Victoria University

School of Psychology

APM 5001F – Foundations of Community Psychology
Semester 1, 2005

Lecturer:

Adrian Fisher

Time: Monday 5pm – 8 pm   **Room:** E 403

Content:

Community Psychology explores the fit between groups and their wider community, attempting to understand where and why problems may be occurring. More importantly, Community Psychology examines the ways in which these problems may be alleviated, or even prevented.

Community Psychology has its foundations in community mental health as well as in applied social, organisational, environmental and ecological psychology. Its unique identity is defined through its focus on communities as the primary unit for understanding and action, and its recognition that the psychological well being of individuals cannot be understood in isolation from broader social contexts.

For many, Community Psychology is an explicitly political approach to Psychology. It looks at power structures within communities and how these serve some groups and exclude others. Community Psychology looks at the practice of Psychology and examines how the definition of problems may lead to looking for causes within each individual who presents, rather than finding out if there are broader causes at work. In this way, Community Psychology challenges some of the ideas of the 'professional' as the distributor of knowledge and favours collaborative partnership approaches.

<u>Readings:</u>

Text book:

Nelson, G., & Prilleltensky, I. (Eds). (2005). *Community Psychology: In pursuit of liberation and well-being*. Houndsmill, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Recommended (for those who have not had Community Psychology previously)

Rudkin, J. K. (2003). *Community Psychology: Guiding principles and orienting concepts*. Upper Saddlewood River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Reserve, e-reserve, e-journals.

While the text and recommended book provide a lot of foundation information, there will be additional readings required each week. These will be available in one of three ways:

RESERVE:	Some books may be placed on physical reserve in the Footscray Park Library
E-RESERVE:	Much material will be available electronically (both on and off campus) through the library's e-reserve system
E-JOURNALS:	The most recent journal articles will usually be available electronically through the Library's e-journal service.

URLs

Some readings are available on the internet without having to go through the Library. Where I have printed URLs in the reading list, you can access those articles directly.

Subject Organisation:

The subject is organised around a 3 hour lecture/seminar each week. The first week will set the scene for the rest of the semester.

For each week there will be specified readings to be completed before class. These will be the basis for discussion, even if they are not individually addressed in class.

Some weeks, I will do some lecturing to provide necessary background information, developments in the field, etc.

However, the best way that these classes to work is for students to bring their own

Assessment:

Paper: Community Psychology for a lay audience 40%
       In this paper, the student will demonstrate their understanding of Community Psychology. The main idea is to identify an audience you wish to address (non-psychologists) and explain to that audience what this Community Psychology thing is.
DUE: 11 April 2005

Paper: Theory Comparison on a Social Issue 60%
       In this paper, the student will take a social issue, psychological problem, etc., and will explore the topic from a traditional psychological perspective and from one of the Comuunity Psychology perspectives. In so doing, the will be one focus (e.g., aetiology, treatment, intervention) and an assessment of which is the better approach to use.
DUE: 1 July 2005

Course contents and readings

Week 1:   28.2.05

Introductions. Course outline, requirements and expectations. Exercises. Background stuff.

This is where we get to know each other, why we are in the course, what we plan to do with it, etc. Also, all those things about the work you have to do, and when work is due.

History and development of Community Psychology - USA, Australia and New Zealand

2005 represents the 40th anniversary year of a key event in the foundation and development of community psychology – The Swampscott Conference. This was a special conference designed to examine new ways of training psychologists to meet community demands. I have given you the Introduction to read.

Bishop, B. J., Sonn, C.C., Fisher, A.T., & Drew, N.M. (2001). Community-based community
       psychology: perspectives from Australia. In M. Seedat, M. (Ed.), N. Duncan, & S. Lazarus,
       (Cons. Eds). <u>Community psychology, theory, method, and practice: South African and
       other Pespectives</u> (pp. 371-382) Oxford University Press Southern Africa: Cape Town,
       South Africa.

Fisher, A., Thomas, D. Bishop, B., & Gridley, H. (in press). Community Psychology in Australia
       and Aotearoa/New Zealand. *Journal of Community Psychology.*

Nelson & Prilleltensky, pp. 4 – 17.

Week 2:   7.3.05

Philosophies underlying Community Psychology.

Much of psychology claims to be a value neutral science. That is, the work of psychologists and the research that they undertake is separate from politics, religion, or any other non-objective influence. In this class, we will discuss the place of values and philosophy in both community psychology and in psychology more generally.

Nelson & Prilelltensky: Chs. 2, 3.

Week 3: 14.3.05

Critiques of psychology and psychological practice.

Cotton, P. (1998). The framing of knowledge and practice in psychology: A response to John. *The Australian Psychologist 33:* 31-37.

John, I.D. (1998). Some reflections on Cotton's response. *Australian Psychologist 33:* 38-39.

John, I.D. (1998). The scientist-practitioner model: A critical examination. *Australian Psychologist 33:* 24-30.

Prilletensky, I. (1989). Psychology and the status quo. *American Psychologist, 44,* 795-802.

Prilleltensky, I., & Nelson, G. (1997). Community psychology: Reclaimimg social justice. In Fox, D. & Prilletensky, I. (Eds.). *Critical Psychology: An Introduction*. Sage, London. (Chapter photocopied and on reserve)

Sarason, S.B. (1981). *Psychology misdirected.* New York: The Free Press. (Chapter 2: Psychologists' dissatisfaction with psychology).

Week 4: 21.03.05

Issues in Community Research – including levels of analysis

If community psychology claims values have an impact on all of our work, what implications does this have for research. In this class we will explore issues related to values, framing research questions, use of information, interpretation of findings, etc.

Nelson & Prilleltensky: Chs. 11, 12

Caplan, N., & Nelson, S. D. (1973). On being useful: The nature and consequences of psychological research on social problems. *American Psychologist 28*, 199-211.

Tolan, P., Chertok, F., Keys, C., & Jason, L.(1990). Conversing about theories, methods and community research. In Tolan, P., Keys, C., Chertok, F & Jason, L. (Eds.). *Researching community psychology: Issues of theory and methods*. Washington: APS.

MID-SEMESTER BREAK

Week 5:   **11.4.05**

Psychological sense of community.

One key area of research that we undertake at Victoria University is in psychological sense of community. In this session, we will explore issues relating to definitions and applications of the ideas.

Bess, K. D., Fisher, A. T., Sonn, C. C., & Bishop, B. J. (2002). Psychological sense of community: Theory, research, and application. In A. T. Fisher, C. C. Sonn and B. J. Bishop (Eds.), *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications and implications (pp. 3 – 22)*. New York: Kluwer Academic/ Plenum Publishers.

McMillan, D. W. (1996). Sense of community. *Journal of Community psychology, 24,* 315-325.

McMillan, D.W. & Chavis, D.M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *Journal of Community Psychology, 14,* 6-23.

Sarason, S.B. (1974). *The psychological sense of community: Prospects for a community psychology.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass. (Read Chapter 6).

Week 6:   **18.4.05**

Sense of Community and Social Capital.

Campbell, C. and Gillies, P. (2001) Conceptualising 'social capital' for health promotion in small local communities in England: A micro-qualitative study. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology, 11*, 329-346.

DeFilippis, J. (2001). The myth of social capital in community development. *Housing Policy Debate, 12,* 781-806. http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/programs/hpd/pdf/HPD_1204_defilippis.pdf

Kawachi, I., & Berkamn, L. (2000). Social cohesion, social capital, and health. In L. S., Berkman, & I. Kawachi (Eds.), *Social epidemiology*, New York: Oxford.

Perkins, D.D., Hughey, J., & Speer, P.W. (2002). Community psychology perspectives on social capital theory and community development practice. *Journal of the Community Development Society, 33*, 33-52.

Putnam, R. D. (1993). The prosperous community: Social capital and public life. *The Americ an Prospect, 4*(13): http://www.prospect.org/web/page.ww?section=root&name=ViewPrint&articleId=5175

Week 7:   **25.4.05**

ANZAC DAY – UNIVERSITY CLOSED

Week 8:   **2.5. 05**

Social support and self-help groups in health

While much of medicine and psychology emphasises the role of the professional in the delivery of services, there are many functions served by people who share a common problem coming together to provide support and information to each other.

Rudkin, pages: 228 – 236.

Chinman, M., Kloos, B., O'Connell, M. & Davidson, I. (2002). Service providers' views about psychiatric mutual support groups. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30,* 349-366.

Heller, K., & Swindle, R. W. (1983). Social networks, perceived social support, and coping with stress. In R D. Felner, L. A. Jason, J. N. Moritsugu, and S. S. Farber (Eds.), *Preventive psychology: Theory, research and practice* (pp.87 – 103). New York: Pergamon Press.

Week 9:   **9.5. 05**

Prevention and wellness in Community Psychology

Nelson and Prilleltensky: Chapter 4.

Albee, G. (1996, November). Revolutions and Counterrevolutions in Prevention. *American Psychologist 51,* 1130-1133.

Bishop, B., & Syme, G. (1988). *Walking Backwards Into the Future: Prevention and the Prediction of the Future.*   Paper presented at the 24th International Congress of Psychology, Sydney.

Cowen, E. L., (1977). Baby-steps towards primary prevention. *American Journal of Community Psychology 5,* 1-22.

Week 10:   16.5. 05

Empowerment philosophy and political nature

Nelson and Prilleltensky: Chapter 5

Kieffer, C. H. (1984). Citizen empowerment: A developmental perspective. *Prevention in Human Services 3,* 9-36.

Rappaport, J. (1981). In praise of paradox: A social policy of empowerment over prevention. *Journal of Community Psychology 9,* 1-25.

Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology 15,* 121- 148.

Week 11:   23.5. 05

Resilience

Luthar, S. S., Ciccetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: Implications ofr interventions and social policies. *Child Development, 71, 543-562.*
Following this article is a number of commentary papers that you may read.

Sonn, C. C., & Fisher, A. T. (1998). Sense of community: Community resilient responses to oppression and change. *Journal of Community Psychology, 26,* 457-472.

Fuller, A. (ND). *Programs that promote resilience in communities at key developmental stages.*
http://www.andrewfuller.com.au/research/resPrimer.pdf

Fuller, A. (nd). *A blueprint for the development of social competencies in schools.*
http://www.andrewfuller.com.au/resilience/blueprint.pdf

Week 12:   30.5.05

Community Psychology and the environment

Nelson and Prilleltensky: Ch 23.

Butterworth, I. (2000). The relationship between the built environment and wellbeing: A literature review. Melbourne: VicHealth
http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/rhadmin/articles/files/built_environment.pdf

Perkins, D.D., & Taylor, R.B. (1996). Ecological assessments of community disorder: Their relationship to fear of crime and theoretical implications. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 24*, 63-107.
http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/~douglas.d.perkins/newsfear.htm