this service that connects 1-800-273-TALK callers to the nearest crisis center within a national network of more than 140 crisis centers across the country. Prior to his work on the Lifeline, Dr. Draper had been the Director of Public Education and the LifeNet Multicultural Hotline Network for the Mental Health Association of New York City, and also previously worked with Interfaith Medical Center’s Mobile Crisis Team in Brooklyn. Dr. Draper will discuss the Lifeline Network as a community intervention and how crisis lines can help fill gaps in the continuity of care. Dr. Draper’s talk will also present successes, challenges, and implications of the Lifeline experience.

In all, we are looking forward to an excellent program and hope to see you all at the 2010 Eastern Psychological Association conference in March. For more information about the upcoming conference, please visit the EPA website at www.easternpsychological.org.
The network of Bay Area community psychologists and colleagues from other fields with interests in community-based research and intervention continue to meet once a semester for an informal colloquium. The Fall Colloquium, held November 13th, at UC Berkeley had two very engaging presentations. Keira Chu, the Project Coordinator for the Kids & Family Project at UC Berkeley and Qing Zhou, an Assistant Professor and PI for the Kids & Family Project at UC Berkeley spoke about “Sampling and Recruitment in Studies of Children from Immigrant Families: An Example from a Longitudinal Study on Chinese American Immigrant Children.” This was followed by a presentation from Cristel Russell, Professor of Marketing from University of Auckland, NZ, on “Testing the Effects of Alcohol Placements in Television Programming.” Both presentations sparked interesting group dialogues and were well attended. For those interested in attending and/or presenting please contact Marieka Schotland or Gina Langhout (see emails below). 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 meets twice a year while encouraging smaller groups to form around particular interests. If you would like to be on our mailing list, please email Marieka Schotland (mss286@nyu.edu) or Gina Langhout (langhout@ucsc.edu).

The Hawaii Region would like to welcome our new Community and Cultural Coordinator, Gina Langhout (langhout@ucsc.edu). We are pleased to share this article on interdisciplinary collaboration written by a MHEDIC colleague, Kurt Michael, along with Melodi Wynne of the Group Development and Cultural Psychology. Educational opportunities such as the certification program in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, as well as the Quentin N. Burdick Interdisciplinary Training and Community Capacity Building for Rural Communities program, both offer unique training and experiential components, where theory and practice meet. With a highly culturally diverse community in the Honolulu area, and a program that offers opportunities for educational and professional experiences in all of her areas of interest, UHM was clearly the best choice for her. Sherri received her B.A. in International Affairs from Kennesaw State University (GA) and M.A. in Sustainable International Development from Brandeis University. For 6 years before entering the Ph.D. program at UHM, she worked at an environmental policy institute at Boston College. While there, she developed and directed programs in urban and community forestry. Sherri’s work combined community-based interventions designed to support communities interested in improving their social and physical environments with research and policy initiatives aimed at improving the health of the urban environment. Through her work and volunteer experience (volunteering in New Orleans after Katrina, and in orphanages in Central America and saharan Africa, for example) she developed a strong interest in community resilience, specifically in the context of trauma and natural disasters.

There was a Labor Day potluck picnic at Kailua Beach Park on Oahu—an annual event hosted by Clifford O’Donnell, who is the Director of the program—to welcome incoming Community and Cultural Concentration students. Above is a picture of the group.

School Intervention

Edited by Paul Flaspohler & Melissa Maras

Hello again from the School Intervention Interest Group. In our last column we introduced you to a national organization that promotes interdisciplinary workforce development in school mental health (MHEDIC; Mental Health Education and Integration Consortium). MHEDIC is a group of “kindred spirits” from diverse disciplinary backgrounds who are committed to helping schools become healthy contexts for young people. As a consortium that seeks to support change through our own collaborative action and research, it is fitting that we often focus on interdisciplinary collaboration as it relates to school mental health. We are pleased to share this article on interdisciplinary collaboration written by a MHEDIC colleague, Kurt Michael, along with Melodi Wynne and Sherri Brokopp.
with several of his colleagues at Appalachian State University.

As Kurt elaborates, one of the greatest challenges to genuine interdisciplinary collaboration is prevailing stereotypes about and among the diverse disciplines engaged in school mental health (e.g., social workers as “baby snatchers”). These stereotypes often create unnecessary barriers to meaningful stakeholder involvement in school mental health and, ultimately, can compromise client care. Beginning with a brief exploration of interdisciplinary collaboration in school mental health, this article describes the experience of one school mental health partnership in tackling negative stereotypes to facilitate effective practices. The authors highlight their success and stumbles in navigating this partnership work, concluding with some reflections about the process and next steps related to community psychology. This article again highlights the relevance of foundational concepts and shared values in community psychology to school mental health endeavors.

So You Don’t Just Take Babies? Debunking Discipline-Specific Stereotypes and Other Lessons about True Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Written by Kurt D. Michael, Lauren E. Renkert, Jon Winek & Cameron Massey, Appalachian State University

There is a growing body of literature that supports the development of school mental health initiatives (e.g., Foster et al., 2005). The support is justified given the high number of young people in need and the fact that bringing services directly to the context in which they spend the majority of their time addresses at least some of the barriers (e.g., transportation) that prevent young people from accessing mental health providers. Furthermore, because most school mental health (SMH) initiatives include an integration of resources across traditionally distinct disciplines and agencies, the need for interdisciplinary collaboration comes into sharp relief. This type of collaboration across several ecological levels can foster the achievement of goals that cannot be reached when individuals act alone (Bronstein, 2003), a well known fact among community psychologists (Yoshikawa, 2006).

Nonetheless, the extent to which interdisciplinary services are successful or effective is an empirical question (Waxman, Weist, & Benson, 1999; Yoshikawa, 2006). There are only a few studies that have examined the effects of integrated mental health services. For instance, Bertelsen et al. (2008) examined the effects of integrated care (i.e., multidisciplinary teams, family treatment, social skills training) versus standard treatment (i.e., medication management, access to community mental health) with respect to a first episode of psychosis and found that clinical outcomes after two years were superior in the integrated model. Similarly, although not a direct test of the effects of treatment integration as it pertains to patient outcomes, Priest et al. (2008) examined the process outcomes of inter-professional education (IPE) among clinical psychology graduate students and mental health nursing students. The authors reported that the findings were suggestive of increased respect, clarity of roles, more effective communication across disciplines, and an exposure to various actual methods of collaboration in practice.

Indeed, among the variables that help to determine whether interdisciplinary school mental health initiatives are successful is the familiarity among the providers, administrators, and educators at the table. As Weist and Paternite (2006) suggested, SMH programs involve people from various systems who have substantial differences in job roles, financial pressures, educational backgrounds, professional jargon, communication tendencies, and expectations about children. In many instances when SMH initiatives are first developed, it is not uncommon for various constituents across disciplines to have virtually no direct experience with some of the professions represented. It might be true that an administrator assigned to the project has never worked directly with a clinical social worker and assumes that a social worker is the professional who investigates allegations of abuse and neglect and takes babies from unfit parents. Similarly, a professional school counselor might have little to no exposure to a marriage and family therapist and therefore have little background knowledge to understand who might be the most appropriate referral for family therapy. Thus, in the absence of any real experience or knowledge with one or more professions, perceptions are frequently based on erroneous and/or outdated assumptions and stereotypes.

Interestingly, attempts to understand and navigate the interdisciplinary landscape in light of these assumptions and stereotypes have several historic antecedents within and among mental health disciplines. In discussing the “dilemma” in clinical psychology of becoming more “interdisciplinary,” Milner (1947) observed that “[w]e tend to see the clinical psychologist as a psychometrician highly skilled in the administration and interpretation of diagnostic tests, psychometric, and in some schools, projective, also” (p. 145). For most psychologists today, the aforementioned description of a psychologist’s role would probably be viewed as outdated, too narrow, or both. Yet, those unfamiliar with the profession might still subscribe to the narrow stereotype of a psychologist being primarily a psychometrician. At the time, Milner suggested that in order for a clinical psychologist to expand one’s skill set beyond psychometrics and/or the research endeavor to become competent to work in a guidance clinic, school, or veteran’s center, it would require much more training and exposure across the interdisciplinary landscape (e.g., physiology, genetics, sociology, anthropology) to avoid what Milner called the “atomistic approach.” According to Milner, the atomistic style which she argued was common in some disciplines at the time (including psychology), needed to be counterbalanced by an integrative, interdisciplinary model.

In another seminal paper about interdisciplinary collaboration, Mitchell (1955) described some of the initial efforts of those on behalf of social work and psychology to forge an interdisciplinary partnership between the American Psychological Association and the American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers (AAPSW). Despite positive overtures, Mitchell characterized some of the early dynamics between the groups as “superficial” or “defensive” and fueled by efforts to protect professional turf. Early in the process, some of those involved with AAPSW were reportedly under the impression that the status of the social work organization was being relegated to a junior partnership with psychology versus a more egalitarian relationship (Mitchell, 1955). As the efforts to create a partnership continued over time (approximately 5 years) and began to stabilize somewhat, one of Mitchell’s observations was that “the two groups got to know one another and there developed a genuine respect for each other’s opinions. Moreover, the social atmosphere of the group acquired a healthy give-and-take quality” (p. 203).

The aforementioned historic examples of interdisciplinary thinking reveal a mixture
of optimism and concern about the prospects of developing an effective mental health collaborative overall. Given our present understanding of the challenges involved in developing exemplary interdisciplinary SMH initiatives, what follows is a brief description of one such partnership, the Assessment, Support, and Counseling (ASC) Center, located at Watauga High School, a rural school district in Western North Carolina. Watauga County is home to both the ASC Center and Appalachian State University (ASU), a well-established university with graduate programs that train mental health clinicians across several disciplines (e.g., clinical psychology, school psychology, social work, marriage and family therapy, music therapy). The genesis of the ASC Center was based on evidence that many young people were going without treatment even when substantial university resources, such as graduate trainees under the supervision of licensed professionals at ASU, were available to address the dearth of available service providers in the community (Michael, Renkert, Wandler, & Stamey, 2009).

The initial and ongoing development of the ASC Center has created numerous opportunities and challenges for the school, community, and university stakeholders. According to Bronstein (2003), there are several factors that influence interdisciplinary collaboration. Among them are structural characteristics (e.g., administrative support, manageable workload, autonomy) and personal characteristics (e.g., ability to engage in mutually respectful and trusting relationships, skills in promoting understanding). Equally important is one’s history of collaboration, including those experiences during pre-professional preparation and internships. Thus, one of the first challenges for the ASC Center was setting up an effective infrastructure and system of regular communication that would create ample opportunities to become familiar with the various constituents and thereby be in the position to dispel or at least diminish some of the narrow perceptions of the various disciplines and job roles. To address this challenge directly, the first decision made was to meet weekly. Initially, this was essentially a two hour discussion between the principal and the original ASU faculty member who served at the high school. Shortly thereafter, a graduate trainee under the supervision of the faculty member joined the discussion along with weekly consultation from a psychologist from the local community mental health center. Since the first year, the team has grown substantially, continues to meet weekly, and now has a diverse array of individuals, including an assistant principal, a doctoral level licensed psychologist/faculty member, a doctoral level licensed clinical social worker/faculty member, a doctoral level marriage and family therapist/faculty member, a master’s level licensed psychological associate, professional school counselors, a student resource officer, seven graduate trainees across three disciplines, two licensed clinicians from the community mental health agency, a school psychologist, and a school-based clinical social worker. The agenda of each meeting is diverse but clear: to develop data-driven (e.g., attendance, grades, number of discipline referrals, symptom measures, observations) school-based intervention plans for students to promote their academic and behavioral success. The number of professionals and trainees at the table might seem unwieldy, yet the meetings are task oriented and facilitated efficiently.

Over time, the pattern of communication that has emerged from the weekly meetings is an atmosphere of familiarity, deep respect, and support. What we have found thus far is that there are more similarities than differences among the interdisciplinary collaborators. We rally around common goals—to bring mental health services to the students at the high school and thereby improve the health, well-being, and academic achievement of each student, and to provide exemplary graduate training for a new generation of students across disciplines. The unified agenda leaves little room for toxic turf-wars or professional elitism. At the same time, individuals at the table are encouraged to share their specific areas of expertise, notably when specialized knowledge is required to develop an effective intervention plan. For individuals at the table, the challenge is to develop the confidence to present professional perspectives while simultaneously listening to and honoring the perspectives of others. In addition, the discussions often result in enhanced learning for graduate trainees and personal growth among the collaborators. Given all of the disparate perspectives, the staffing discussions are often lively and typically push professionals to think beyond their traditional discipline specific boundaries. The perspective of interdisciplinary school personnel is integral given that these individuals frequently have daily contact with the students, know their families, and have a broader understanding of the students and families in the context of the community.

Another lesson learned early on is the importance of valuing each member’s contribution, regardless of discipline. For example, by no means was the ASC Center designed to replace the excellent work of the current professional school counselors, yet there were some concerns expressed during the first year that they did not feel like full-fledged members of the team. Given these formative data, adjustments were made to the intake (e.g., weekly case presentations) and follow-up procedures to ensure that the professional counselors were fully integrated into the ASC Center operation. In sum, weekly staffing sessions often provide a comprehensive picture of each student’s strengths and needs, and do so in a much more efficient manner than is possible within the norms of traditional school-based services or individual therapy. Consequently, a more targeted, data-driven and expedited intervention plan is developed for each student with several layers of cooperative accountability and consultation.

As the ASC Center partnership has evolved, there is evidence to suggest the
interdisciplinary endeavor has successfully led to the debunking of stereotypes, created an atmosphere that is relatively free of professional suspicion, and provided positive models of collaboration for current and future mental health and educational professionals. Similar to the observations of Mitchell (1955), much of what has been achieved through the ASC interdisciplinary endeavor is attributable to time, structural and interpersonal variables, and a common agenda. Based on our experience, the most important lesson learned is the value of meeting weekly. This is the context where familiarity, respect, and collaboration actually happen! Nonetheless, a great deal of work remains. At the top of the list is to evaluate whether this interdisciplinary SMH activity is associated with benefits above and beyond what would be achieved by a more traditional approach. Given some of the innovations in community psychology in evaluating multi-system interventions (Yoshikawa, 2006), another chair or two should be added to the interdisciplinary table.

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References

Multiple authorship will increase.
A quick analysis based on 30 randomly selected articles from the American Journal of Community Psychology for each of the years 1978 and 2008 showed that the percentage of sole-authored research reports dropped from 43% to 13% and that the percentage of research reports with four or more authors increased from 0% to 30%. This secular trend in the distribution of credit for scientific work in community psychology probably merits investigation but I can at least speculate that it is due to two factors. One is that as the competition for graduate school, post-doctoral, and faculty positions increased, faculty mentors were increasingly receptive to the inclusion of their students on articles (and it may also be the case that theses and dissertations good enough to be published were increasingly likely to include the thesis and dissertation committee members as co-authors, as expectations for research productivity for faculty members increased). But I also believe that research teams have probably increased in size secondary to the molecularization of technical skills and other changes in the way we do research. While it would be almost impossible to

Social Policy
Edited by Nicole Porter

Integrating Policy into Graduate Education
Written by Steven Howe

The Division 27 policy committee is committed to building the capacity in community psychology graduate programs that will be necessary to train graduate students in social policy research, consulting, and practice. While our vision is not fully articulated as of this writing, it is audacious enough that we foresee a future in which community psychologists will routinely be trained to effect second-order change on behalf of their clients, partners, stakeholders, students and colleagues. This will require a transformation of our training programs, the full dimensions of which may be inferred from just how profoundly psychology departments had to change after World War II in order to incorporate training in clinical psychology. It was not simply a matter of hiring faculty members with new areas of expertise. Departments had to create new curricula; divide the training of their students into tracks; provide novel kinds of training experiences, which often involved collaborations with external units or organizations that had patients; develop new ways of financing graduate students; and create new visions for where its graduates would work. Not all of these efforts were successful; clinical training has evolved along a number of divergent paths, some of which appear in retrospect to have been dead-ends. What we would now recognize as a successful modern clinical training program involves a curriculum, a training philosophy, a faculty with distinctive responsibilities, and shared expectations about the program by such external constituencies as other faculty members, the dean, the provost, and the community. We should expect that policy training might have similarly profound and far-reaching effects on graduate training programs. In this column I consider only the effects that an increased focus on policy might have on publishing practices in academia.
study except by surveying researchers, it is my hunch that more published articles are resulting from a given lab initiative than used to be the case. External funding standards get higher, our proposals become more sophisticated, our aspirations grow grander, our teams get bigger, we get more articles/initiative, and the authorship lists grow longer. As department head, I beat the following mantra about article publication into untutored assistant professors: fewer, bigger, better. But even against this secular trend in authorship practices, an increased focus on public policy will induce further growth in the number and nature of authors. I am fond of noting that policy successes have a thousand parents, many of whom may be elected officials. Effective policy analysis may involve forming a partnership with elected officials, staff at planning agencies, and advocates. Any publication (or technical report) will correspondingly need to include many co-authors.

The intellectual products produced will skew more toward the applied end of the applicability-generalizability continuum.

Consider the stereotypical publication of an experimental social psychologist (I was trained as a social psychologist, so I mean no disrespect). A cognitive mechanism is proposed to explain some ubiquitous social phenomenon. Subjects (I choose term purposefully) are recruited, brought into the lab, and randomized to an experimental condition. Some exemplar of an everyday phenomenon, but one meaningful to the subject population, is chosen, such as grading policy or littering in university parking garages. An indicator of a cognitive process is selected; self-reports are sometimes used, but so are things like reaction time. Based on these extraordinarily narrow samplings of content, subjects, and responses, the social psychologist generates some conclusions. Again, I mean no disrespect. These kinds of laboratory studies in social influence—as merely one example—are pored over by marketing gurus and get implemented by car salespeople. But I ask you to imagine standing before a legislative committee charged with moving a piece of legislation forward. It is not even a question of their being skeptical about the ecological validity of laboratory findings to their task at hand; they will not understand why you are there. They don't care about reaction times, they care about income. They don't care about attitudes toward pass-fail grading, they care about votes. And if you are to have an impact on what they decide to do with a legislative proposal, it had better be immediately obvious to them that the research you are using to support your conclusions is relevant to the task at hand, their electoral district, and the present. Is their proposed allocation too small or too large? Are their inclusion criteria too generous or too conservative? Will the public support their efforts or oppose them? What should they do here and now? They don't even know what generalizability is, they just want to do the right thing with their vote on this issue. Political scientists understand the value of research at the extreme of applicability; it won the cold war. Researchers at the Centers for Disease Control understand the value of research at the extreme of applicability; it contained HIV. Academic psychologists? Not so much. But if we are to incorporate policy into our graduate programs, we will have to start doing high applicability-low generalizability work.

Work teams will have to be nimbler and more fluid.

Sometimes colleagues express an interest in becoming involved with policy work. When a project comes along that they might be interested in, I seek them out. “Great,” they might say, “as soon as I’m done with this paper I’m working on… maybe at the end of the term.” Often I have to tell them that the client wants a proposal in 48 hours and that the project will have to be complete by the end of the term. And unlike some of my academic colleagues who are always publishing with the same core set of colleagues, policy consulting often begins with figuring out what expertise you’ll need to bring onto the team that you don’t possess. And the expertise is often not even research expertise; it might be legal, financial, or programmatic. I’ll use an example of my current project line-up to illustrate. Last summer I decided to stake out a line of research into mental health financing and mental health prevention science. It wasn’t very clear to me why I thought these two strands should be connected other than a hunch that with declining public funding for mental health financing, prevention was probably getting squeezed. I spent the summer doing some reading with Claudia Feldhaus of DePaul, in Cincinnati for the summer, and Kellana Walton, an incoming graduate student in my lab. Kellana and I are now at work writing a funding proposal for a pilot project and lining up collaborators, one of whom is a social worker at The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati with a profound grasp on public mental health funding. This project illustrates the leisurely pace at which self-directed research proceeds. In the meantime, Kellana and I have already been invited to help write an NSF ADVANCE grant to change the culture for women STEM scientists at UC (submitted in early November 2009) and have been asked to consider bidding on the evaluation component of a SAMHSA grant recently awarded to the Hamilton County (Ohio) Mental Health Recovery Services Board. I suspect that we were invited to participate in the latter precisely because word had started to filter out about our interests in mental health financing. And, to top it off, I am in talks with a unit at the Veteran’s Administration Hospital system to discuss a possible research collaboration of national scope. So depending on how you count things, we have as many as four different research teams and four large projects under consideration in about five months. Of course not all of them will be funded, and Kellana and I may even choose not to pursue some of them. But this is the pace at which evaluation and policy consulting projects appear on the task horizon and need to be assessed and either bid on or let go. And these are a particularly coherent set of projects compared to some phases of my career’s work.

The process is more often the product.

A few years ago a senior staff member in the office of the City Manager of the City of Cincinnati contacted me to say that some council members and community advocates wished to resurrect a defunct office for environmental concerns, an area in which I have no content expertise. She had heard that I was often willing to do facilitation work, she apologized that there was an insanely short time period in which to pull together a proposed piece of legislation (I seem to remember three weeks), and asked me if I would do it. After being assured that I would have some support from a councilmember’s staff to handle the process of scheduling the meetings, I estimated the number of hours this would take, made her a fixed-price offer, which was accepted, and went to work. I did a few key informant interviews by telephone, met with the same group of about two-dozen stakeholders three times, and we hammered out a proposal. It was an interesting group; while nearly everyone was in favor of the proposal, participants ranged from passionate citizens who were convinced that no proposal would be strong enough to battle-tested city bureaucrats who knew
how the proposal had to be crafted to win majority approval from council. My role was strictly facilitative. The work was done on time, the proposal passed council, and there is now a city office on environmental quality. I was reminded on this story because of an external review I just did for a community psychologist on the faculty of a medical school where her policy expertise and federal programmatic experiences were, to my mind, major qualifications for promotion to the rank of full professor and yet curiously absent from her vita. One five year stretch at a renowned scientific agency of the federal government was reduced to a single line on her vita. I think we have to learn a lesson from academic administrators, whose vita often include sections where they list their administrative accomplishments. We are so used to vitae where you list only positions and products that we denigrate process-related accomplishments. (As I footnote to this, I wondered whether I had any vita-credit for the project described above. When I examined my vita, I saw that under “Consulting to organizations” I had failed to even list this consultation, so it has been added as, “City of Cincinnati, facilitated planning of proposal for new office of environmental concerns, 2006”).

**And our products themselves will change.**

Several years ago, as part of an undergraduate senior thesis project I was supervising, a student and I did an analysis of several hundred articles randomly sampled from the social science literature, half from psychology and half from the other social sciences. The goal was to code them according to their use of primary data or secondary data, or their use of meta-analysis. While the results from the psychology literature were interesting enough to support a senior thesis, we had to reject the idea of even coding the other publications. Why? Because to my surprise we learned that it would have been far too hard. The literature in the other social sciences does not overwhelmingly rely on our publication stereotype of introduction, method, results, and discussion. We would have had to read every page of every publication to figure out the method. Worse, particularly in certain subfields of sociology, much of political science, and large parts of economics, there is no clear distinction between the data of the author(s) and other data that are being analyzed. In psychology, we do not analyze data in the introduction, we do not introduce findings based on other data sets in our results section, and our conclusions are generally expressed in terms of what we learned from our data. This now strikes me as hugely limiting. Should not a scientific paper attempt to pull together all that is known of a phenomenon? And indeed, that is what the policy audience expects. They wish to be educated, they wish to hear all of the relevant data, and they wish no special status to be accorded to data that the researchers themselves might own. A policy analyst might be expected to interweave original analyses of census data, a detailed explanation of findings published by a federal agency such as the Centers for Disease Control, more original analyses from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, and connect his or her conclusions to the totality of the findings. And while I am on this subject of how we structure what we publish, let me note that to a policy audience, our discussion sections are tepid and boring. What policy makers need is not discussion but conclusions and especially recommendations. Based on these data, what do we do? And if we do not have some concrete and practical recommendations to offer to the policy community, then they dismiss our work as mere dissertations. (Go to www.etymonline.com to get the devastatingly accurate origins of “dissertation,” which stems from “to arrange words.”) The debate from 1945–1965 in the political science literature about mutual assured destruction had to do, among other things, with whether the U.S. should develop a “second strike capability.” In other words, the debate was about what kind and how many missiles and delivery systems we should build. Had that debate been in the psychology literature, it would have been about the correlates of beliefs, not about recommendations for action. We have to start taking our science seriously enough that we propose its findings be implemented.

**Special Feature**

**Responding to the Challenges of Our Times: Report of an Innovative Session held at the 2009 SCRA Biennial**

*Edited and written by the Responding to the Challenges of Our Times Organizing Committee:*

- **Bill Berkowitz**  
  University of Massachusetts Lowell
- **Liesette Brunson**  
  University of Quebec at Montreal
- **Gina Cardzone**  
  University of Hawai‘i
- **Victoria Chien**  
  University of South Carolina
- **Jim Cook**  
  University of North Carolina, Charlotte
- **Vince Francisco**  
  University of North Carolina, Greensboro
- **Bill Neigher**  
  Atlantic Health
- **Dyana Valentine**  
  Los Angeles, CA

We face challenges unprecedented in most of our lifetimes: to our economic well-being, to our environment, to our emotional health, to our community quality of life. It is a long and compelling list, which poses the following questions: In these circumstances,

1. How can we best create and maintain supportive, resilient, equitable, and sustainable communities?
2. How can we as a discipline use our psychological knowledge to create the greatest impact upon the wider world?
3. And how can we best convert our ideas and plans into concrete actions?

An innovative session at the 2009 SCRA Biennial conference gave us a chance to meet together as community psychologists and talk about how we can best respond to these challenges. The main objective of these sessions was to start conversations about concrete responses to local community challenges, and the roles that we as community psychologists can play to foster positive responses. A secondary objective was to experience one type of community-building technique, the World Café (Brown, Homer, & Isaacs, 2007).

Due to the unprecedented challenges in the world today, the title selected for this innovative session was Responding to the Challenges of Our Time. This meeting
was meant to be an unstructured time for discussion of topics including the status and future of the discipline. People from around the world attended. Countries represented included Egypt, the UK, Mexico, Canada, the U.S., and Germany. Two sessions were held—one on Thursday and one on Friday, both in the evenings. This was the first time this program was held.

Thursday’s meeting centered on identifying challenges, using the World Café format. About 40 people participated, sitting around small tables and discussing actively with their table partners. Participants changed tables and met with new partners for each of four rounds of questions:

- **Round 1**: Speaking from your own experience, what needs have you sensed related to the economic crisis or other challenges that your local communities face? What are your own anxieties and fears related to these challenges? What motivates you to want to engage more deeply in local community life? What keeps you from getting involved?

- **Round 2**: What roles can we play in promoting innovative models for community and in fostering community processes that develop trust, resource sharing, and a sense of belonging?

- **Round 3**: What are some models for sustainable community life that you’ve heard of? Examples of small-scale community development? New forms of collaboration and relationship building? Techniques that bring community members together to solve problems?

- **Round 4**: What barriers to adopting these roles or implementing these solutions? With whom could we partner to overcome these barriers?

Friday’s meeting centered on plans to meet the challenges identified in Thursday’s meeting. About 30 people participated on the second evening. Participants focused on concrete actions they can do in their local communities after the conference ends. There were lively discussions centered around:

- breaking out of the traditional labels and barriers that limit our ideas about how to approach our work;
- being with people in the community in genuine ways;
- how to compile examples of sustainable community practices for global sharing;
- how to influence policy;
- the need to foster more of a sense of community within SCRA, including more time to “play” together;
- making community psychology more visible and influential; and
- how to offer more community building activities at upcoming Biennials, including unstructured time, bringing in more people outside of SCRA, and more opportunities.

While these discussions did not arrive at complete solutions, participants generated many ideas and plans. Participants committed to specific actions they wanted to do as individuals, as members of their local community, and as members of community psychology associations and groups. For example, someone suggested starting an environmental interest group. Others committed to joining the Practice Group and other active SCRA committees and interest groups. One group, whose members include Vince Francisco, Greg Meissen, Oli Dziadkowiec, and Victoria Chien, focused on community building and action oriented ideas for Future Biennials. This group has continued to work together and is developing ideas to offer to the next Biennial planning committee. People seemed to enjoy the time to meet together and share ideas on an informal basis, and the discussions generated a lot of laughter and enthusiasm.

In addition to face-to-face meetings that took place at the Biennial, there was also an online version of the Café led by Gina Cardazone in collaboration with Dyana Valentine. Around five people chatted online about the same questions that were presented to the Thursday evening participants. The members of the online group enjoyed participating and felt it was good for community building. Incorporation of similar formats into biennial programming should be considered, for those who are unable to attend certain sessions or the overall meeting.

The organizers of this innovative session would like to thank everyone who participated in this first-ever Biennial experiment! We recruited several table hosts on the spot, including Oli Dziadkowiec, Tiffeny Jimenez, Greg Meissen, and Dave Julian. Tod Sloan, who was not able to attend the conference, helped develop the discussion questions for the World Café. Scot Evans provided the technical support for linking an online chat session to the SCRA web site that Gina Cardazone hosted. Dyana Valentine facilitated the large group discussions at the end of the Thursday evening session that allowed us to identify themes for the Friday evening session. Bill Berkowitz provided the leadership that got these discussions going, and made sense of it all with a concise summary at the closing plenary session, captured with notes by Jazmin Ryes. A great big thank you goes to all of the participants who were willing to experiment with us and contributed their terrific enthusiasm and great ideas!
We hope this innovative process—the first of its kind at any Biennial—provided a forum for participants to share models for sustaining community life that is rich, joyful and adaptive and that offers a buffer for difficult economic conditions and other adversities. We also hope there will be many continuing opportunities for us to meet together and act upon the current challenges we face.

**Reference**


### 12th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action: Evaluation and Recommendations

Written by Rhonda K. Lewis-Moss, Jamilia Sly, Shani Roberts, Shoshana Wernick, Felecia Lee & Chris Kirk, Wichita State University

The 12th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action was held in Montclair, New Jersey, June 18–21, 2009. The conference was hosted by Montclair State University, Department of Psychology, and lead by Drs. Milton Fuentes and Sandra Lewis (co-chairs). The theme of the conference was “Realizing Our New Vision: Values and Principles for Practice, Research and Policy.” The goal of the evaluation was to provide feedback to the Society, and help future hosts in planning for the Biennial. This article reports on the results of the 12th Biennial evaluation. For the first time conference evaluations were conducted on-line with the vision of “going green” by saving paper.

#### Overview of Evaluation

The evaluation team consisted of researchers from Wichita State University which was lead by Dr. Rhonda K. Lewis-Moss. The evaluation team developed the evaluation survey in collaboration with the Society for Community Research and Action 12th Biennial Conference Co-chairs and the SCRA executive committee.

#### Method

**Procedures.** An online survey was

### Table 1. Gender and Racial/Ethnic Group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Racial/Ethnic Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International (Scottish/Irish British, South Asia, Indian, White African)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biracial</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Asian/Caucasian, Latino/White, Middle Eastern, Pan-Ethnic, White/Native American)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>237</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Participants may choose more than one.

### Table 2. Conference Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tell us how you felt about the conference arrangements.</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online registration</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line abstract</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing arrangements</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining arrangements</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference meeting rooms</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled social events</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal social opportunities</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for interest group meetings</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from conference volunteers</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community conversations</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall site quality</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Range of responses: 1 = very negative, 2 = negative, 3 = neutral, 4 = positive, 5 = very positive
Table 3. Reasons for Attending Conference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why did you come to this Biennial Conference?</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquire new ideas/theories</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>4.30</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about new developments in the field</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about the overall state of SCRA &amp; CP Field</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire new factual information</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet new people</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive mentoring from knowledgeable professionals</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about community psychology</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present my own work</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See old friends/colleagues</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a break/vacation</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with special interest group</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about community practice</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about career paths using community psychology</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other reason</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Range of responses: 1 = Not very important, 2 = Not important, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Important, 5 = Very important

Table 4. Program and Conference Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The content of the conference...</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflected the scope of the field</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflected the values of the field</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave sufficient emphasis to research that contributes to theory</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represented social policy issues sufficiently</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave sufficient emphasis to research that contributes to action</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Represented applied settings sufficiently</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall quality of content was high</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1–5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Range of responses: 1 = Strongly agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly disagree

devolved from past evaluation surveys and a few new questions were added (Woods & Wilson, 2005). The survey consisted of demographic questions, questions about conference content and logistics, and how satisfied conference attendees were with conference activities. In addition, the research team also conducted interviews with conference attendees to gather qualitative information (i.e., roving reporters). In order to save paper the on-line survey was constructed and a few paper copies of the survey were available at the conference registration desk. In each conference packet a sticker was placed on the inside flap of the conference packet directing conference registrants to a website that conference attendees could complete the survey on line. Conference registrants were reminded to complete the evaluation on-line by the conference co-chairs and the evaluation team wore “It’s All about the E” buttons to encourage participants to complete the survey. The online-survey was made available two weeks after the conference and reminder emails were sent to encourage people to complete the survey on-line.

Instruments. The evaluation survey was adapted from the instrument used for the 2005 Biennial (Woods and Wilson, 2005). The survey also collected data on the following areas: 1) demographics, 2) conference arrangements, 3) program and conference content, and 4) overall assessment of the 12th Biennial. In addition, the Wichita State University evaluation team developed a list of questions for the roving reporter to collect qualitative information from conference registrants. Because of page restrictions the roving reporter information will be included in the next TCP.

Participants. Forty-six percent (237/514) of the conference attendees completed the evaluation survey. The 46% response was pretty good given the fact that the surveys were online for the first time. There were 208 on-line surveys completed and 29 paper surveys completed.

Results
The following pages present the quantitative evaluation data on the four overarching areas described above.

Demographics. Of the 237 people who completed either the online or paper survey, 45% identified themselves as students, 44% were from academic institutions, and 5% were from Government/Other Non-profit, or a Community-Based Organization. Four percent of the respondents reported working
for a mental health agency, advocacy group or other. The vast majority of respondents were SCRA members (89%) while only 40% reported being APA members. Nearly 80% of those completing the survey either had their doctorate or master degree, 18% reported having a bachelor degree, and three reported other. Table 1 provides a summary of the conference attendees that completed the evaluation survey.

A total of 229 of the 237 respondents provided information on previous Biennial attendance. For 42% of registrants this was their first Biennial. Forty-three percent reported attending the last Biennial in Pasadena.

**Conference Arrangements.** Forty-one percent reported staying in campus housing, 47% stayed in a hotel, 7% stayed with family or friends and about 12 people commuted from home, New York City. Table 2 shows the mean scores for the list of conference arrangements. The Likert-type scale ranged from 1-5, “1” being “very negative” to “5” being “very positive.” The highest mean score was 4.38 for on-line registration. Overall the means were fairly high and with the exception of transportation from the airport to the conference site (2.36), and no other item fell below a 3.00. This suggests that people were positive about the conference arrangements. Registrants were asked about travel from campus to conference site. The mean score was 3.08. This suggests another mixed review. Registrants did not find travel from the airport very difficult, but they also did not find getting from the airport to the conference very easy.

**Program and Conference Content.** Participants were asked about reasons for coming to the Biennial (e.g., acquire new ideas/theories, learn new developments in the field). The scale used a 5-point Likert-type scale (5=very important, 1= not very important). The top three reasons people came to the conference were to learn about new developments in the field, acquire new ideas/theories, and meet new people. Table 3 gives the number of respondents, the mean score and the range of responses. Registrants were asked about the conference content. Table 4 shows that lower scores indicate registrant’s greater agreement with the items. The scale ranged from “1” (“strongly agree”) to “5” (“strongly disagree”). The item with the highest mean score was “Overall quality of content was high.” The item with the second highest mean score was “Reflected the values of our field.”

**Overall Conference Assessment.** Overall, registrants rated the value of the conference (on a scale from 1 to 10 with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest) a mean score of 8.24. When asked how likely it would be for them to attend the next Biennial, registrants reported (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest) a mean score of 8.24. Table 5 shows satisfaction surveys for each of the plenaries and special events. The cocktail reception received the highest score of 4.35 on a 5-point scale, “1” being “very dissatisfied” and “5” being “very satisfied.” Registrants reported being satisfied with Kevin Cathcart’s presentation (4.07) and the poster sessions (4.01).

**Suggestions**

A number of registrants felt that the conference was packed with wonderful sessions; however, they were all at the same time and this was frustrating. One recommendation is to have fewer sessions at the same time. Other recommendations include: 1) improving the availability of recycling; 2) providing computer Internet access in the dorms; 3) making the program easier to read at a glance; 4) holding the student mixer at the beginning of the conference; 5) including more information on getting around Montclair; and 6) allocating more time for the session, which would allow more time for discussion.

**References**


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**Student Issues**

*Edited by Fernando Estrada & Lindsey Zimmerman*

**SCRA Student Members Honored with 2009 Ford Diversity Fellowships**

*Written by Lindsey Zimmerman*

**Fernando Estrada**

Ford fellow Fernando Estrada is a second year, doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Arizona State University and proudly serves as a National Student Representative for SCRA. Fernando’s Ford-funded research will examine how gender and race continue to be entrenched in a socially stratified matrix of power and resources (Collins, 1990) that affect human development. By raising student awareness on institutional power and oppression, higher education remains central in the dismantling of sexism, racism and other hegemonic forces. In hopes of
greater, more consistent multi-level change, some have urged educators to move beyond the popular oppression-based curriculum to more privilege-based educational content (Johnson, 2001). Studies, in fact, confirm the construct of privilege as producing prejudicial values like superiority (Ostrander, 1984) and an us-versus-them perspective (Tajfel, 1982) among dominant groups like men and Whites. But despite promising outcomes in the classroom (e.g., Case, 2007), attempts to address issues of privilege result mostly in the management of strong, affective reactions like guilt and anger among both students (Mallet & Swim, 2007) and teachers (Vaught & Castagno, 2008). We wish Fernando the best with this important work.

Katrina E. Davis
Ford fellow Katrina E. Davis attended San Diego State University where her involvement in mentoring programs and student organizations made her acutely aware of education and mental health disparities among ethnic minority individuals. Katrina is now a second-year graduate student in the Clinical-Community Psychology doctoral program at DePaul University where she is working with Dr. Bernadette Sánchez on a number of projects examining academic achievement among low-income, urban Latino adolescents. In addition, Katrina is collaborating with Dr. Sabine French from the University of Illinois at Chicago on a project exploring academic disengagement among an ethnically diverse sample of college students. Katrina’s Ford-funded research will utilize numerous treatments to better understand the effects of both oppression and privilege-based content on student awareness and attitude change in hopes of creating optimal student environments for learning. African-American and Latino adolescents in low-income areas are at increased risk for academic failure. Much of the psychological literature examining achievement gap focuses on deficits rather than strengths. Katrina seeks to identify psychological factors that contribute to academic resilience within a low-income, urban, ethnic minority population. A mixed-method approach will be used to establish a valid measure of academic resilience among this population. Understanding psychological variables that allow the most high-risk individuals to achieve success despite the adversities s/he faces will be an innovative approach to inform prevention/intervention methods. We wish her the very best.

In addition to Fernando and Katrina’s predoctoral fellowships, Michael Strambar, a former SCRA student member was awarded a postdoctoral Ford fellowship. A very small minority of Ford fellowships were awarded in 2009 among hundreds of applicants. Therefore, it is a great honor to have three awardees from SCRA. Perhaps these members’ successes will encourage other students to apply for a Ford Diversity Pre- or Post-doctoral Fellowship in the future. Congratulations again to Fernando, Katrina, and Michael!

Updates from the 2009 Southeast ECO Conference

Written by
Greg Townley

The Clinical-Community graduate students of The University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC hosted a successful 2009 Southeast Ecological Community Psychology (ECO) Conference on Oct. 16th and 17th, 2009. The conference theme was, Promoting Lasting Change in Communities. Over 75 students and faculty attended from six different universities, including North Carolina State University, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, North Carolina Central University, University of South Carolina, and Georgia State University. We were pleased to welcome students and faculty from the University of Miami for the first time this year. Their continued involvement in future Southeast ECO conferences will help to promote the sustainability and growth of this exciting event.

In line with the conference theme of promoting lasting change in communities, we asked for graduate programs to help involve undergraduates in their presentations. We were heartened to see a number of undergraduate students at the conference delivering first-time presentations on topics ranging from photovoice with homeless youth to service learning in undergraduate community psychology courses. The theme of the conference was also captured in Dr. Pamela Martin’s (North Carolina State University) keynote address entitled, ‘Working yourself out of a job: Understanding self to promote liberation in diverse communities.’ Dr. Martin paid homage to numerous community psychology

‘heroes and sheroes’ and helped each of us reflect on the ‘super powers’ we utilize in our community practice. We would like to thank everyone who was part of making the 2009 Southeast ECO conference a success. We look forward to next year’s conference, hosted by the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Updates from the 2009 Midwest ECO Conference

Written by
Meredith Poff, Mark Relyea, Claire Christensen, Brett Coleman, Hillary Rowe & Amy Mart

Thank you to all who attended Midwest ECO 2009 at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Over 120 graduate and undergraduate students, community members, faculty, and volunteers came together on October 9th and 10th to engage in meaningful discussions about such topics as empowerment, public policy, trauma in marginalized populations, and within-group diversity. This year’s theme, Backpacking through Community Psychology: Pathways to Understanding our Diverse World was a large part of the conference proceedings. An insightful keynote address on “Sociocultural Identities, Social Analysis, and Social Action” by Dr. Roderick Watts from Georgia State University highlighted distinct pathways to understanding identity using mixed methods and an inclusive perspective on individuals living in diverse social domains. The conference theme was further explored in the Saturday evening entertainment, featuring the grassroots stories of the directors of two Chicago community organizations, The People’s Music School, and Positive Action Using Self Expression (P.A.U.S.E.). This year’s ECO workshops included “How to edit your writing and get published,” as well as “Efficacy in research: Multiple principal investigators, perspectives, and organizational levels.” UIC hopes to use the proceeds from this year’s conference to establish a travel fund for future Midwest ECO Conferences. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign has agreed to host Midwest ECO 2010, which will no doubt also be a fun and energy-charged opportunity for new and continuing researchers in our field. We hope to see you there!
Community Psychology Competencies: A Call for Student Submissions

Written by Jim Dalton

The SCRA Council on Education Programs and Practice Group are co-sponsoring a conversation in The Community Psychologist (TCP) about graduate training for the key competencies of the practice of community psychology. Future issues of TCP will feature a series of columns, each to discuss effective training in one key competency. Each column will feature comments from practitioners, graduate program faculty, and students.

We are especially interested in how to build professional-level expertise, whether through coursework, fieldwork, community research, other experiences, or a combination of these. We need commentators to contribute to this conversation. Each commentator would either write a short commentary, or participate in a brief online dialogue, about a particular competency. The column editors of the Education Connection and Community Practitioner columns for TCP will collect and edit these contributions for publication.

Below are the competencies to be discussed in the first three columns, to be spread over the next year or so. If you know faculty, students or practitioners (including yourself!) who have developed innovative, effective ways to train students in any of these competencies, please contact me. I need only the column topic and name and contact information (including email address) of a potential commentator. For the first column topic (listed below), contact me by December 10, 2009 and send nominations for the other column topics by March 1, 2010. If you prefer, send nominations for all column topics by Dec. 10. Thanks! Jim Dalton (for the SCRA Council on Education Programs and Practice Group) Email: jdalton@bloomu.edu Phone: 570-389-4475.

1. Collaboration with Citizens & Communities / Group Processes: Develop and maintain a network of constructive work partnerships with clients, organizations, and communities, including diverse populations. Ensure that diverse persons and communities are involved in making decisions. Negotiate/mediate between stakeholders. Assist in resolving conflicts. Use effective interpersonal communication skills.

2. Leadership, Supervision & Mentoring: Organize and manage services offered to clients, organizations, and communities. Facilitate organizational decision-making. Engage in supervision that motivates, teaches, and manages.

3. Policy Advocacy / Public Communication & Disseminating Information: Communicate with public officials and community decision makers through consultations, policy briefs, lobbying. Communicate effectively with diverse groups (e.g., citizens, professionals, coalitions, news media) through public speaking, writing, and social marketing techniques.

References

The Community Student

Edited by Fernando Estrada & Lindsey Zimmerman

Julie E. Braciszewski, a student member of SCRA, was honored with the 2009 APA/APAGS Distinguished Graduate Student in Professional Psychology award at the 117th APA Convention in Toronto, Canada. We proudly publish her acceptance speech that was delivered on August 8th.

Urban and Urbane? Building Bridges from the Ivory Tower to Reduce Mental Health Disparities among African-American Youth

Written by Julie E. Braciszewski & Jordan M. Braciszewski, Wayne State University

Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary (2009) defines urban as (1) of, pertaining to, or designating a city or town; (2) living in a city; and (3) characteristic of or accustomed to cities. The term urbane is juxtaposed: (1) having the polish and suavity regarded as characteristic of sophisticated social life in major cities; and (2) reflecting elegance, sophistication, etc., especially in expression. The connotation of urban and urbane can be construed as conflicting, though each pertains to essential components of the research and clinical interaction—the community, often being urban, and those of us looking out from our universities, practices, and institutions, thinking we exemplify urbane. However, we believe that these definitions are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, there are several ways we can be of both minds, urban and urbane, striving to be the most effective practitioners and researchers working to lessen mental health disparities among African-American youth in urban settings.

When compared to European Americans, African-American youth are more likely to live in poverty and areas of higher unemployment and crime (Harrison, Wilson, Pine, Chan, & Buriel, 1990; U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). They also experience greater community violence as well as academic difficulty and school dropout (Bowman, Barnett, Johnson, & Reeve, 2006; Connell, Spencer, & Aber, 1994). In turn, lower academic readiness and difficulties with reading and language skills are associated with increased exposure to violence and mental health symptoms (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999).

Also important when considering the urban African American child’s mental health, are the physical health disparities these children experience. Epidemiological studies clearly indicate urban, African-American youth have higher rates of obesity, poor nutrition, childhood Type 2 diabetes, and sickle cell anemia when compared to European-American samples (Dubow & Ippolito, 1994; Juel, Griffith, & Gough, 1986).

Although African-American youth

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experience less favorable environmental, academic, mental health, and physical health outcomes, availability of support and interventions proportional to these difficulties are not currently present (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999). A quarter of all African-Americans are uninsured, compared to 16% of European Americans, and only 15% of African-Americans receive needed mental health services, compared to 30% of European Americans (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2001). Further, in 2005, schools in low-income, urban areas received an average of $1,020 less per child, often resulting in a million dollar deficit per lower-income school district (The Education Trust, 2009). Taken together, we find that those at the highest risk for many mental and physical health problems—who already have significantly lower access, availability, and usage of services—are spending the majority of their time in under-resourced environments.

Often, disparaging comments are made in regards to these environments, many times stunting our efforts for growth. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, for example, recently noted that the Detroit Public Schools “fail kids” and are “a national disgrace” (“Duncan Vows Funding,” 2009). Although 75% of Detroit Public School children are unable to graduate high school, it has been our experience that these youth feel dejected and apt to give up on their futures when asked about Secretary Duncan’s words. While the motivation behind these comments is undoubtedly positive, such summary statements do nothing to move us forward toward equality in service attainment.

If we take a look “before the beginning” (Sarason, 1972) of such comments, it is possible to reflect on what role we play in their origins. Our field has repeatedly focused on what is lacking in urban environments and how African-American children are at-risk. Simultaneously, media and policy makers often receive their information through our research. Therefore, the brush strokes used to paint public and private opinion and policy on achievement and service utilization are a product of the paint we provide. We must change this medium and continue to advocate to put children “at promise” rather than focusing on why they may be “at risk” (Boykin, 2000) by identifying moderators and mediators of outcome that serve as protective factors for urban youth. A balanced approach in research and intervention, to supplement risk-oriented investigation, can have a substantial impact on the efficacy and effectiveness of service provision.

In fact, several protective factors have been identified for urban, African-American youth including warm parenting styles, parental monitoring, stimulation in the home, emotion regulation skills, positive identity formation, and teaching style in the classroom (American Psychological Association Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents, 2008). The APA Task Force (2008) noted that resiliency is “a holistic developmental process that consists of interdependent dimensions” (p. 8); thus, we can study these phenomena as a system of resiliency rather than individual pieces of the puzzle.

Borrowing from Sandler’s (2001) Process Oriented Model and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Levels of Analysis (1979), we propose that we can not only understand processes of resilience, but also seek to build resilient systems for youth. As researchers and practitioners, we can think about which factors of protection we want to offer and at what level of ecological influence we seek to impact. Because of the complexity inherent in understanding such a system, we can clearly see how easy it is for youth, families, schools, and government officials to make negative, generalized comments such as Secretary Duncan’s. However, by utilizing these models, it is apparent that there are many avenues in which we can promote resilience for urban, African-American youth. We are not limited to just one!

Research at the Wayne State University Psychology Clinic continues to aim toward this goal. In our work with a Detroit charter school whose students are 99% African-American and 92% low-income, we attempt to engage as many ecological levels as possible. For example, at the macrosystem, we publish in scholarly journals, host a yearly Family Fun Day integrating the resources of the Psychology Clinic with the school and neighborhood (locality level), and provide feedback and resources to the principal and teacher associations hoping to impact their procedures and policies (organizational level). Group therapy, teacher and family consultation (microsystem level) as well as psychoeducational assessments, individual therapy, and speech and language screenings are provided (child level). Such a partnership has resulted in engaging the children’s system of resilience and creating mutual benefit to the community, school, and university.

Research is often seen as contributing to long-term gain, but many investigators strive to increase resilience while conducting research. For instance, cross-sectional research may include a psychoeducational component to increase awareness of key variables. The microsystem can be engaged by holding an informational meeting or taking on a brief consultative role by discussing the study results with the community. Many well-designed, longitudinal studies have ‘rule out criteria’ such as low intellectual or language functioning. This provides an opportunity for children to be identified for intervention services; a process which often occurs too late, if at all in low-resourced environments. One can also empower participants by purposely engaging positive cultural identity and guarding against negative stereotyping. Using such strategies is mutually beneficial, as the empowering researcher who utilizes culturally competent methods serves his/her population by ultimately increasing retention.

In addition to these institution-centric approaches, communities often serve as excellent examples as they strive to adapt and evolve. As previously mentioned, African-American youth are often at higher risk for many health problems, in part because of a lack of access to adequate food sources. Detroit, for instance, has been deemed a “food desert,” as city residents have to travel at least twice as far to shop at a mainstream grocer as they would to visit a convenience store. Our city also contains a myriad of open and abandoned lots that many refer to as “urban prairies.” In response to the dearth of healthy food options, residents across the city are creating strength and resilience by initiating urban farming. Consequently, over 1,000 gardens and farms in the Detroit city limits have been developed in the past 5 years (Detroit Garden Resource Program Collaboration, 2008). This community initiated movement is positively affecting service discrepancies by influencing child health, family interactions, neighborhood unity, and even school curricula. Detroit’s urban farming movement is a great example of a community-led effort which engages several levels of ecological context in children’s resilience system.

The manner in which we study development and intervention is changing, as it must. Similar to the urban farming movement in Detroit, the most effective research and intervention must take note not only of what is lacking, but also of the incredible resources which are ripe for picking. By modernizing our research.
practices and reconceptualizing where we may fit and exert effort in the child’s ecological context, we ultimately create fertile ground for building resiliency.

References


Sylvie Taylor Receives SCRA Outstanding Educator Award

At the 2009 Biennial SCRA conference, the SCRA Council of Education Programs (CEP) presented Dr. Sylvie Taylor with its Outstanding Educator Award. Dr. Taylor is the founding director of the Applied Community Psychology (ACP) specialization (within the clinical psychology MA program) at Antioch University, Los Angeles. This specialization, created in Winter 2002, now graduates 10–15 students per year. In Fall 2008, the program expanded its offerings by launching a new post-bachelor’s Certificate in Applied Community Psychology.

Dr. Taylor was also recognized for her work in creating and maintaining the Community Partnership Speakers Bureau (CPSB) at Antioch. Since Fall 2003, this program has linked schools and other community organizations with student or alumni speakers, who conduct workshops on issues that affect wellness in these settings.

Besides her administrative/organizational work, Dr. Taylor also excels as a classroom teacher and mentor. Her students noted her contagious enthusiasm for social justice, her ability to explain difficult concepts, and her encouragement of social action. The CEP is very pleased to be able to recognize her contributions to community psychology education in all of these areas.

October 2010

The Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture 2010 Diversity Challenge: Race and Culture in Teaching, Training, and Supervision

Each year the Institute for the Study and Promotion of Race and Culture addresses a racial or cultural issue that could benefit from a pragmatic, scholarly, or grassroots focus through its Diversity Challenge conference. The theme of the 2010 conference focuses on the impact of race and culture in the domains of teaching, training, and supervision. The two-day conference held at Boston College includes panel discussion/symposia, workshops, structured discussions, a poster session, and individual presentations by invited experts and selected guests including educators, administrators, researchers, mental health professionals, and community organizations. Individuals interested in presenting should check the ISPRC website in late January 2010 when the Call for Proposals will be posted, www.bc.edu/isprc. General information about the conference including pre-registration will also available on the website.
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- Length: Five pages, double-spaced
- Images: Images are highly recommended, but please limit to two images per article. Images should be higher than 300 dpi. Photo image files straight from the camera are acceptable. If images need to be scanned, please scan them at 300 dpi and save them as JPEGs. Submit the image(s) as a separate file. Please note that images will be in black and white when published.
- Margins: 1” margins on all four sides
- Text: Times New Roman, 12-point font
- Alignment: All text should be aligned to the left (including titles).
- Color: Make sure that all text (including links, e-mails, etc.) are set in standard black.
- Punctuation Spacing: Per APA guidelines, make sure that there is only one space after periods, question marks, etc.
- Graphs & Tables: These should be in separate Word documents (one for each table/graph if multiple). Convert all text in the graph into the consistent font and font size.
- Footnotes: Footnotes should be placed at the end of the article as regular text (do not use Word footnote function).
- References: Follow APA guidelines. These should also be justified to the left with a hanging indent of .25”.
- Headers/Footer: Do not use headers and footers.

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