

The *Community* Psychologist

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mmh@interaccess.com

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Children and Youth 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: Mark Aber, (217) 333-6999, maber@s.psych.uiuc.edu

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 Lounsbury, (415)338-1440
Susan Wolfe, (214)767-1716, swolfe@oig.hhs.gov

DISABILITIES

The Disabilities action 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: Dorothy Nary, (785)864-4095

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: Gary Harper, (773)325-2056, gharper@depaul.edu
Alicia Lucksted, (410) 328-5389, aluckste@psych.umaryland.edu

PREVENTION AND 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: Richard Wolitski, (404) 639-1939, RWolitski@cdc.gov

RURAL

The Rural interest group is devoted to highlighting issues of the rural environment that are important in psychological research, service, and teaching.

Chair: Craig Blakely, (979) 862-2419, blakely@srph.tamu.edu

SCHOOL INTERVENTION

The School Intervention interest group addresses theories, methods, knowledge base, and setting factors pertaining to prevention and health promotion in school.

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fuentesm@mail.montclair.edu
Jane Shepard, (203)789-7645,
jshpard@theconsultationcenter.org

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: Bret Kloos, (803)777-2704, kloos@gwm.sc.edu

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Editors' Column

Joy S. Kaufman and Nadia L. Ward
Co-Editors of *The Community Psychologist*

The Consultation Center,
The Division of Prevention & Community Research,
Department of Psychiatry, Yale University School of Medicine

We are pleased to present TCP's Spring Edition to the SCRA membership. We have a wonderful line up of columns, book reviews, and special features for you to peruse!

In addition to the 17 columns represented in this edition, readers will particularly appreciate the two book reviews written by Pamela L. Mulder and Jean Hill that appear in this issue. Mulder provides a balanced review of Duffy and Wong's new *Community Psychology 3rd edition* text and its utility for graduate level training. Jean Hill also provides a thoughtful review of Anne Brodsky's *With All Our Strength*, a moving story of how the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA) has worked to empower the women of Afghanistan through education as a method for social change.

We would also like to direct your attention to the three Special Features included in this edition. In *Strangers in a Strange Land*, Joe Ferrari compiles a series of papers that highlight the experiences faced by our colleagues in conducting research abroad. The authors offer a host of insightful and useful strategies to consider when planning a sabbatical or other 'cultural immersion' experiences overseas. In addition, Carlton Parks in his critique and analysis of the *American Journal of Community Psychology's* Special Issue on LGBT communities, urges us to be more inclusive of the LGBT community in our research, policy, and practice activities in the field.

We are also very excited about the inclusion of *The Community Student* as a Special Feature. Our students have put together three terrific pieces. Frances Palin provides an historical overview of the role that psychology has played in the sociopolitical oppression of South Africans. Despite psychology's albeit dubious involvement in assembling apartheid in South Africa, she discusses the opportunities in which we as community psychologists can engage in helping to promote the health and well-being of all South Africans. In addition, students from Vanderbilt provide an engaging account of their travel to Ecuador as part of an international field school experience. They discuss the incredible learning opportunities and challenges they experienced in conducting social action research in Latin America from economic, public health, and community organizing perspectives. Finally, Nathaniel Israel from Wayne State provides students with a realistic view of initiating a community-based initiative while simultaneously managing the rigors of graduate study.

Also take note of the candidate statements included in this edition in time for SCRA's Executive Committee Elections. Running for President are Ana Marie Cauce & Douglas Perkins. Appearing on the ballot for Secretary are Sarah Cook & Coleen Loomis. Gary Harper & Eric Mankowski are running for Regional Network Coordinator, and Bianca Guzman & Anita Davis for the Member-at-Large post.

As a final note, we are actively soliciting the membership to send in submissions for the 'Special Feature' section of TCP. We would like to encourage TCP column editors and interest group chairs in particular to consider editing a Special Feature to showcase the work being done in your respective areas of interest. We are well aware that there are great things happening in the field and we want to ensure that our membership is kept informed of these developments!

Annual Convention
of the
American Psychological
Association
Honolulu, Hawaii
July 28 - August 1, 2004



A convention in the beautiful tropics. Does it get any better? For SCRA members it does! Picture yourself on a sunset dinner sail off Waikiki or enjoying a beach luau complete with entertainment. Details will be available in the Spring 2004 issue of TCP, along with information about local dining, places of interest, housing, and more. An SCRA Student Travel Award Application can be found on page 61 of this issue.



Turtle Bay Cove in Honolulu, Hawaii

President's Column



Paul A. Toro
Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan

SCRA Elections Procedures

The slate of candidates running for the four open SCRA offices is now set (see candidate statements later in this issue of *TCP*). As you may recall, we used a modified nominations process this year (for the rationale for the modifications, see the letter by Jack Tebes in the Fall 2003 issue of *TCP*). For this process we asked members to verify that nominees were willing to run before nominating them (in cases where we weren't sure if the nominee would run, the potential nominees were called by Bret Kloos, Chair of SCRA's Nominations Committee). The Nominations Committee was then able to rank ONLY nominees willing to run. This process streamlined the work of the Committee and resulted in a fine slate of candidates that well represents the diversity of our Society. Due to its success, we plan to continue to use this same procedure next year. As a reminder, when you receive your dues statement next fall, you will be asked, again, to provide nominations. Please take a few moments at that time to call a few people you'd like to see run for a SCRA office to see if they are willing and then submit their names. With your help, we can continue to get fine slates of candidates in the future.

All SCRA members can expect to receive their ballots in April from APA, with the ballots due back to APA by sometime in May. Please vote for the SCRA officers of your choice.

SCRA's New Web Site is "Under Construction"

Our new web site is now under construction by Viaden, a web site design and maintenance company with lots of experience. By the end of my term as SCRA President in August 2004, or soon thereafter, I am hopeful that the new web site will be operational. Web site enhancements include a "members only" section (with *TCP*, a member directory for those who wish to be included, and other timely content), a way to join and pay dues online, bulletin boards and chat rooms, special pages for Committees and Interest Groups, and much more. Contact me (paul.toro@wayne.edu) or Member-At-Large Robin Miller (rlmiller@uic.edu) with ideas about how the web site could be further enhanced.

Your Executive Committee at Work

Your Executive Committee (EC) just completed its annual Mid-Winter Meeting (MWM), held in Detroit, February 6-7. The 2-day MWM is a time for EC members to meet each other face-to-

face (much other EC business is now handled by e-mail) and deal with various small and large issues facing the Society. Among the topics covered at this year's MWM were: A review of prospects for a site for the 2007 Biennial and a review of plans for the 2005 Biennial that will be held in Champaign Illinois, approval of the slate of candidates for SCRA offices, an evaluation of our Membership Services Office, consideration of budget requests from various Committees and Interest Groups, a discussion of our current dues structure and proposals to modify it, and a discussion on the



Executive Committee at work

relationship between SCRA and the Council of Program Directors in Community Research and Action. If you have any comments on any of these topics, please contact one of the your EC members (for a listing of current EC members, see page 2 of this issue of *TCP*).

One idea that was discussed in some detail at this MWM as well as the 2003 MWM was that SCRA should form a "strategic planning and finances committee." Members may not know this, but SCRA is now in a solid financial state, in part due to financially successful Biennials and that we now receive a portion of the royalties on library subscriptions to *AJCP*. Increasingly, we have "assets" that need careful investment. We also have the "luxury" of considering hiring a full-time Executive Director (currently we have a part-time Membership Office only). Such an Executive Director could do many of the arduous tasks now done on a voluntary basis by various EC members. This and other business items will likely be discussed at our next EC meeting, to be held at the APA Convention in Hawaii (typically, this "second" annual meeting is much briefer than the MWM).

The 2004 APA Convention in Hawaii

Under the capable direction of APA Program Chair Hiro Yoshikawa, the Program is now largely set and most of you who submitted proposals should know by now about their acceptance. So, it's time to begin planning your trip to Hawaii. Cliff O'Donnell, SCRA President-Elect, has been developing some "fun" events in Hawaii around the time of the Convention. These include a luau and a sunset dinner sail for SCRA members. You should hear more details about these events in the near future (in *TCP* and/or the SCRA-L listserve). I, for one, already have my Hawaiian shirt and sailing gear already packed! Hope to see you in lovely Hawaii.



Book Reviews

Community Psychology

by Karen Grover Duffy and Frank Y. Wong

Review by Pamela L. Mulder, Ph.D., Marshall University

Community Psychology 3ed (2003) by Karen Grover Duffy and Frank Y. Wong is a comprehensive and well written text that is entirely appropriate for a graduate level course. As is true of most texts, there are strengths and weaknesses related to the authors' presentation style and choices about topics and scope of information included.

Overall, the authors present an excellent compilation of the theory and perspective of community psychology over the past several decades. This text will provide the student reader with an understanding of the history of community psychology and the principles which have directed inquiry. The book has a generally conversational tone and the topics presented are very clearly described. It is also heavily referenced, which contrasts with the slightly conversational tone of the prose. The comprehensive and generally up to date citations make this the sort of text that a student should be encouraged to keep as a valuable reference for future use even if they do not have a specific interest in focusing on community psychology.

The requisite "how to do research" chapter is included in the text, generally focused on covering the basics. In addition to the standard fare usually offered in such a chapter, the authors do present at least brief descriptions of some of the most relevant procedures including needs assessment and program evaluation. The text also provides a brief account of ethnographic methods and the authors clearly describe the value of including relevant qualitative data in social and community analyses. This is in keeping with the authors' acknowledgment of the intra-disciplinary ties that bind community psychology to clinical, social, experimental, and organizational fields, a theme that is recurrent throughout the text and which adds to the utility of this text as a reference.

Students who read this text will be aware of the enormous range of human behavior and the tremendous scope of the social concerns that may be addressed by community psychologists. Similarly, there is excellent coverage of many of the most defining programs and field projects as they have been applied across a broad spectrum of human activity, and the authors present clear and understandable discussions of the factors which led to the success, or lack thereof, of the various programs. One section of the text focuses on the application of community psychology in settings other than the traditional community mental

In particular, the chapters covering schools and the criminal justice system as they relate to communities are among the most comprehensive presentations of the interactions between individual and environment that I have come across in an overview text of this type.

health centers and the breadth of issues and models that have been considered will be apparent to the reader. In particular, the chapters covering schools and the criminal justice system as they relate to communities are among the most comprehensive presentations of the interactions between individual and environment that I have come across in an overview text of this type.

This text is an excellent compendium of facts, historical accounts, and references, but innovation and inspiration are somewhat lacking. Although the references are quite comprehensive and up to date, the authors have organized much of the text around primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention constructs to the exclusion of more contemporary perspectives. Similarly, although the authors clearly emphasize the importance of the interactions between the individual and the environment, the coverage given to ecological perspectives and to macro / micro systems is minimal at best. The authors have presented more of an historical account of the field, including valuable but stagnant discussions of "models that work", rather than a theoretical framework that would inspire students to take the discipline further.

In one section of the text, the students are presented with a variety of pragmatic change facilitating concepts, but there is little encouragement for the students to consider how these processes might be at work in their own environment or how these factors might be intentionally applied in new and innovative directions. Vignettes are used to open each chapter and, although they are invariably emotionally compelling and interesting to read, the relationship of the material in the vignettes to the material in the chapter which follows is often not clear. For example, the very first vignette in the text presents the biographical sketch of "Dory", following her story from her birth to a single mother living in poverty to her death as one of the possibly mentally ill street people in a large and generally uncaring city. This vignette is certainly definitive of the historical roots of community psychology and of the many issues that the field tries to address, but the vignette is relevant to the entire text rather than to the following chapter and readers who are being exposed to this area of inquiry for the first time are going to find the story to be a useful organizing gambit.

Finally, the text is extremely fact filled and, as has been stated, heavily referenced. Although this can be considered to be an obvious advantage, the generally open and inviting tone which permeates the writing style is not sufficient to overcome the small type and the fact that very few graphics are used. In many instances the graphics which are used are not self-explanatory and they are frequent not on the page which includes the written description of the information presented. Important terms are presented in bold face type, but there are often several such terms packed into a single paragraph along with numerous citations which break up the flow of the prose. This is what make the text a comprehensive reference, but it may also be very distracting to student readers.

In conclusion, *Community Psychology, 3ed* (2003) by Karen Grover Duffy and Frank Y. Wong is an appropriate text for graduate students taking an introductory course in community psychology. It is an excellent and inclusive overview of the field; it is fact filled and the comprehensive list of references make this a valuable resource for students. The utility of the text in the classroom will depend very much on the professor's own preferences for specific approaches and teaching style because the text itself is more of an historical account of community psychology, including well described and clearly explained sample programs and projects addressing a wide array of social concerns,

rather than an inspiring and innovative call to future action.

As noted, the references are current and very inclusive, however some of the concepts around which the entire tome has been organized have been left in place to the exclusion of more contemporary perspectives; this is most likely because only a small proportion of an existing text can be altered for publication of a new edition. The text has a slightly conversational style which may be rendered somewhat less reader friendly than intended as a result of the many citations which interrupt the prose. Graphics could be better used and the small type may pose problems for some readers.

With all our strength:

The Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan
By Ann Brodsky

Review by Jean Hill
New Mexico Highlands University

With All Our Strength (2003), by Anne Brodsky published by Routledge, is based on the stories of some extraordinarily brave women, and the organization that supports and unites them. As is made clear throughout the book, that bravery takes many forms, including living with the perennial threat of physical violence and death. But for me, the most powerful example of that bravery came in the story of a woman who had fled an Afghanistan nation controlled by battling fundamentalist factions (the *jehadis*) in the mid-1990's, and had settled with her family in a refugee camp in Pakistan. Sima was 45 and had never before set foot in a classroom. In the camp, she "...says she did one of the scariest things she had ever done in her life. She entered a RAWA literacy class" (pg. 103).

For Sima, the class was about much more than literacy. "Through the literacy classes I realized totally the importance of education and how it can change a life. I became braver, even if I didn't learn much I became braver" (pg. 104). Her bravery takes many forms, including the bravery to uncover her face, shake hands with people, and travel by herself, as well as the obvious bravery involved in attending RAWA demonstrations where she risks assault and arrest.

Sima's story illustrates in a very personal way the story of the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA). *With All Our Strength* is Anne Brodsky's compilation and interpretation of over 100 in-depth interviews of people connected to RAWA. The book focuses on the founding and history of RAWA, the central role of education in the movement, how the organization is run, the role of male supporters, the community of RAWA and the life adopted by RAWA members, and the future of RAWA.

At its most basic, this book is a documentary of RAWA, its history, goals, methods, successes, and challenges, as told through the words of its members. This documentation is extremely valuable in and of itself. But the use of the book goes far beyond the understanding of the organization, or of the cultural history of Afghanistan. As a teaching tool, the book is full of material intrinsically relevant to many of the complex issues dealt with in community psychology and related fields. Discussions of cultural relativism, the role of women, consciousness raising, education as a method for social change, qualitative research methods, and the life of community organizations could all be given depth through the use of powerful examples drawn from this book.

In addition, I found myself repeatedly thinking of this book as a source of data for a wide variety of inquiries. The book is largely a primary source document. Anne touches on many of these research topics herself, without developing any of them fully. This is more than appropriate, since the book is meant to use the topics of resiliency, community change, sense of community, and education as a social change method as a means of understanding RAWA, not to use RAWA as a means to understand those topics. Yet the material in this book could serve as primary source data for investigating any of those areas.

For example, the role of education as a social change method, as is shown in Sima's story, is central to RAWA's efforts. In 1979, only 4% of the girls and women in Afghanistan were reported to be literate (pg. 37). But, as the author repeatedly points out, literacy and education are not considered the end goals for RAWA. Rather, education is viewed as a tool for revolution.

As one long-time member, Shaima, stated about RAWA's goals, "We always thought deeper than just giving women education. We thought the purpose was giving women a consciousness – political, social, cultural – giving them that consciousness meant a revolution. We obviously had to start with basic education, but couldn't stop at that" (pg. 106.).

The author writes that as she was hearing these stories, she repeatedly found herself thinking about Paulo Freire's work on emancipatory education, yet no one she spoke to in the organization had ever heard of his name or work. Anne does not elaborate on this connection herself. She just mentions it, as she does in many other instances when she sees RAWA's work illustrating or complementing diverse theoretical works. Yet others could elaborate where Anne did not.

Finally, I found the book to be an interesting and thoughtful stimulus for thinking about my own community work. Of course, these "uses" of the book overlap. For example, the book made me think a great deal about the role of conflict in the development of community organizations and in effective community change. As presented in *With All Our Strength*, RAWA is an organization that has consciously and explicitly developed norms that embrace criticism, conflict and arguments. Although, as a RAWA member makes clear in the section on how the organization is run, "We don't call them arguments – there can be discussions, but they are not arguments." (pg. 171).

The organization even has an explicit mechanism, the *jelse enteqady* (translated literally as "mistake meeting"), for dealing with disagreements. This mechanism seems to give the organization the security necessary to allow members to do things their own way, and to make their own mistakes, since everyone knows there will be an opportunity to explicitly discuss and learn from those mistakes.

This discussion brought up a whole host of reflections for me, from the need to develop a body of theoretical and research work on the role of conflict in community organizations to how I might use the concept of a "mistake meeting" in my work with a local organization that has difficulty acknowledging conflict among members.

The work of RAWA, and the stories of its members and supporters, suggest many more areas for reflection and research than can be covered in this brief review. But perhaps the most vital area for research suggested by the book involves the tension between traditional values and societal change. The women of RAWA have set themselves the difficult task of maintaining their support for most of the traditional religious and cultural values and

practices of their country, while at the same time engaging in a true cultural revolution, one that supports “secular democracy, freedom, peace, women’s and human rights, and equality.” On the basis of their support for these values, RAWA has been criticized as being co-opted by Western ideas. But the members do not see it that way. As one member, Mushtari, asserted, “These values are neither Western nor Eastern. Certain ideas belong to neither East nor West. They should be for all people. Why don’t Afghans deserve them as much as anyone else?” (pg. 273).

Community Action

Templates of Community Action

by Brad Olson
DePaul University

It was mentioned in the latest *Community Psychologist* that one major activity of the Community Action Interest Group would be to collect various stories that relate to community action, and perhaps have them compiled and available in a common place on the internet. There is a clear value in collecting stories about community action. Stories seem to have a special association with action that can complement the content of scientific manuscripts. While scientific manuscripts can also help spark community action, there is a certain power in stories and their ability to create community action.

How does a story bring about community action? First, stories or narratives have the ability to enlighten other community

members about the commonalities they share in their work and daily interactions. If a community psychologist in Canada reads a story about an African

community

psychologist who resolved a personal identity struggle being both a researcher and community member, for instance, the story makes it possible for the Canadian to recognize a shared experience. To see that one’s actions are connected to that of other community members makes both the opportunities for action more realistic and the obstacles less intimidating. The Canadian can concretely see that community action exists, and that it exists in a form consistent with her or his own worldview and experience. If the story of the African community psychologist leads the Canadian to act, it may partly be due to a conscious effort to confirm this shared identity, and concurrently an unconscious form of modeling, as the story has provided a template for community action, a procedural script of how community psychologists can and do act.

A collection of individual stories can also contribute to community action by bringing together personal narratives that strengthen as they coalesce into the river of community narrative. With the absence of shared stories, we have a pluralistic misperception that community psychologists fail to take action, because without exposure to exemplars, none are cognitively

available. Therefore, to greater perpetuate action, we need more accessible outlets for stories that portray such narratives. While empirical publications add to our knowledge-base, the content tends to focus more on research methodology and generalized outcomes, and the real processes of community action tend to be lost in a few supplementary paragraphs.

Many of the strongest instances of community action, moreover, are never disseminated in print. Many community action psychologists do not highly value the publishing process or are too busy engaging in their community to sit down and write about it. Some also have a sense of humility that prevents them from broadly publicizing events that they tend to engage in for more spiritual or humanistic reasons. In these instances, other community psychologists must document and share the stories that can so valuably contribute these unknown currents to our shared community narrative.

One of the simplest ways that a story contributes to action is by providing a pure form of motivational or inspirational energy that can stimulate us to step outside our academic doors and into other communities. Our common narrative not only unites our perceptions, but intensifies them as well. Such unification in attitude can stimulate the transformation of a passive belief into a mobile, working instance of action. In contrast to scientific manuscripts, stories also frequently incorporate the archetype of a heroine or hero, and this element of myth helps bridge the chasm between belief and action. Many of us are cautious about seeing community psychologists as mythological agents of change. This is partly due to our tendency to downplay the impact community psychologists have on communities, to be careful that our involvement in the community does more good than damage, and to hold that empowerment is not provided by the community psychologist but by the community itself. These feelings of caution and modesty often stem from past experiences that have ended in failure, but they are also what makes community psychologists so noble, so heroic, and what makes their shared stories such fruitful sources of motivation.

The story does not only precipitate action; it is equally vital in sustaining action, even in the bleakest of circumstances. Vaclav Havel argued that the single strongest mechanism of power used by a totalitarian government is its ability to extract the story from everyday life. The totalitarian system, Havel argues, firmly possesses a single overarching interpretation on the progression of history, from the past and on through the future. The totalitarian system thus neutralizes the dynamic, diverse, and unpredictable agents characteristic of any individual or community narrative. With the story removed, Havel argues, the lifeless citizen of the land has no means of action.

In a more subtle way, science is also guilty of removing story from life. One reason for the attraction of community psychologists to qualitative methods may be their attempt to retain and protect as much story from the lives of community members as possible. The tendency of community psychologists to also talk to, interact with, and get feedback from their participants, violates traditional, empirical psychology norms of distance for the sake of objectivity. Community psychologists nevertheless do not easily tolerate the removal of story from the lives community participants. To avoid a more totalitarian orientation in our science and to foster community action among ourselves, we should continue to do whatever we can to keep stories flourishing within SCRA.

It is unclear where such community narratives will ultimately take us and what the exact impact of more comprehensively

collecting stories related to action will be, but it is unquestionably a path worth pursuing. Needless to say, this is not the first effort to collect stories of community psychology, and the first task is to both build on past efforts and collaborate with present efforts. The collection of stories and their organization on the internet or elsewhere is only one small way of helping to facilitate more common community actions within SCRA and across other groups who hold similar philosophies. It is hoped that we can all talk more about this collection process in the community action interest group and outside of it—discussing how we can best seek, compile, and present this sharing of stories. If you have ideas, if you simply know of strong instances of community action that should be told, or if you want to join the Community Action Interest Group, please email me at bolson@depaul.edu or call (773) 325-4771.

Community Practitioner

What Happens when a Community Psychologist Becomes a High School Principal?

Stephen J. Fyson

This was a question I was asking myself when the September 2003 edition of the *American Journal of Community Psychology* arrived at my home down under. There in the middle of that volume was a North American critique of psychology and schools, by none other than Seymour Sarason, himself (Sarason, 2003). I have read much of the work of this pioneer and provocative community psychologist. A good bit of what I have tried to do as a resident researcher in the community goes back to Sarason's initial work on community psychology. In this work, Sarason attempted to define and create a purpose statement for social action as a vehicle for learning and contributing to knowledge.

He contrasted "being at bat" to "quick and dirty research." The former was explained as follows:

...I refer to any instance in which an academic person takes on a socially responsible role – in government, politics, business, schools, or poverty agencies – which will allow him to experience the 'natural' functioning of that particular aspect of society. The role must be an operational one with responsibility and some decision making powers.... He is not a consultant with the luxury of giving advice without responsibility for implementation.... He assumes the new role to test the adequacy of ideas and theories, to see how they fit with social realities (Sarason, 1974, pp. 247-248).

While Sarason (1974) describes a potential role for professionals, Rappaport (2000) points to a major problem in schools. With reference to the potential for social change and with reference to schools in particular, Rappaport used the paradigm of a 'narrative' to suggest that the work of community psychology is to help turn "tales of terror" into "tales of joy" (Rappaport, 2000). Rappaport commented that:

[Teachers] have a serious preoccupation with order that may interfere with the capacity to experience the pleasure of joyful engagement in a

learning environment.... [and] Students appropriate the settings' self-narrative... such that it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy (Rappaport, 2000, p. 20)

Rappaport agreed with the sentiment of an earlier Sarason book, *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform* (Sarason, 1990) that provided a pessimistic outlook as to whether the conditions for productive learning through engagement can indeed occur. Sarason (1990, p. 20) states "Can such tales of terror be replaced by tales of joy? Frankly, I do not know." Others point out that school reform simply doesn't last (e.g. Fink, 2000; Hargreaves, Earl & Ryan, 1996).

Sarason (2003) suggests that community psychologists should step up to the plate. Both Sarason (1990) and Rappaport (2000) seem pessimistic about traditional efforts to reform schools. Did this new article by Sarason give me any alternative hope? In terms of the state of the field (psychology in the schools), the answer was "no." For example, with reference to the Columbine high school tragedy, Sarason tested and found intact the prediction that "psychologists and sundry other mental health professionals... reveal a near total ignorance of the ecology, organization, and culture of high schools (and middle schools)..." (Sarason, 2003, p. 103).

However, Sarason (2003) makes five points that I believe present the core of the challenge for my work in my new role as high school principal. In an attempt to start a dialogue with others within community psychology who find themselves in resident researcher and practitioner roles in schools, I will summarise Sarason's five point challenge. I also include a series of questions that might guide the work of change agents (or principals like me) in the schools:

1. *Students move progressively into relationships of anonymity as they progress from elementary school into high school and teachers teach too many students to help each child realise his or her potential.* Some focus questions for me as a principal might be: 1) Who will own each student in each year of high school? 2) Who will own each class and year group in high school? 3) Can teachers' lives be simplified so that they can teach in more intimate structures? and 4) What defensiveness is to be expected when the answers to these questions start to change the social regularities of each person's life world?
2. *Classrooms in high schools reflect a most narrow, superficial, over simple conception of what makes for contexts of productive and unproductive learning.* This is most easily seen in the low number of questions asked by students in classroom environments. Thus, some focus questions might be: 1) How can teachers be freed to teach in more productive and engaging ways? 2) Are teachers, parents and students willing to redefine the central purposes of education in the classroom to allow this to happen? and 3) How is teaching of the whole person to be made compatible with the demands of increased standards and results accountability that is inherent in contemporary western society?
3. *Interest and motivation to learn decreases as students progress through high school, even for those who achieve high test scores.* Some focus questions might be: 1) Who will relate to students closely enough to know if they are increasing their love of learning? 2) What traditions can be put in place so that students are listened to routinely? and

3) How can teachers be trained differently so that they know students better as choice-makers?

4. *The school system is characterised by adversarialism.* Thus the school system is composed of antagonistic parties with often opposing interests. Some focus questions might be: 1) What needs to be done so that all members of the school community know that they can safely ask questions without resorting to adversarialism? 2) What needs to be done so that all members in the school community know that they are cared for, without the need for adversarialism? 3) What needs to be done so that all members want to be at school without the strains of compulsory attendance detracting from a growing commitment to the community? and 4) Will this be compatible with the purposes of those who fund schools?

5. *The selection and preparation of teachers and administrators are inexcusably inadequate.* Some focus questions might be: 1) Is my training adequate for the tasks implied by the questions above? 2) Can I help teachers and my fellow administrators be better equipped for their tasks? and 3) Can such tasks be undertaken with the spark of creativity that is assumed to be part of the teaching and learning process?

And so, the quote by Weinstein et al., 1992 that I have used to illustrate some school- based research that I have undertaken over the last few years still remains relevant (parentheses added by the author):

In truth, not one of us was (is) prepared for the time it would (will) take to systematically alter the instructional and school climate so that expectations and opportunities to learn were (are) consistent, positive and available, i.e. to undo a lifelong pattern of schooling (Weinstein, 1992, p. 361).

Will there be many of us who remain committed over the long run to help schools move to new, productive and life engaging traditions? What will be our relationship with the academic world and will our lessons learned contribute to the accumulated wisdom regarding educational reform? Time will tell. Will our journals also tell?

If you want to join in a dialogue with Stephen on these issues, he can be contacted at sfyson@huntercs.org, or 33 Bulkara St., Wallsend, NSW, 2287, Australia.

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Schedule and Publication Procedures for the Community Practitioner

The following paragraphs provide some details regarding procedures for publishing in the "Community Practitioner." The "Community Practitioner" is a peer reviewed outlet published several times a year in *The Community Psychologist*. At the last Biennial Conference, there was much discussion regarding the mission of the "Community Practitioner." These discussions were summarized in the last issue of *The Community Psychologist*.

In general, the editorial team is not interested in submission of the type of scholarly articles typically published in the *American Journal of Community Psychology* or the *Journal of Community Psychology*. Rather, the "Community Practitioner" publishes material focused on applied work including:

- Case studies
- Interviews with practitioners/consumers
- Round-table discussions of issues impacting practice
- How-to articles related to practice
- Editorial comments
- Articles about practice
- All materials will be peer reviewed prior to publication. Submissions and/or ideas for articles or issues should be sent to Dave Julian at julian.3@osu.edu.

Currently there are six members of the editorial team including Bill Berkowitz, Maurice Elias, Dan Fishman, Dave Julian, Paul Toro and Tom Wolff. Dave has agreed to serve as team leader for the next several issues of the "Community Practitioner." If you have a strong interest in the field, please consider joining the editorial review team. We are quite interested in adding several new members, so please get in touch with Dave or another member of the editorial team. You can contact Dave at the e-mail address indicated in the preceding paragraph.

You might also consider coordinating an issue of the "Community Practitioner." Coordinators are responsible for assembling materials, making revisions in conjunction with authors and the team leader and submitting a final draft to the team leader. Step by step procedures are listed below:

1. Coordinator assembles issue
2. Coordinator e-mails contents of issue to review team
3. Review team provides feedback to coordinator
4. Coordinator ensures revisions are incorporated in the final draft
5. Coordinator e-mails final draft to team leader and summary of feedback from review team
6. Team leader submits contents to Editor of the *Community Psychologist*

Deadlines for up-coming issues of the "Community Practitioner" and *The Community Psychologist* are indicated in Table I.

There are currently several issues in development. Dan Fishman is coordinating a summary of several case studies for the spring 2004 issue. The editorial team would also like to include

brief summaries of thoughts, goals and aspirations for the "Community Practitioner" in an up-coming issue.

Table 1. Deadlines for Publishing in "Community Practitioner"

Issue	Submission to The Community Psychologist	Submission to "Community Practitioner"
Spring 2004	2-27-04	2-13-04
Summer 2004	5-31-04	5-17-04
Fall 2004	8-31-04	8-17-04
Winter 2005	11-30-04	11-14-04
Spring 2005	2-28-05	2-14-05
Summer 2005	5-31-05	5-17-05
Fall 2005	8-31-05	8-17-05

Disabilities

It's War, and it's official: Repositioning impairment and disability into SCRA

Paul Duckett
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Three months after I attended SCRA's 9th biennial conference, I attended the biennial UK Community Psychology (UKCP) conference. There was a resonance between the two conferences in how disabled delegates were treated.

The UKCP conference had a rather inauspicious opening with us being told disabled delegates could only choose between 2 of the 3 parallel sessions on the program as one of the conference rooms had no disability (wheelchair) access. The conference then proceeded with a keynote speaker who began his presentation with an unfortunate choice of metaphor, declaring, "having two legs is better than one" (he did not relate this to the earlier announcement on disability access). Clearly in the case of this conference, having two legs was certainly better than one and having one leg was better than none because the conference organizers had not ensured the conference site was fully accessible for wheelchair users. In Las Vegas the Disability Action Group concluded similarly on the SCRA conference (Nary, 2003).

Of course, this exclusion of disabled delegates works in more subtle ways other than the physical structure of the conference setting and the social relations between conference delegates. Disabling recruitment and retention policies operated by the labor market and education sector filter disabled people out of our professional networks. The few who fight to get in find life is made very unpleasant when they arrive because of the behaviour and

attitudes of network members. Some disabled people who have hidden impairments therefore seek to hide their impairment status through fear of being stigmatized and pathologised by others (it is particularly dangerous for a psychologist to disclose a psychological impairment to fellow psychologists as they risk being transmogrified from a colleague into a client).

Disabled people continue to have their/our' impairments used as metaphors to describe misfortune, tragedy and negativity (Longmore, 1985; Shakespeare, 1994). The continued lack of thought that goes into the problems disabled people face at academic conferences and the crass use of disabilist language and humor by conference delegates appears to be a perennial (biennial?) problem. Why are community psychologists still engaging in these oppressive practices? Some people say disability is viewed as the poor relation to other diversity issues such as race and gender. I would agree. Though growing numbers of us now understand that society disables people who have impairments through not accommodating for their/our needs, a number of us may view impairment as the stuff of the medical sciences rather than the social sciences. Impairment is often viewed as an organic, and biological phenomenon. We defer to the medical model's expertise on all things impairment related. If we experience a physical, psychological or sensory impairment we need a medical clinician. Perhaps one of the greatest disappointments for me about community psychology is that many of us appear to have allowed the medical model to re-turf the mental health field with its disease model. We accept the terms 'schizophrenia' and 'depression' and the general concept of 'mental illness' as an organic brain disorder even though there is no empirical support for it (Boyle, 2002). If we have surrendered that, perhaps it is no wonder we have also surrendered turf on impairments more broadly. I believe it is time we reclaim impairment and position it at the heart of our work. We need to do so because impairment is rarely anything other than a manifest expression of injustices caused by our social, economic and political arrangements. Very few impairments nowadays have

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an organic or genetic etiology, they have mostly been "manufactured" by social, economic and political systems (Abberley, 1987).

Repositioning impairment back into community psychology

Rather than completely displace the medical field, let us reposition it. We can do so with the help of a few drugs. Thalidomide was a drug introduced during the 1950's as a treatment for morning sickness during pregnancy and caused physical impairment in 8000 infants across 46 different countries (Grover, 2000). Largactil, a powerful tranquilizer prescribed to people experiencing acute anxiety, is believed to have caused

irreversible brain damage in 25 million people (Abberley, 1987). Seraxat, the world's 'favorite' anti-depressant drug (100 million prescriptions in 100 countries recorded in 2002), is alleged to have caused suicidal and homicidal ideations and to be highly addictive².

The pharmaceutical industry has an impressive slight of hand to excuse such impairment creating effects of their drugs: they describe them as the drug's 'side effects'. This is an act of deception: drugs cannot have side effects as they do not have intentions. The behaviour of those who manufacture and prescribe these drugs have side effects: their actions are intentional). Thus, pharmaceutical corporations can and do create impairment on a massive scale. I have just picked three well-publicized cases, there are many more.

Industrial corporations are also engaged in impairment creating practices. For example, the gas leaks from the Union Carbide (now called Dow Chemicals) factory at Bhopal, India in 1984 killed thousands and left more than a hundred thousand chronically ill. The corporation then left Bhopal without cleaning up its factory site, resulting in toxic chemical leakage into local water supplies. More recently (Dec 23, 2003), 234 people died, over 10,000 were injured and 40,000 forced to evacuate their homes as a result of the leak of toxic chemicals from the Chuandongbei Gas Well owned by the China National Petroleum Corporation. There are too many such incidents to recall in one short paper (e.g., Chernobyl, Minamata, Times Beach, Three Mile Island), incidents that kill, main and/or displace whole communities.

Corporations are also quietly creating impairment within their workforces where working practices are corroding employees' physical well being. Employees are sustaining attacks on their muscular-skeletal (e.g., beat knee, carpal tunnel syndrome, arthritis), epidermal (e.g., infective dermatitis) respiratory and pulmonary (e.g., asbestosis, chronic bronchitis, emphysema) and sensory systems (e.g., occupational deafness, tinnitus, cataracts) among others³. In the UK, large numbers of workers every year experience injury, a third of which result in permanent damage (Pearson Report, 1978). In the US it is estimated that each year 10,000 people die from industrial accidents, 100,000 die from occupational diseases and 30,000 die and 20,000,000 are seriously injured by unsafe consumer products (Draffan, 2001). These figures do not include the 90 per cent of cancers believed to be environmentally induced by the products and by-products of agriculture and industry. This, combined with the corrosive effects on psychosocial well being of growing levels of underemployment (poorly paying, non-unionized, insecure, poorly satisfying, temporary forms of employment re: Fryer, & Fagan, 2003), is adding considerably to the numbers of people who experience significant impairments in their lives.

More broadly, the rapid and global processes of industrialization and urbanization are leading to increased rates of environmental damage and increased incidents of impairment. Acute and chronic respiratory disease, diarrhoeal disease, malaria and other vector born diseases, injuries and poisonings, poor mental health, cardiovascular disease, and cancer are spreading fast through rapid and unplanned urbanization that creates inadequate housing, poor sanitary and drainage systems and poor management of clean water supplies. It is estimated that the world has 1.1 billion people who live without clean water and 2.4 billion who live without proper sanitation. The problem of poor quality housing was tragically illustrated by the earthquake in Bam on December 26th 2003 which resulted in an estimated 50,000 dead, 100,000 homeless, and tens of thousands injured. Many cities are expanding

too fast through the thirst of industrialization for cheap, disposable labor. Urbanization and industrialization is growing faster than the development of basic life-sustaining infrastructures to support residents of these sprawling cities.

The pollution from agriculture and industry is leading to our greater exposure to fertilizers, pesticides, and heavy metals leading to the contamination of our air, food, soil and water. Pollutants released by automobiles and airplanes (particularly the latter) are pouring vast quantities of toxins into our atmosphere, which is having a dramatic effect on the incidence of impairment across the globe. Air-borne chemical agents are believed to cause and exacerbate such respiratory impairments as asthma, bronchitis and tuberculosis and degenerative diseases such as cancers and heart disease. The depletion of the ozone is believed to have led to growing incidents of skin cancer. The pollution is happening indoors too. Toxins such as sulphur, nitric oxides and arsenic compounds are released into our home through exposure to open fires that burn biomass, coal or wood fuels. We are also at risk from Volatile Organic Compounds through 'off-gassing' where chemicals from soft furnishings and cleaning products become released into the air. This phenomenon is particular associated with buildings that have inadequate mechanical air ventilation systems (known as 'Sick Building Syndrome').

Increasing numbers of impairments are being caused by a combination of polluted air, poor sanitation and waste disposal, polluted water or poor water management, polluted food, poor housing, and global environmental change caused by rapid urbanisation. Most of these environmental threats are associated with poverty and social inequality.

Such fears that increasing levels of impairment are being created by an exponential growth of agriculture, industry and urbanisation are supported by extensive epidemiological research – the Global Burden of Disease project (GBD). GBD is a project sponsored by the World Bank and World Health Organization and based at the Harvard School of Public Health. GBD has published a series of reports on the causes of death and impairment and makes projections for future causes under a measure they refer to as the 'disease burden'. Though this terminology is unpalatable (disabled people viewed as a burden), its findings do confirm the growing prominence of environmental causes of impairment. The report published in 1996 stated that in 1990 the three leading causes of disease burden were pneumonia, diarrhoeal disease and perinatal conditions. By 2020 the report stated that the leading causes of death and impairment are expected to be ischaemic heart disease, depression and traffic accidents. Heart disease can have a genetic component, but has a significant environmental etiology (poor nutrition, excessive smoking and psychosocial stress). As well as depression being the second lead cause, the report predicts 'psychiatric conditions' will occupy five of the top ten leading causes of 'disease burden' by 2020. Automobiles as well as polluting our air also smash up our bodies. The automobile is responsible for a massive proportion of physical and neurological impairments, particularly impairments to the spine and head. Further, as the automobile is increasingly viewed as a necessity rather than a luxury in the western world and the oil that is necessary to keep these automobiles running becomes an increasingly scare resource, some commentators are identifying the thirst for oil as one of the main motivations for the recent wars on Afghanistan and Iraq.

Not among the top 15 causes of disease burden in 1990, GBD predicts war to be the 8th leading cause and violence the 12th of

'disease burden' by 2020. I think it useful to remind ourselves that to date estimates suggest 10,000 civilians have died and over 20,000 civilians have been injured as a result of the war on Iraq and over 3,500 civilians died and 5,500 were seriously injured due to the bombing of Afghanistan. War can have a massive psychologically damaging effect on individuals, families and whole communities. Many people who have experienced war (either as civilian or soldier) experience severe mental health difficulties that are long-lived and change resistant. Violence in general between and within countries is a massive source of impairment. It is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 Vietnam veterans have committed suicide, that's three times as many as soldiers than were killed in the Vietnam war. Homicide and suicide strike a considerable toll. Women and children are most often the victims of violence in domestic settings. International rates of women being physically abused regularly by their male partners range from 20% to 75%. Across the global, between 10 and 30 per cent of all children are physically abused. By 2020 global levels of impairment caused by accidents and violence may rival the incident of impairment caused by infectious disease.

The lesson to be learnt is that impairment is not solely a medical issue. I would argue it is an issue that should lie at the very heart of community psychological work. It is an environmental issue; it is social, economic and political. However, reorienting ourselves to impairment in this way has implications in light of issues that arose in the recent SCRA biennial conference.

Taking a DIG out of SCRA: SCRA and DAG

As Dot Nary wrote in the last issue of the TCP (Nary, 2003) DIG (Disability Interest Group) renamed itself DAG (Disability Action Group), placing an increased emphasis on Action. SCRA's membership in general have recently been considering the significance of the 'A' in the organisation's acronym (re: The "Special Feature" entitled "'A' in SCRA" in the last edition of TCP). SCRA has been spurred into critical reflection following e-mail discussions before, conference discussion during and further discussions and publications after the biennial conference where members have been considering the challenges facing the organization in regards to its relationship to and orientation towards recent world events. These world events include the bombing of Afghanistan, the war against Iraq and the formation of the 'Coalition of the Willing' to prosecute a new 'War on Terrorism'. There were a number of painful moments in the SCRA conference when it appeared the organisation (wittingly or otherwise) was structurally preventing plenary discussion of the War against Iraq and the War against Terrorism. Gridley (2003) outlines how delegates were finding it difficult to get 'the war' on the conference agenda. I feel the presence and support of Psychologists for Social Responsibility ensured that we had at least a semblance of public discussion on the topic.

DIG's transformation into DAG was motivated for different reasons. Rather than as a response to and concern about the organization's positioning towards events external to the SCRA network, the group renamed itself due to concerns of happenings within the network – in particular the groups experience of the continued oppression and exclusion of disabled SCRA members within the network. For me this distinction between SCRA's and DAG's reorientation to action is captured in the question Dot Nary asked of SCRA members in the last edition of the disability column: "Are oppressive social conditions within the organization more tolerable than those outside of it?" (Nary, 2003:9). Thus,

while SCRA were wondering whether they should discuss 'the war' during the conference, the disability group was re-constituting itself to find new ways of resisting and challenging SCRA's oppressive treatment of its disabled members.

While these reclaiming and re-naming activities differed in this regard, there was a frightening connection between them. I hope that I have shown where this connection might lie by repositioning impairment back onto its social, economic and political turf. By doing so, and reflecting upon the forces that are at play at a global level in this regard, we are reminded how the number of people who are acquiring impairments (psychological, sensory and/or physical) is swelling considerably as we are entering a new era of increased violence both within and between countries. SCRA's apparent decision to avoid discussion of the war combined with its oppressive treatment towards disabled delegates was shocking and for me served up a particularly pernicious double-whammy. A perverse simultaneity of oppression: denying dignity to its disabled members and silencing discussion on one of the most critical global issues in relation to the creation of impairment.

If we are to seriously consider disability as a diversity issue, I feel we must recognize the social, economic and political nature of impairment. SCRA is a social, economic and political institution that needs to engage in purposeful activity to achieve social justice for disabled people both inside and outside its organisation. It does not appear that SCRA is creating an organisational environment where that will be fully permitted at present, but I feel optimistic that the prognosis will improve in the future.

Footnotes

¹ The reason I can't settle on a personal pronoun is two fold. First, we are all going to acquire an impairment at some point in our life. For some of us it will be temporary, for others it will be permanent. Second, I do not wish to disclose my own impairment status to the SCRA membership for reason you may be able to distill from material in this paper.

² The drug's manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline has faced a number of class action medical negligence cases both in the US and UK.

³ For a comprehensive list visit <http://www.iiac.org.uk/papers/injurie.pdf> [last accessed 7th Jan 2004]

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Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender

Being a straight ally to the LGBT community – “Start There”

Peter Ji
University of Illinois at Chicago

The title for this piece comes from a college professor’s graduation commencement speech. Many students did not know what to do after college and asked the professor about what should they do. In her speech, the professor replied, “Start there. You start with what you know and you look forward to learning more about what you hope to know.” This statement has become my mantra for describing my journey in becoming a straight ally to the LGBT community.

I first wanted to be a straight ally because I needed to do something more than accept my LGBT friends. They are special to me and I am proud that they are comfortable telling me they are gay or lesbian. When I went to social gatherings with other LGBT persons, they felt comfortable socializing with me. I valued my meaningful relationships with persons within the LGBT community. We would acknowledge and discuss LGBT issues and how they relate to our own identity, our friendships, our family relationships, and our relationship with society.

But I did not feel that I was “qualified” to be straight ally. I did not have a family member who “came out” as openly gay or lesbian. I recall talking to my straight friends who had LGBT siblings or to parents with a LGBT son or daughter. From my perspective, they had more insight into LGBT issues because they knew what it was like when one of their family relatives “came out.” I did not have these experiences, so how could I relate?

If someone were to describe me, would they describe me as a straight ally to the LGBT community? Could I be identified as someone who is fully aware of LGBT issues? During my multicultural training in my psychology doctoral program at the University of Missouri, I viewed my professors as multiculturally competent. Would someone identify me as competent in LGBT issues and as a straight ally to the LGBT community?

I had to answer “no.” Honestly, I felt that just accepting LGBT individuals was not enough. Just having LGBT friends was not enough. Like any unjustly marginalized group, the LGBT community continuously deals with oppression and discrimination. Furthermore, the LGBT community deals with people who use the Bible as “evidence” that being gay is fundamentally wrong. How would I respond if someone proclaimed me as fundamentally flawed based on religious text? In the end, I assessed myself as uncomfortable with being too passive and I experienced an inner urgency to do more.

So I had to “start there.” It was not enough for me to say I accepted LGBT individuals and that I was against oppression of the

LGBT community. If I wanted to “do more,” what would it look like? What would be the model? Should I read plenty of literature on the LGBT community? Should I take every opportunity to strike down LGBT jokes? Do I fight legislation that prohibits LGBT individuals from having the same privileges and rights as heterosexuals? At this point, I felt I had a problem with credibility and identity. If I wanted to portray myself as a straight ally to the LGBT community, what evidence would I have to back my claim? Where would I start?

As I reflected and talked with others I trusted, I concluded that I could offer my emotional reactions and my beliefs about what was right. I do have noteworthy experiences with LGBT individuals. On one occasion, I was riding in a car with a gay couple, and one man talked about his family’s struggle to accept his gay identity. During that car ride, I remember being silent, wanting to say something to show my understanding, but feeling unable to do so. On another occasion, I remember feeling proud that, while casually talking with friends, a gay man complemented me by saying I could

There were times when I felt good speaking about LGBT issues, and there were times I wished I could have done more rather than be silent.

be his date for a school dance. At a wedding, I remember other persons making fun of a gay man, and I felt unable to quell their homophobic remarks. I

remember other persons saying that being gay has to be biologically rooted because why would anyone intentionally choose to be gay? There were times when I felt good speaking about LGBT issues, and there were times I wished I could have done more rather than be silent.

So I had to “start there.” I wanted an active voice. During my internship, I had an opportunity to produce an outreach event. My task was to construct a short program to promote psychology issues for interested college students. I will always remember this opportunity as the time when I “got started.” I decided that I would create an outreach event titled “Being a Straight Ally to the LGBT Community.” As soon as I started, I became nervous. I did a literature search and found nothing substantial on this topic. During my doctoral training, I became extensively involved with multicultural issues. I took several courses, participated in projects and workshops to learn about race issues, ethnic identity, and LGBT issues. During my search, it occurred to me that there were no models or literature that dealt with LGBT straight allies. So I felt even more at a loss because there were few, if any, models that could guide my wish to become a straight ally.

I had to start elsewhere. My internship had three wonderful staff members who proved to be a source of encouragement and validation. It was important for me to feel safe to say, “This is what I want to do. I want to be a credible, confident, ally to the LGBT community. I do not know where to start, I do not know what being an ally would mean, and I do not know how to lead this outreach event.” All three reacted with positive welcome. It was actually refreshing for them to hear that a straight individual wanted to come forward and “do more” for the LGBT community.

Furthermore, my issue of wanting to be “credible” was not an issue for them. My internship staff counselors were right - Exactly why did I want to be “credible?” Therefore, my first lesson was examining my need to be “credible.” Turns out, I wanted to be

“credible” because I was afraid that others might ridicule me. For example, I was afraid that others would question my motives. Why would I speak for LGBT persons if I were not gay? What investment could I possibly have in the LGBT community? I then realized that this was my first experience of what it is like to live in fear for proclaiming who you truly are. I wanted to be a straight ally and I was afraid of coming out as a straight ally. I thought that knowledge was the only way to justify my claim as a straight ally. Now, I suddenly realized that I had a shared experience of being afraid of being who I want to be. I felt empowered because I was angry that I had to be timid about wanting to be who I wanted to be. I felt angry that there was a possibility that others might ridicule me for wanting to be a straight ally. Rather than retreating in fear, I could fight back this fear.

My second lesson was truly realizing that issues of persecution are pertinent for everybody. The third staff member I talked to shared stories about how a straight family member was mistaken for being gay and subsequently accosted. At that point, this staff member realized that prejudice and hate was not about specifically discriminating LGBT individuals. Anybody and everybody is a target for hate because there will always be someone who feels justified in hating another person. At that point, as a straight ally, you are not speaking out about the rights of a particular group, you are speaking about the rights of everyone to be treated with respect and free from misguided perceptions of others.

At this point, I was energized. I felt I had a starting point. I became comfortable with being a beginner. During my journey towards developing my straight ally identity, I wanted to hear stories about becoming a straight ally and I wanted to hear stories of hate and prejudice. I became confident that I was not starting from “nothing.” I was starting from my own experience. Yes, I was still in the beginning stages of my development, but no longer was I timid about being a “beginner.” Rather, I was starting to feel comfortable at being “expert” about the early process of becoming a straight ally.

So now I “started” to explore. I have always wanted to be a part of a group that addresses these issues and my first logical place was with the national organization, Parents and Friends for Lesbian And Gays (PFLAG). I attended my first meeting and immediately met an old friend and found out that after all these years he was gay. We have maintained our friendship ever since. The PFLAG meeting was illuminating. Many family members were happy to see me as a straight person at PFLAG simply because I wanted to be there. It also altered my assumption that everyone at PFLAG was comfortable as a parent or friend of a gay or lesbian individual. There are those who have fully accepted his or her gay or lesbian relatives or friends and there are some who still struggle with acceptance. However, PFLAG provided a space to feel comfortable and talk openly about acceptance by sharing stories about the difficulties and joys of being a friend or relative of a LGBT individual.

Even those who are comfortable with their LGBT relatives face additional struggles. For example, one mother came to PFLAG and talked about how her daughter had confided to her that she was a lesbian. However, her daughter was not sure if she could confide in her other family members. So only the mother shared her daughter’s secret. The mother had to conceal from the remaining family members that the mother was going to PFLAG. A father described how difficult it was for him to hear his fellow co-workers joke about homosexuals. He could not risk telling his co-workers that he was offended because he was afraid of the

potential backlash from disclosing that he has a gay son. Listening to these stories, I realized that the end goal is not simply accepting LGBT individuals. Parents and other heterosexual people need straight allies too; they may face discrimination for being a straight ally. We need others who understand how hard it is to live in a homophobic society. Straight allies can set the tone that it is not enough to simply accept; only active advocacy and open support can truly assert that discrimination of LGBT individuals, as well as the parents and friends of LGBT individuals, is wrong.

These experiences were invaluable to me. I began to see my purpose and identity as a straight ally. Based on my experiences with PFLAG and other groups, I began to construct the outline for my outreach event, “Being a Straight Ally to the LGBT Community.” I presented this event at a Midwestern university campus as part of their LGBT Pride week. I came up with fifteen reasons why it is important to be a straight ally to the LGBT community. The event consisted of passing this list to the participants and I would lead a discussion regarding their reactions to the list. The list is as follows:

“It is important to be a straight ally.....”

1. ...so other heterosexuals can learn how to stop any form of persecuting LGBT individuals.
2. ...so we can dispel the myths and misconceptions of the LGBT community that are held by majority society.
3. ...because straight allies need to support other straight individuals who are coping with their own biases and discomfort with LGBT individuals.
4. ...because the feeling of being marginalized from mainstream society can be intense for a LGBT individual. Straight allies help LGBT individuals feel free to be a part of all society, as opposed to having LGBT individuals feel that only the LGBT community can accept them.
5. ...because LGBT individuals can comfortably and securely claim their identity when they know that straight individuals also accept the LGBT individual’s identity.
6. ...because a LGBT person may not feel supported or accepted by his or her own LGBT community and need to rely on straight allies for safety and support. LGBT individuals may have their own biases about the LGBT community or the LGBT community may have communicated some bias against the LGBT individual. Such biases make it difficult for a LGBT individual to “fit in” within the LGBT community and may look to straight allies for acceptance.
7. ...so LGBT individuals can look to straight allies as role models for how they hope the “coming out” process will be like when they are ready to “come out” to their families and friends.
8. ...because a LGBT person may need a positive emotional experience from straight allies if the LGBT individual’s own families or friends will not support him or her.
9. ...because LGBT individuals in the process of “coming out” may feel the straight community is labeling their feelings as deviant, inappropriate, or transitional. Straight allies can provide a supportive emotional experience by appreciating and valuing the LGBT individuals’ struggle with the “coming out” process.
10. ... because straight friends or family members who know of a individual’s LGBT identity may need to keep the LGBT individual’s secret from others. Straight allies can

help these straight members cope with this uncomfortable experience.

11. ...because straight individuals may be threatened or slandered if they express any affection for same sex individuals. Prejudice against the LGBT community restricts how straight individuals can express affection for one another.
12. ...because straight allies need other straight allies to “come out” so they too can be supported as being an advocate for the LGBT community.
13. ...because even if a LGBT individual, or a family member or friend of a LGBT individual, has “come out” within their family home or their circle of friends, LGBT individuals and straight allies still have to decide if it is safe to “come out” within other settings, such as his or her workplace, school, social club, etc. Straight allies can help make every setting or environment a safe place for LGBT individuals.
14. ...so they can change environments or settings (e.g. schools, workplaces, institutions) that are not taking a clear stance regarding LGBT individuals. If we do not clearly support and encourage LGBT individuals within our own environments or settings, we are in effect leaving them at the mercy of passive sexual stereotypes inherent within these environments and settings.
15. ...it is simply the right thing to do.

A comment about reason #15. As I was reviewing the first fourteen reasons, I realized that I left out the most important one. In constructing these reasons, my purpose was to write down “reasonable” responses to those who might question why I am striving to become a straight ally. I was anticipating that I had to debate others; to justify my reasons for standing up for LGBT rights; to combat a homophobic society. I suddenly realized that these reasons were empty because I forgot a crucial piece: discrimination and hurting others is inherently wrong. No one should have to live with feeling hated for who they are. So I ended the program with reason #15; being a straight ally is simply the right thing to do.

The response to this outreach event was astounding. Many straight persons came to the outreach event and said it was their first chance to “come out” as a straight ally to the LGBT community. Many LGBT individuals attended because they were glad that straight individuals were presenting programs to address homophobia. I received an enormous thank you from the LGBT outreach center at the university. The program turned a corner for me. I found others who were also struggling to be a straight ally. I was no longer alone and I was relieved to have other straight allies to share my struggle with. We realized that to be a true ally means remaining curious about your identity as an ally. By being honest about ourselves, acknowledging what we know and what we want to do, and remaining true to our desire to be an ally, we can claim that we are allies to the LGBT community.

After a year of being involved in PFLAG and presenting the outreach event, I marched in my first Gay Pride Parade in Chicago. The experience was wonderful. Our PFLAG section received the loudest cheers. Proud parents held up signs stating, “Our children free at last” or “God blessed me with a Gay Son.” I walked arm in arm with a gay man and crowds cheered our embrace. I have marched in the parade twice now and I always have mixed emotions. While I am proud to be a part of the PFLAG organization and will constantly set goals for myself to be a straight

ally, I am often beset with the feeling that I have not done enough. Maybe that is the way I will always perceive myself. Maybe it will be my incentive to keep advocating, to keep being involved, to keep learning, to keep experiencing, so that I can combat my own complacency and continually stretch myself to help rid society of homophobia and hate. I now know that I no longer have to worry about whether I am qualified or credible. To be a straight ally, you start with what you know. You “start there” and explore and develop to be the straight ally you wish to be. It has been a great journey for me and I will know that by the next Gay Pride Parade, I can look back each year and find that I have continually and confidently explored ways to be a straight ally.

Living Community Psychology

Gloria Levin, Editor

“Living Community Psychology” highlights a community psychologist through an in-depth interview that is intended to depict both personal and professional aspects of the featured individual. The column’s purpose is to offer insights into community psychology as it is lived by its diverse practitioners.



Featuring: Andrea Solarz

While we are all products of our parents, this is especially apt for Andrea Solarz. Her father was a Ph.D. (experimental) psychologist who was an academic at the University of California at Davis. After a sabbatical year in Washington, DC, he decided to leave academia for a federal government career, working as a policy analyst in rehabilitation and then health care financing. Her mother’s contribution to Andrea’s interests was equally significant, having been a political activist and a Congressional staffer. It was virtually assured that Andrea would receive a doctorate in some field and equally so that partisan politics and a commitment to applied social policy would claim her energies eventually.

Majoring in Psychology at the University of Virginia, Andrea received her B.A. with high distinction in 1977. There, she was introduced to community psychology principles by Dick Reppucci and decided to pursue graduate studies in that field. Andrea chose Michigan State University because it was one of the few “pure” community psychology programs available. The standard advice in that program was to make one’s own way, to create one’s own career, but she had no idea how to do it. “It frustrated me because, at the time, I didn’t understand it at all,” she recalls. Fortunately,

she began working with Carol Mowbray, then director of the Office of Research and Evaluation for the Michigan Department of Mental Health. Dr. Mowbray “was an incredibly fabulous mentor” who provided Andrea opportunities to pursue her interests in social policy. Andrea helped staff a Governor’s interdepartmental task force that produced a report addressing various approaches to homelessness and then co-chaired (along with the Governor’s staff liaison) the effort to implement these recommendations in Michigan. Andrea credits Dr. Mowbray with creating a wonderful setting for pursuing her own work. “Every opportunity was available to me through her. Whatever I was interested in doing, she wanted to support me in.”

As she approached the end of her graduate training in 1986, Andrea knew she did not want an academic career “from seeing people be assistant professors. That can be a fairly miserable existence! It’s very hard work, and there is no guarantee you’re going to be able to keep your job. But more than that, I’ve always been motivated more by wanting to have an impact on promoting social good, the greater social welfare.” By serendipity, Andrea learned of the APA Congressional Science Fellowship and submitted her application 3 days after her dissertation was due. By luck, one of the (two) Fellows selected by APA declined the invitation, and first runner-up Andrea was tapped for the honor.

The Congressional Science Fellowship program (coordinated by the American Association for the Advancement of Science) assembles professionals selected from different scientific associations for a year in Washington, DC working in Congressional offices. One unexpected outcome of her interactions with the other Fellows was a greater exposure to and greater appreciation of basic science. More important, she had the opportunity to “do something that truly was going to have a significant impact on the lives of thousands of people.” She worked in the office of Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), initially on an issue related to cable TV. “The idea is just to learn the process, not necessarily to work on issues related to your particular substantive background.” Closer to her social science background, she also worked on a briefing memo on welfare reform and then joined the staff of a subcommittee chaired by Sen. Harkin, crafting legislation to benefit persons with disabilities. She credits the Fellowship year with providing “a deep understanding of policy and policy making and what kinds of issues and concerns are of meaning and importance to policy makers. And just understanding the language and the process.” Andrea also credits the Fellowship year with helping crystallize the idea of a career in policy for herself. While her family background and personal inclinations headed her in that direction, the Fellowship year provided the quality of experience and contacts that allowed her to realize that career path. She continues to be a big booster of the Congressional Fellowship program, encouraging community psychologists to consider it as a post-Ph.D. option.

As her Fellowship year came to an end in August 1988, Andrea had no idea what she would do next. She admits: “I have never had a clear sense at any point along my career of what my next step would be. I feel my way around until I find something I connect with. Even if I haven’t been able to articulate for myself what I want or need next, I sort of know it when I get there. That’s how the process has worked for me.”

Andrea joined the Dukakis Presidential campaign as the National Health Constituencies Coordinator. Although the funding for her position never materialized (despite working 60-hour weeks), she was very committed to working on the campaign and

gained valuable experience. In recent years, she has worked on fundraising for the National Democratic Party.

Her first paid job following the Fellowship was a time-limited detail to the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), assigned to a large study on adolescent health. As the two-year OTA detail was coming to an end in 1990, she was recruited to work in public policy at APA. Her job titles changed with the frequent reorganizations of APA’s policy office, ending as Assistant Director for Science Policy. Her 5 years at APA coincided with some “dark days” for APA’s science staff, beset by considerable turmoil. She says: “Despite some significant problems at APA that made my working there difficult at times, I also had many valuable experiences and terrific colleagues.” She eventually left APA in 1995 to work on another time-limited detail, this time at the Institute of Medicine (IOM) where she directed two studies – one on genetics, health and behavior and the other, a groundbreaking report on lesbian health research. She characterizes IOM as a “really intense place to work.” Nevertheless, as with all the difficult environments in which she has worked, she acknowledges that “I got a lot out of the experience and have applied a lot of what I learned there in other contexts. Even experiences along the way that have been difficult or challenging, I have definitely learned from. Having had those experiences has sometimes made me wiser.” The IOM job ended nearly 3 years later, in 1998. Having learned from her prior job transitions the need to take a break between assignments, Andrea purposely did not look for a new job upon leaving IOM. Drawing on her savings, she first vacationed in Nova Scotia and then generally hung out.

She began to receive requests to consult and was delighted with the variability and flexibility of independent social policy consultation. Within a year, she realized she could earn a good living as a self-employed consultant. “Work has kept coming. I’ve never had to look for any work.” Andrea describes her typical work day as spent writing on her home computer. Because APA is her major client, she also has an office there, allowing her the opportunity for social interaction – loneliness being a typical problem for independent consultants. Other clients have included federal agencies and other professional associations. She does policy analysis, project evaluation and science writing; prepares grant applications; and monitors policy developments on selected scientific issues for clients. Andrea estimates that she now works fewer hours than she had as a salaried employee, while earning a comfortable living. Because of her flexible work schedule, she is able to invest considerable time in “nonpaid work,” including her active involvement with SCRA.

Andrea has a long history of service to SCRA, having started as a student member, then serving as Northeast regional coordinator, co-chair of the Committee on Women, and co-editor of the public policy column of SCRA’s newsletter. She was elected to the Executive Committee as National Regional Coordinator and then Member-at-Large. Her third year in the latter role thrust her into the role of Program Chair of the APA annual meeting, a task to which she devoted considerable time while on a hiatus from employment. (Andrea also has the rare distinction of having attended all of SCRA’s Biennial Conferences.) Coincident to her beginning her consulting practice in 1998, Andrea’s involvement in SCRA kicked into high gear with her election to the presidency of SCRA. Before accepting the presidential nomination, she carefully considered the commitment that would be needed to be “a really

good steward of the Society” and decided to devote full attention to it, limiting her consulting practice for a year.

Andrea’s presidential term extended from 1999 to 2000. She is the only applied, non-academic president of SCRA since Saul Cooper served in 1972 – a fact that she finds shocking. Taking a “real-world perspective” during her term, she emphasized policy-oriented activities. Among the accomplishments of her presidency, she counts obtaining external funding for SCRA projects, having many more SCRA members named to APA boards and committees, and providing substantive input to NIH in its planning processes. She also instituted a survey of the SCRA membership. “We had no idea who we are, particularly the (non-APA) members who had never been surveyed. I hoped that, as part of our database, we would have information (to be updated annually) about people’s interests so that we could draw on the assets of our members much more effectively. It would really increase the capacity of the division to be active and involved and to contribute (to APA, NIH, etc.) Unfortunately, after I left, that hasn’t been maintained effectively. I’ve been quite frustrated with that.” Although no longer a member of SCRA’s executive committee, she stays well informed, in part by serving as SCRA’s listserv administrator.

Andrea has long felt that SCRA, “like all organizations that are dependent on volunteer leadership,” lacks continuity for maintaining the organization’s basic functions. She strongly supports SCRA employing an Executive Director – in part, to increase the number and activism of members. She recognizes the value of “having a permanent structure with someone who is substantive and really understands, at a professional level, how to make an organization have more visibility.”

She regrets that in her fleeting presidency year she did not make more progress in instituting a mentoring program in SCRA. A mentoring survey was distributed to members during her presidency, but to date she has not seen the survey results. (More recently, she co-chaired (with Gloria Levin) an ambitious mentoring track at the New Mexico Biennial Conference that was well regarded by participating mentees — students through early professionals.) Aware of an increasing interest among younger community psychologists in applied, policy-oriented careers, Andrea provides informal mentoring to students referred to her, “especially talking about different career options or the Congressional Fellowship. Students have difficulty finding models for applied work in academia. You don’t get prepared to be a nonacademic. Unless you’re exposed to people who are really out there, working in the community, I think it’s hard to envision an applied career.” Andrea admits: “I’ve never done the kind of job search I recommend that others do, of talking with people in a deliberate, systematic way. But, in part, that’s because my networks are pretty broad. I know lots of people, and I’m talking to them frequently. But I’ve never had to call up a stranger for a job.”

Andrea agrees that recognition for a job well done is important to her — “Actually, I find that I get a lot more strokes for my work (as a consultant) than I did when I was employed where you’re often taken for granted. A lot of the work you do may be invisible. There could be political conflicts or people with other motives who make it difficult for your work to be recognized. The fact that people choose me (as a consultant) is a stroke right there — that I’m sought after. I admit I’m pleased with that. People have expressed a lot of appreciation for the work I’ve done.”

Andrea’s family, including her artist/sister, Valerie, live in Annapolis, MD, close enough for frequent outings with her nieces. She plans to write a book on the life of her great-great-grandfather,

Charles Amory Clark, a Congressional Medal of Honor winner for saving his regiment. She is using as primary research materials “his amazing Civil War diaries and letters.”

When asked what her major contribution will be to community psychology, Andrea answers: “Providing an example of someone who can take the training of community psychology and have a rewarding applied career in public policy.” She intends to continue her self-employment but acknowledges there may come a time when she’ll place higher priority on the long-term security obtainable from a salaried job that provides benefits of health insurance (she now pays for her own) and vestment in a third retirement system (she pays into Social Security and a SEP-IRA fund).

Reflecting on her career to date, she states: “In some ways, my career choices reflect a struggle to try to balance my interest in advocacy (having an impact) and my interest in being substantive (focusing on science).” By following a non-traditional career path and by creating her own job, Andrea is able to make a reasonable income, have flexibility in scheduling her life and work on meaningful issues that are of personal interest to her.

Andrea Solarz can be contacted at asolarz@prodigy.net.

Prevention and Promotion

Richard Wolitski, Editor

In a prosperous country such as our own, it is difficult to believe that we are unable (or unwilling) to ensure the well-being of individuals who do not have enough food on the table or a roof over their heads. In our efforts to reduce the burden of disease in communities, it sometimes seems that we take an approach that misses the forest for the trees. Too often we fail to recognize that many different health threats are brought about by a common cause that is driven by differences in economic and social opportunities that are differentially available to members of our society. In this issue, Dan Kidder considers the fundamental influence of housing and homelessness on HIV risk and the lives of persons living with HIV or AIDS.

If you, a colleague, or a student would like to contribute to this column, please send me an email at: RWolitski@cdc.gov. I am actively looking for submissions for future issues of the Community Psychologist that address a wide range of prevention and health promotion issues. This is a great opportunity to turn an introduction of a thesis or dissertation into a brief literature review, describe a program that is underway, or report on early research findings. – Rich Wolitski

Homelessness, Housing, and HIV Prevention

Daniel P. Kidder, PhD
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention

Housing and Homelessness

Housing is a basic need, although it is recognized that many people do not have satisfactory housing (Fullilove & Fullilove, 2000). Rhetoric for at least the last half century has promoted the

goal of providing adequate housing to everyone in the United States. The Housing Act of 1949 posited 'the realization as soon as feasible of a decent home and suitable living environment for every American family,' an idea which has been reaffirmed in various ways in the Housing Acts of 1968, 1974, and 1990 (Hartman, 1998; Freeman, 2002; Martinez, 2000). Not only has the United States stated housing is a right, but international communities have also, as evidenced by documents such as the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states 'everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services' (UN, 1948; see Thiele, 2002 for further review).

Despite multiple proclamations for the 'right' to adequate housing, it is no secret that homelessness is an ongoing problem in the United States. Although it is difficult to obtain an accurate count of the number of homeless people, estimates indicate that, at any given time, there are 500,000 to 600,000 homeless, and more than 3 million people are homeless at some point during the course of a year – with about 40% of those being young children (US Conference of Mayors, 2003; Urban Institute, 2000). Importantly, these estimates do not even consider people who are unstably housed, such as those who are staying temporarily with a friend or relative, or homeless teenage youth. Despite increased attention to the issue of homelessness in recent years, the problem appears to be getting worse rather than better (US Conference of Mayors, 2003; National Coalition for the Homeless, 1997).

The explanations for homelessness are many and are often complex. One of the most widely cited reasons is the lack of affordable housing (US Conference of Mayors, 2003). It is typically recommended that no more than 30% of household income should be spent on housing, yet people working low wage jobs often spend a much larger portion of their income on housing than higher wage workers. In 1999, 20% of renters (who are overwhelmingly low income) spent half of their income on housing (Freeman, 2002). For poor families, spending a large proportion of income on housing means there is little remaining for food, clothing, medical care, or other necessities. In these cases an illness or loss of a job by the main income earner may result in a choice between eating and having a place to live.

For those with compromised housing situations, the associated stress can have implications for their health. The relationship between health and housing has been well-documented, indicating that those in better quality housing have better mental and physical health (Dunn, 2000; Thomson, Petticrew, & Morrison, 2001; Evans et al., 2000). For those with serious chronic or infectious diseases, lack of housing can have serious consequences. Such is the case with homeless people living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Homelessness and HIV/AIDS

If quantifying the numbers of people who are homeless in the United States is challenging, determining the subset of those who are living with HIV/AIDS is even more difficult. Estimates for the percentage of homeless adults with HIV/AIDS have ranged from 1% to 62%, depending on geographic area, population, and sampling methods (Fournier et al., 1996; St. Lawrence & Basfield, 1995; Zolopa et al., 1994; Allen et al., 1994; Torres et al., 1990). Even using the lower end of this range indicates that there are tens of thousands of people with HIV/AIDS who do not have housing.

Homeless people are more likely to engage in behaviors that put them at risk for HIV infection at a much higher rate than other groups. These activities include risky sexual behaviors; injection drug use and needle sharing; and exchanging sex for money, drugs, or a place to stay (Fournier et al., 1996; Allen et al., 1994; Culhane, Gollub, Kuhn, Shpaner, 2001; Walters, 1999). Ironically, though they are more likely to be at risk for HIV, they are less likely to have access to HIV prevention measures available to other populations. For instance, counseling and testing services are not generally offered to homeless people, and when available there are often barriers, such as travel to the service site, that make it difficult for these to be effective (Song, 1999). The co-occurrence of homelessness and HIV infection risk behaviors, coupled with the lack of access to adequate prevention information and interventions, makes it likely that if the number of homeless people increases over time, so will the number that will be infected with HIV.

People who are homeless and living with HIV/AIDS face additional burdens not faced by either homeless individuals or stably housed people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA). For instance, people with HIV need greater access to comprehensive health care than the general population. Yet there are many barriers to care for homeless PLWHA, such as lack of transportation, insufficient (or non-existent) health insurance, and limited culturally and linguistically competent service providers (Song, 1999). For a group that often spends most of their energy on subsistence needs, seeking primary medical care may not be a high priority (Conanan et al., 2003). Difficulties with accessing medical care have negative effects on health as it delays the identification of HIV and comorbidities, and contributes to higher rates of opportunistic infections and diseases (e.g., influenza, diabetes, liver disease) that tend to be more serious in this population (Conanan et al., 2003; Song, 1999).

For PLWHA, medical advances have brought antiretroviral medications that can suppress HIV and add many years to their lives. However, for homeless PLWHA, even with appropriate medical care and access to medications, treatment may add additional difficulties to their lives. HIV medication regimens are usually complex, involving taking as many as twenty pills over the course of a day with strict instructions on when and how they should be taken (e.g., with food and drink), as well as how they should be stored (some need refrigeration) (Conanan et al., 2003; Song, 1999). Additionally, medications often have incapacitating side effects, such as recurring diarrhea which is a problem for a group with little access to restrooms. These are issues that may not easily be overcome for people who may not have control over their access to food, water, or other necessities for adherence to the regimen. Medical providers may also be less likely to provide antiretroviral medications to homeless individuals if they do not believe they will be able to adhere to the prescribed regimen, as incomplete adherence may result in the virus becoming drug resistant or result in cross-resistance to other HIV medications (Song, 1999). Even without obstacles, antiretroviral therapy is expensive, and homeless PLWHA often have no mechanism for paying for the medications.

Homeless PLWHA experience many difficulties and thus may not be able to make preventing the spread of HIV a high priority, assuming they even know they have HIV. However, given the large numbers of people in this group and the risky behaviors in which they often engage, this group should be targeted for HIV prevention efforts.

Structural factors in HIV prevention

The focus in psychology and public health prevention has often been on individual behavior change. Although these efforts can be effective, they are also costly with respect to time, money, and personnel. A complementary approach is to focus on change at the policy and environmental level. These types of interventions focus on changing the environment around an individual in order to improve the prevention outcomes. More specifically, the focus of these interventions is to change *structural factors*, which are barriers to, or facilitators of, an individual's prevention efforts (Sumartojo, 2000). These can include environmental, structural, social, cultural, political, and other mechanisms that often occur at a level beyond the direct control of an individual, but influence an individual's prevention behavior. There are numerous examples of structural interventions that have been implemented in public health such as seat belt laws, taxation of tobacco products, water fluoridation, prohibiting sale of alcohol to minors, speed limits, and criminalization of drug use by pregnant women (Blankenship, Bray, & Merson, 2000).

Recently more attention has been placed on structural factors related to HIV prevention, at least in part because of the continued increase in the number of HIV diagnoses in the United States (MMWR, 2003). More importantly is the empirical evidence that structural interventions are effective in HIV prevention efforts, including work conducted both internationally and in the US (Parker, Easton, & Klein, 2000; Sumartojo, 2000). Although these studies are not numerous, results indicate how structural factors can impact HIV prevention efforts among intravenous drug users as well as those engaging in risky sex.

For instance, people who took free condoms were more likely to use condoms during the last sexual encounter than those who did not. When a nominal fee was charged (25 cents) for the condoms, people with two or more sexual partners reported using fewer condoms than when they were free (Cohen, Scribner, Bedimo, & Farely, 1999). Thus, a small change in the cost of condoms can impose a barrier to HIV prevention, and given the financial constraints of homeless individuals, this would be an especially salient issue.

Distribution and use of condoms has also been used as a structural intervention among commercial sex workers. Parker, Easton, and Klein (2000) discuss the 100% Condom Program implemented by the government in Thailand requiring all patrons of sex establishments to use condoms. Strict enforcement of this program by police and local AIDS committees resulted in a 94% rate of condom use, which was nearly double the rate prior to program implementation.

Developing, implementing, and evaluating structural interventions is quite challenging because they often require broad-based support and changes in policies in order to have the intended effect. Typically they require the cooperation of different political and social groups that may not have a history of collaborating, especially around such a sensitive issue. Among these groups there may also be resistance to structural interventions as they 'may be seen by some as limiting individual choice or coercing individuals in unacceptable ways' (Sumartojo, 2000, p. S7), despite the positive effect they are intended to have. Understanding and acceptance of some individual sacrifice may be necessary to achieve the desired outcome.

Evaluation of structural interventions is an additional difficulty, as the interventions often deviate from traditional experimental

designs. Due to the multitude of potential influences on the health outcomes and that implementation often occurs on a large scale, isolating the effects of the structural intervention is a complex proposition. Research in this area may require new methodologies or innovative applications of existing methods in order to determine intervention effectiveness (Sumartojo, 2000).

Despite the challenges involved with structural interventions, it is important to continue to stretch the boundaries of HIV prevention interventions. A new generation of interventions is needed, as 'traditional behavioral intervention strategies have demonstrated some effectiveness in a number of particular contexts but have not had widespread impact' (Parker, Easton, & Klein, 2000, p. S30). Though offering new challenges, structural interventions provide the opportunity to have a broader impact than conventional behavioral interventions.

Housing as a structural intervention

Although the literature presented earlier describes the associations between homelessness or unstable housing and HIV risk, infection, medical care, and treatment adherence, there is virtually no published research comparing those who are housed with those who are homeless or unstably housed, nor is there research on providing housing as a prevention intervention. Housing is important for a variety of issues for people living with HIV/AIDS (e.g., medication adherence), and preliminary studies suggest that housing as a structural intervention for people who are homeless or unstably housed may result in positive health outcomes regarding HIV prevention and health promotion in this population.

In one study comparing people homeless or unstably housed with those with stable and adequate housing, Aidala et al. (2002) conducted secondary analysis of pooled interview data from over 3000 HIV-infected clients of agencies participating in a national, multi-site, program evaluation study. Housing status at program enrollment was coded as homeless, (sleeping on the street or out of doors, in a public place, or emergency shelter), unstable housing (in a temporary housing program or doubled up with others), or stable housing (regular apartment or house). There were significant differences in risk behavior by housing status. Compared to 1% of the stably housed, 16% of those in unstable housing, and 23% of the homeless recently exchanged sex for money or drugs. Only 5% of the stably housed recently used a needle to inject drugs compared to 12% of the unstably housed and 25% of the homeless. The relationship between housing status and HIV risk behaviors remained even after controlling for a wide range of demographic, health status, and service utilization variables. Large reductions in rates of sex and drug risk behaviors were seen among individuals with a prior history of homelessness or unstable housing who were now stably housed. Recognizing limitations of the agency-based sample and cross-sectional design, findings suggest that housing status influences risk.

In a separate study, the authors extended their analyses by the addition of follow-up data. Examination of the longitudinal data revealed that homeless or marginally housed HIV-positive individuals whose housing status improved were about half as likely to use hard drugs, use needles, or share needles in the recent past and were significantly less likely to have had unprotected sex at last intercourse as were individuals who did not change their housing situation, controlling for important demographic and service utilization variables. Clients whose housing status worsened over time were four times more likely than others to have

exchanged sex for money, drugs, or needed goods in the recent past.

Although the longitudinal data showed a general temporal association between change in housing status and HIV transmission risks and drug use, it was not possible to determine that change in housing status always preceded change in risk-taking or drug use behaviors. In addition, these data were not gathered using a controlled design, and so could not support causal assertions about the associations between provision of housing and consequent lowering of transmission risk among HIV-seropositive individuals. It is possible that HIV transmission risks (such as intravenous drug use and/or sex exchange behaviors) were the *cause* of homelessness rather than an effect of housing status.

Due to the limitations of the study design, these data are consistent with, but could not establish a causal relationship between housing status and HIV transmission risks. Nonetheless, this is the largest study of the association of homelessness and HIV risk behaviors and the first to show that longitudinal changes in housing status are associated with changes in AIDS risk-taking among HIV-seropositive individuals.

This study points to important future directions for intervention research. Rigorous intervention studies are needed to test the hypothesis that providing housing assistance to homeless people living with HIV/AIDS results in lower rates of HIV risk behaviors, greater access to medical care, and higher rates of treatment adherence compared to those who do not receive housing assistance. If data from these studies support the hypothesis, they would provide strong support for the effectiveness of housing as a structural intervention in the prevention of the spread of HIV.

Conclusion

There are many issues faced by the growing numbers of homeless people living with HIV/AIDS. Not only do these individuals carry the burden of an incurable disease, but they also are at the intersection of two of the most stigmatized groups in our society. They are at risk for many negative health outcomes due to exposure to physical elements, lack of food and drink, and inadequate medical care. In order to improve the outcomes and lives of people in this group rigorously evaluated and effective interventions are needed.

Providing housing to homeless or unstably housed people is a sensible option given that many national and international organizations have described housing as a right that should be provided to all citizens. Yet there are not unlimited funds for social programs, especially programs that are as expensive as providing housing, and policy makers and funders often request empirical data to support funding initiatives. Large-scale empirical studies that can show that housing reduces risk of transmitting HIV and improves health may provide the impetus for increased funding for housing programs and increase the chances of achieving the goal of adequate housing for all.

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The European Network of Community Psychology (ENCP) convened a successful day conference on health and income inequalities in Leuven, Belgium in 2003 and, at an associated Business Meeting did the ground work to launch a more democratic mass organization - to be called the European Community Psychology Association (ECPA), which will be formally launched at Berlin in September 2004 is being set up as a not for profit Association in accordance with Belgian laws and will aim to bring about progressive changes in the way psychology functions both academically and practically in Europe and beyond.

The fifth European Community Psychology conference is to take place in Berlin (Germany) between September 16th and 19th 2004. Previous conferences in this series have been held in Rome (Italy) in 1995, Lisbon (Portugal) in 1998, Bergen (Norway) in 2000 and in Barcelona (Spain) in 2002 with intermediate smaller meetings in Vienna (Austria), Stirling (Scotland), Lecce (Italy) and Leuven (Belgium).

The Berlin Conference, which will take place at the Free University of Berlin, is entitled 'Social Responsibility in a Globalizing World: Learning Communities, Empowerment and Quality of Life'. Conference topics already envisaged include: sustainable socio-economic city development; patient participation and empowerment; social representation of communities; counseling context and networking; corporate citizenship; community values; qualitative community research; health promotion; women in the community; empowerment in organizations; community services in Europe; violence in cities. Further details can be obtained by visiting the conference web site: www.enpc-congress-berlin.de

Before Berlin, community psychologists and their allies in the UK are currently looking forward to the visit in February 2004 of Professor Bernardo Jiménez-Domínguez of the Urban Studies Center at the University of Guadalajara in México. Bernardo, who is 2004 British Psychological Society Visiting Fellow, will be talking about his work in liberation, community and critical social psychology. He is meeting community and critical psychologists in London, Leicester, Nottingham, Manchester and Birmingham (all in England) and Stirling (in Scotland).

Regional News

Judy Primavera
Regional Network Coordinator
Fairfield University
jprimavera@mail.fairfield.edu

This issue's column will be brief. We still are in need of new regional coordinators in the Southeast (to nominate yourself or someone else, contact Lorraine Taylor at University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, ltaylor@email.unc.edu, phone 919-962-8774), the Rocky Mountain/Southwest (contact Susan Wolfe, Texas Department of Health & Human Services, swolfe@oig.hhs.gov, phone 214-767-1716), and the West (contact Ken Miller at San Francisco State, kemiller@sfsu.edu, phone 415-405-0555). A Regional Coordinator generally serves three-year terms, the activities vary from region-to-region, and the time/work commitment is distributed among the three people sharing the RC responsibilities within a region.

The RCs in the Northeast, 3rd year RC Joy Kaufman (joy.Kaufman@yale.edu), 2nd year RC Rhonda Boyd (rboyd@mail.med.upenn.edu), and 1st year RC Cindy Crusto (cindy.crusto@yale.edu), have put together a great regional SCRA program at the Eastern Psychological Association meeting in Washington DC April 15-18, 2004. They will be reporting on the highlights of that meeting in a later TCP Regional Network News column.

News from Europe

David Fryer
University of Stirling, Scotland
d.m.fryer@stir.ac.uk

Community psychology continues to be a thriving, if minority pursuit, in Europe. The UK Critical and Community Psychology Conference 2003 was held in Birmingham, England, and attracted about a hundred delegates for two days of vigorous debate.

International News

Toshi Sasao
International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan
& University of Illinois at Chicago

As we have been ushered into 2004, a number of exciting developments in community psychology around the world show that community psychology is going "truly international" this year and beyond! Below is a list of some of these happenings. Perhaps SCRA members may want to participate in some of these events.

The 9th Biennial Australia-Aotearoa (New Zealand) Community Psychology Conference. Our colleagues in New Zealand and neighboring countries in the South Pacific Region are planning to have a conference to provide an opportunity to learn, share and network in a professional, but comfortable atmosphere at the Mills Reef Winery, Tauranga, Bay of Plenty, New Zealand on July 5 through 7, 2004. The theme for the conference is

“Community Narratives and Praxis: Sharing Stories of Social Action and Change.” Given the growing recognition of the importance of narratives in community life, the conference aims to share community stories and to explore how they relate to social action and change. For more information, you might wish to contact either **Dr. Neville Robertson** at scorpio@waikato.ac.nz or Dr. Darrin Hodgetts at dhdgetts@waikato.ac.nz.

The 5th European Conference for Community Psychology.

Following several successful conferences in Europe (the most recent being at Barcelona, 2002), the European Network for Community Psychology has planned another conference on “Social Responsibility in a Globalizing World.” The conference will be held for September 16 -19, 2004 in Berlin. Some of the issues will include: How can we build both flexible and sustainable communities in organizations and society? What can people from diverse cultures and spheres (e.g., business, professionals, different countries) in order to achieve the goal of empowering, sustainable and learning communities? What is the role of participation and empowerment for the quality of life in a civil society? **Dr. Adrian Fisher, Dr. Paul Toro, Dr. Jim Orford**, and others are planning to submit a panel discussion on the differing views on community psychology from around the world. The conference details can be found at <http://www.enpc-congress-berlin.de>.

The 1st Japan-Korea Joint Seminar on Community

Psychology. Despite much discussion on globalization and virtual communities across continents, relatively little is known about the development of community psychology in the Asian region. However, this does not mean that the other countries do not use community-based approaches in research and action for social change, but perhaps community psychology might have been practiced for years under the guise of neighboring disciplines (e.g., social work, education, sociology). With the growing interest and licensure issues in the practice of individual-based clinical psychology in Asian countries, the promise of community psychology has not been at the frontline. Therefore, the overall objective of the Joint Seminar on February 21, 2004 at Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea is to bring together those community-based researchers from two neighboring nations, Korea and Japan, to network and develop a truly international perspective in community psychology that helps us see the commonalities and uniqueness of community psychology research and action in Asia. The theme of the seminar is “Forging and Serving Communities across Cultures.” Financially supported by a Center of Excellence grant from the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science & Technology to International Christian University and also by a generous contribution from Yonsei University, **Professor Paul Toro** of Wayne State University, will address the participants on The Promise of Community Psychology Research & Practice in Asia: Bridging Individuals and Communities Across Cultures. The other speakers include **Professor Kyung Ja Oh** (Yonsei University, Seoul), **Professor Toshi Sasao** (International Christian University, Tokyo & University of Illinois at Chicago), **Professor Jonghan Yi** (Daegu University, Daegu), and **Professor Masahiro Miguchi** (Rikkyo University, Tokyo) will focus on the current research and practice in community-based approaches in Japan and Korea in the afternoon sessions. Further information can be obtained from Dr. Toshi Sasao at sasao@icu.ac.jp or sasao@uic.edu.

The 1st International Conference on Community Psychology.

As announced in the Summer 2003 issue of *TCP* (pp. 56-57), a group of community psychologists from several countries (e.g.,

U.S., South Africa, New Zealand, Japan, Puerto Rico, Colombia) gathered at the 2003 Biennial in New Mexico and agreed that our colleagues in Puerto Rico would be planning and sponsoring the first International Conference for community psychologists from around the world in June 2006. This conference will be the first of its kind in scope and potential number of participants from all of the continents. In the tradition of community-participatory approaches in community psychology, the conference organizers would like to receive as much input as possible from the SCRA members. Dr. David Perez Jimenez (dperez@prdigital.com) and Dr. Blanca Ortiz-Torres (blancao@hotmail.com) are on the conference organizing committee.

These are some of the international events related to community psychology that came to my attention, but I know that a lot more conferences, seminars, and/or workshops have been planned around the world in which we can participate (given that we can find enough travel money). Please contact Toshi Sasao, Chair, SCRA International Committee at sasao@icu.ac.jp if anyone knows any events that are of interest to SCRA members. In addition, if you know of any community psychologist or anyone who might have any interest in international issues, please send their names to Toshi Sasao as well. I am working on the list of community psychologists around the world.

School Intervention

There will be a panel presentation at the SCRA Program at the 2004 Eastern Psychological Association Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C. on April 16th titled, “Community psychologists in schools: Examining positive youth development, emotional intelligence, program evaluation and mental health.” Panelists are: Milton A. Fuentes; Jane Shepard; Maurice Elias; and Cindy Crusto. The panel presentations will be followed by informal round-table discussion to explore the role of SIIG and its future direction.

Making Use of the Positive Youth Development Approach in Schools

Jane K. Shepard

The Consultation Center, Yale University

Over the past seven years, I’ve had the opportunity to consult to several middle and high schools located in the New Haven area. Whether it was to plan and implement programs in peer mediation or social competency, train teachers in team-building, or to attend committees to improve school climate, I have found that both youth and adults respond enthusiastically when projects were put in the context of Positive Youth Development.

One of the core constructs of the Positive Youth Development (PYD) approach is the notion that “problem-free is not fully prepared” (Pittman, 1991). It emphasizes that focusing solely on decreasing and/or preventing risky behaviors misses the whole person and his/her potential. Instead, the PYD approach insists that all adolescents need supports and opportunities to develop the aspects of identity and areas of ability necessary to become healthy and successful adults (National Training Institute for Community Youth Work, 2002). The key principles of Positive Youth

Development are often described as the 5 C's: *Competence* (academic, social, and vocational); *Confidence* (positive self-concept); *Connections* (to community, family, peers); *Character* (positive values, integrity, and moral values); and *Contributions* (active meaningful roles in decision-making, facilitating change) (Public/Private Ventures, 2000). There is a strong emphasis on the interaction of the youth and the environment with attention to cultural factors (Deyhle, 1995; Boykin & Toms, 1985). Finally, adults are encouraged to see young people as resources in their social environments whether in the family, school, or greater community and creating adult/youth partnerships is emphasized as a best practice to achieve success.

From the PYD perspective, it is the engagement of students in their own learning and in the school system processes which holds the promise of health promotion and problem prevention. Three of my experiences highlight these ideas: implementing block scheduling, a peer mediation program, and a safe school committee.

Block scheduling at high schools means that students have fewer classes each day with each class being longer, and in the case of one suburban high school, ninety minutes. At first many teachers were resistant and wondered how they would hold students' attention for so long. What this has led to in the six years since its inception, however, are classes that involve more interactive learning and opportunities for students to work in groups and to be responsible for teaching one another about the subject matter. As we know, people generally remember information they have to teach much better than information they passively receive. This format also encourages the development of teamwork and group decision-making skills. Teachers are encouraged to see these additional competencies as related to improved academic performance as well as serving other positive youth development functions. As a result, teachers and students become allies in the classroom.

Peer mediation programs teach students valuable conflict resolution skills while engaging them in sharing the responsibility for improving overall school climate by helping other students resolve tensions that could otherwise escalate into more severe interpersonal problems. When they make a referral to the program, adults in the school send the message that the students have special skills and perspectives because of their peer status and students feel their work is meaningful.

In the high school I consult to, the success of the peer mediation program led to the inclusion of students when a safe school committee was formed. The school leaders chose to acknowledge the important role students could play in maintaining a positive school environment. The committee, which also includes teachers, parents, the security resource officer, administrators, guidance counselors, and community stakeholders, meets quarterly to discuss school safety from a wide range of perspectives. Students have taken the daily responsibility for meeting visitors at the front door and giving them an identification badge as a means of ensuring strangers are not entering the school. These students take turns during their free periods and provide coverage all day. They have a radio that puts them in constant touch with the administrators and school security personnel. So, their opinions are heard in the committee meetings and they are active in the daily security of their school.

On a much larger scale, the organization What Kids Can Do in partnership with the Forum for Youth Investment published a working paper about 40 youth-adult partnerships in the San Francisco Bay Area that are working toward educational change. "Taking Democracy in Hand" summarizes some of their ideas and

projects ranging from advocating for multi-ethnic curriculum to capacity building for effective youth leadership in schools (Cervone, 2002). Both organizations also have well-developed websites that provide a wealth of information related to the Positive Youth Development field (www.forumforyouthinvestment.org and www.wkcd.org).

Encouraging adults in schools to listen to students and provide them with opportunities to share responsibility is not always easy but I have found that once the process starts, the rewards that participants experience provide inspiration to continue the change process and that the PYD model gives them a useful framework to build with.

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Self-Help/Mutual Support

Bret Kloos
University of South Carolina

As a longstanding interest group of SCRA, the self-help / mutual support interest group has developed into an international association of researchers, self-help leaders, and policy makers that promotes research and action related to self-help organizations. We have decided to use this column to provide information to those who may want to learn more about this area or who may have related interests. Over the next few issues, we will include reviews of recent research findings, interviews with leaders of self-help organizations, and reflections about the challenges faced in promoting self-help and mutual support.

Self-help / mutual support is a naturally occurring phenomena with a long past but a relatively short history. In the 1970s it became more prominent as a field of study, paralleling the exponential growth of groups across the world. In the U.S., it is estimated that over 25 million persons participated in self-help by the mid-1990s (Kessler, Mickelson, Zhao, 1997). Interest group members and researchers are located around the world – Australia,

Defining self-help and mutual support

Terminology can be confusing. We use the combined terms self-help / mutual support to reach many different audiences about the phenomenon. As ideas of self-help have gained currency, the term developed many different meanings in popular culture. Our references to self-help have a narrower meaning than is commonly used, and may be better captured by the term "mutual support". However, because this term is not as widely known as self-help, we use both to be as inclusive as possible. Amongst ourselves, and indeed in this column, we often use the terms interchangeably.

Common definitions of self-help / mutual support emphasize that it is an intentional process where persons come together to share their experiences in addressing a common life challenge. Typically, these are groups of 5-20 persons that use standard procedures, routines, and prescriptions for addressing problems (e.g., Chinman, Kloos, O'Connell, & Davidson, 2002). This intentional process distinguishes self-help from naturally occurring support. The emphasis on persons coming together to address a common situation distinguishes mutual support from support groups led by a professional who does not share the condition or life circumstance addressed in the group.

The interests of SCRA Self-Help / Mutual Support Group members are broad and varied. A number of members focus on the promise of mutual support for persons with mental health problems or addictions, particularly in the alternative viewpoints and resources mutual support can offer when compared to treatment settings. A number of group members have interests in how self-help can support persons who have experienced stressful life circumstances (e.g., parents of children with cancer, bereavement after a disaster, sexual victimization) or persons who experience multiple stigmatization in their communities (e.g., LGBT persons with mental illness). Some members concentrate on how self-help approaches can improve outcomes of medical treatments for life threatening conditions (e.g., cancer). A few persons have keen interests in understanding the processes that are critical to self-help/mutual support (e.g., development of leadership, sustainability of groups). An emerging area of study is how mutual support organizations are adopting their practices to use the new technologies of the internet and World Wide Web.

While there may be a similarity in the range of interests described in the previous paragraph and the titles on a self-help section of a bookstore, the phenomena they promote can be quite different. Contrary to popular culture images of self-help that emphasize individualistic effort, we are interested in the social process of collective empowerment that comes from group members exchanging emotional support, being role models, and sharing information based upon their experience (e.g., problem solving skills, steps in the journey to recovery, technical information not widely available). Fundamental to most self-help / mutual support approaches is the opportunity to help others (Maton, 1994) or the "helper-therapy" principle (Reissman, 1965) such that all group members are believed to have something to contribute. Unlike self-help books, self-help / mutual support groups offer opportunities for members to help another, rather than only be a receiver of help as is typically the case in many professionally delivered services. Senses of mastery and personal worth are increased when one is not only the receiver of help, but has

something to offer other people. Like the books in the self-help section of a bookstore, mutual support can offer worldviews and ideologies to assist persons in making sense of their experiences (Antze, 1976). However, the collective experience of mutual support offers many other resources for making changes in one's life (Kennedy & Humphreys, 1994)

Examples of recent presentations

At conferences this past summer, group members presented a range of papers promoting understanding of self-help / mutual support. At the SCRA Biennial conference in Las Vegas, NM, Margaret Davis chaired a round table session with exploring the tensions that can arise in conducting research with self-help organizations, as well as, strategies to resolve these tensions (Davis, Borkman, Holtz Isenberg, Jason, Maton, June 2003). A second session considered how mutual support principles can be used to (a) strengthen peer support of young people who are disadvantaged in multi-cultural communities and (b) simultaneously challenge system-level barriers (Visser, June 2003). A third session examined new developments where mutual support principles are being used to develop consumer run organizations that provide services to peers in addition to their self-help activities (Borkman, Meissen, Lucksted, Hughes, Salem, & Karlsson, M., June 2003). Finally, at the APA Conference in Toronto, a session focused on examining empirical evidence about mutual support and proposing new research agendas (Toro, Humphreys, Meissen, & Lavoie, August, 2003).

Self-help / Mutual Support Resources

Hopefully the column provided a taste of the wide range of topics discussed in our interest group. For those interested in learning more about self-help / mutual support, below is a brief list of resources that can offer a good introduction.

List-serve. We have members from a large variety of diverse organizations outside academia. Many of these members cannot attend Biennial conferences. To facilitate communication, we have created a listserv to keep members up to date about activities and opportunities. To subscribe to the list serve, send a message to listserv@LISTSERV.UTORONTO.CA saying: SUB SLFHLP-L

Websites. Like many sites on the web, there is a wide range of quality to sites that present material about self-help. Below is an incomplete list of sites and organizations that offer quality information.

- <http://www.chce.research.med.va.gov/chce/pdfs/Kyrouz%20Humphreys%20Loomis%202002.pdf>
A recently updated, relatively jargon-free review of research on the effectiveness of self-help groups for different problems that is free to download.
- <http://www.bhrm.org/Guide.htm>
A review of self-help research and resources that is updated monthly.
- <http://www.selfhelp.on.ca/>
Self help Resource Centre – Ontario. Provides general information about self-help groups, links to local groups and online resources.
- <http://www.selfhelpnetwork.wichita.edu/>
A statewide self-help clearinghouse that also aims to facilitate grass roots community partnerships that promote and sustain social change.

- <http://www.mhselfhelp.org/>
A consumer-run, national (U.S.) technical assistance center serving the mental health consumer movement that includes self-help and advocacy resources
- <http://www.mentalhelp.net/selfhelp>
A keyword-searchable database of over 1,100 national (U.S.), international, model and online self-help support groups. Also lists local self-help clearinghouses worldwide, research studies, information on starting face-to-face and online groups, and a registry for persons interested in starting national or international self-help groups.

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- Visser, M. (June, 2003). Peer support systems in a multicultural disadvantaged community. In a symposium (M. Visser, Chair) conducted at the 9th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Social Policy

Policy is Not Just for Policy Researchers or Policy Advocates

Steven R. Howe

This column is devoted to a discussion of the work of the SCRA Social Policy Committee and the relevance of that work to the larger SCRA membership. Many members of Division 27 are quasi-involved in the policy process even though they may not think of themselves that way. Certainly, it is fair to argue that most members of SCRA have a passion for social issues. In addition, we certainly share a respect for the role that research and action can play in ameliorating social problems. These attributes alone make the issue of social policy important to nearly every member of SCRA. What might it mean for some of these community psychologists to think more explicitly in terms of policy? In this column I attempt to translate the mission of the Social Policy Committee into terms that might suggest to other members of the division how the policy perspective might add another dimension to their work.

The Mission and Activities of the SCRA Social Policy Committee

At their June 2003 meeting at the SCRA Biennial in Las Vegas, NM, the SCRA Social Policy Committee discussed its three-part mission and the activities it could undertake to achieve that mission.

1. Create opportunities for training and encourage community psychologists who lack policy experiences to familiarize themselves with the policy process.

In other words, the committee is invested in increasing the number of community psychologists who are interested in social policy and are competent to play a role in policy matters. Some of the tools the committee has to accomplish this outcome include contributing to this column, offering training programs at the SCRA Biennial, at APA, and at regional meetings, and promoting academic training, regional workshops, etc.

2. Encourage communication between community psychologists and policy makers and encourage collaborative relations with other groups to work on policy activities.

In order that community psychologists might play a role in policy matters, they need access to relevant information and effective tools for communicating. Some of the tools the Committee has to convey information include the SCRA Listserv, APA Action Alerts, the SCRA website and the Public Policy Advocacy Network.

3. Use the knowledge base of community psychology to contribute to policy debates at state and federal levels.

There are two paths here, an insider path and an outsider path. Insiders are the Congressional Fellows, consultants, evaluation researchers, et al who are actively engaged by governments and organizations to assist with their policy agenda. Outsiders are community psychologists who seek to promote social change but who are not retained for this purpose. They either operate at a grassroots level or work for advocacy organizations that are not empowered to make policy.

Reflections on the Social Policy Committee Mission

In the following material, I want to offer my personal reflections on the mission of the Committee and explain some of the ways in which the committee's mission might have relevance to others community psychologists.

Hooking Community Psychologists

It is my belief that if the Social Policy Committee were to achieve its first aim, it would scarcely need to devote effort to its other two aims. I say this based on my experience that when people are infected with the policy bug, it changes their view of themselves as professionals. They spend their time on different activities, they develop different products as professionals, and they define problems differently. What are some of the key elements in the thinking of a policy professional?

1. People respond to incentives. At first glance, this might appear a ridiculous basis on which to differentiate community psychologists who are policy savvy from those who are not. Presumably, as psychologists, we share a common heritage that included learning about instrumental conditioning. But when it comes to big social issues – welfare, domestic violence, substance abuse being just a few examples – we may forget that we do not have to know exactly how behavior change occurs. Skinner did not really teach pigeons to play Ping-Pong. He never attempted to coach them in the sense of transmitting skills. He did not offer them advice like “keep your eye on the ball.” Instead, his brilliant contribution was to realize that you could get pigeons to play Ping-Pong if you created incentives for them to begin emitting Ping-Pong-like behaviors, which could then gradually be shaped into a complex set of skills. People do not always need to be taught how to accomplish desirable ends – such as achieving self-sufficiency. It may be enough to create incentives for people to change their behavior (assuming, of course, that the key community resources they will need are in place).
2. Follow the money. Understanding complex systems often means following the money. Consider the case of tenant-based Section 8. Under this program, qualified low-income applicants may be given a voucher that allows them to rent any unit they choose to live in while paying no more than 30% of their income for the rent. As long as the unit rents for no more than the area's fair market rent level, the federal government will subsidize the difference between the 30% and the amount the property owner charges. In theory, this program encourages the dispersal of low-income housing throughout the area while giving voucher holders freedom of choice. In practice, tenant-based Section 8 units are usually highly concentrated. Many neighborhood associations oppose Section 8 units because they fear neighborhood decline. Focusing on the dollars helps explain why the program is so controversial. The primary beneficiaries of the tenant-based Section 8 program are property owners with units in low-income areas or with borderline-quality units in higher-rent areas. They are able to rent units for more than what they could get in the open market and they can continue to receive those rents even if they allow the properties to deteriorate. Owners of single-family homes receive no benefits under

the program and probably do bear some cost burden in the form of decreased valuations. Perhaps a different way of structuring the flow of money would attenuate neighborhood concerns.

3. Beware the unintended consequence. Policy is hard to get right. Consider the theory of welfare rights. While not formal policy, as in law, it has been an extremely influential policy perspective. Its genesis reflected the noblest of policy aims. I strongly recommend a two-volume reader entitled *Reporting Civil Rights: American Journalism 1941-1963 and 1963-1973*. In it is a piece by Robert Anderson (“Welfare in Mississippi; February 1967”) that makes it vividly clear that following the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 it became state policy in Mississippi to blunt the impending electoral advantage of Black residents by promoting their out-migration. State and county officials hit on a powerful tool to accomplish this end: systematically removing Black residents from the welfare rolls. Mississippi was thus one of the crucibles of welfare rights. In its early form, the theory of welfare rights was surely admirable. But a more pernicious form of the theory soon emerged and gained credence, and that was the idea that women could choose to stay on welfare, and indeed that women with children should have the right to choose to stay out of the labor market. Political support for cash assistance programs declined. Welfare rights had unintended consequences. In retrospect, perhaps we should have been more focused on employment rights for single mothers (e.g., childcare, livable wage, etc.).

Where and how do we begin inculcating in people the elements of a policy perspective? Graduate training opportunities are an obvious route. Georgetown University, just to cite an exemplary case, offers the option of a joint Ph.D. in Psychology-Master's in Public Policy. As important as more policy options in graduate programs would be, I would also like to see more policy content in our undergraduate core curricula. It is at the undergraduate level when students are dreaming about what their careers will look like. Only by making policy considerations such an integral part of our discipline that they belong in the core undergraduate curriculum will we effectively promote policy solutions to social problems. I say this because it is not merely a matter of too few psychologists thinking in policy terms. We are also hampered by a world full of college graduates who in taking their social science electives were never exposed to the possibility that a psychologist might have something to say about policy. As a personal anecdote, I was initially denied the right to teach an undergraduate course that I wished to title “Research Methods in Policy and Evaluation” because a political scientist on the college undergraduate curriculum committee convinced the other members of the committee that such a course could only be taught in his department. I would challenge you to think of ways of incorporating the policy perspective into substantive courses at the undergraduate level. Even Introduction to Psychology students could be exposed to public policy considerations in ways that are relevant to them (e.g., laws regarding alcohol consumption).

Encouraging Communication

I have only a few comments to make about the committee's goal to provide communication tools for psychologists who might be interested in policy. One is that we are all busy and I know many

of us have had the experience of posting something to the SCRA Listserv that we thought was worthy of attention by many people, only to see a discouraging lack of response. I have no creative ideas concerning getting the attention of the community of community psychologists. Two, and more importantly, except on issues narrowly defined to involve policy that affects our science, I am strongly of the opinion that policy experts in community psychology probably need to spend less time talking with each other and more time talking to people who bring other perspectives to bear on the substantive issue under consideration. I have strong interests in suburbanization and its role in the concentration of poverty. The best thing that ever happened to my work in this area was to become involved in an interdisciplinary group of housing researchers that included planners, economists, geographers and political scientists. Being successful in the policy arena involves being able to win over people to your point of view and being able to accommodate the concerns and objections of others. Diversity of thought is critical. We should not spend all of our time talking with other members of our little choir.

Paths to Impact

The committee outlined two distinct strategies by which community psychologists can influence social policy. These can be characterized as an insider strategy and an outsider strategy.

Adopting the insider strategy, community psychologists are engaged by systems that want to develop, refine or better understand policies that influence the lives of populations with which community psychologists are concerned. Community psychologists with policy expertise who adopt an insider strategy may be employed by a policy-promulgating organization or they may be retained as consultants to those organizations. Typically, they have unique opportunities to influence social policy at the cost of being responsible, not to the populations with which they might feel affinity, but to the governmental bodies, funders, or other organizations that wish to have an impact on those populations. The insider is effectively compromised in situations where he or she disagrees with the employer on a point of policy. This is perhaps most obviously true for a practitioner who provides policy research to legislators, but my experience (as an insider-type) is that it happens in subtler but no less confining ways when working with funders such as United Ways or foundations.

The outsider strategy is quite different. Adopting this approach, community psychologists seek to influence social policy by advocating for policy changes without having any official standing vis-à-vis the organization that is setting the policy. Such practitioners suffer from several disadvantages that the inside practitioner does not face. They may be cut off from proprietary data and confidential discussions. They may be attempting to change an organization that has not made any commitment to change. Their work might be directed at weakening the efforts of other groups that seek to effect policy change that the community psychologist would find objectionable. Money and time are donated and are, therefore, typically scarce resources. Offsetting all of these disadvantages, however, can be the propelling force of ideological conviction. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is a textbook example of what an outsider strategy can accomplish. In 1980, after Candy Lightner lost her 13-year old daughter, she and several other concerned mothers began an outsider campaign to change public policy and public attitudes about drunk driving that is still producing effects nearly 25 years later.

This bifurcation of policy efforts is obviously simplistic. Indeed, pure forms may be the exception rather than the rule. Some of my most satisfying work has occurred in the context of a mutual decision by advocates and organizational representatives to collaborate in jointly retaining me to consult on policy development and research. While a bit messy in terms of lines of authority and budgetary control (advocates never seem to have money), this type of arrangement is my preferred mode of operating, although it is often not possible to arrange. Another blending of the two strategies is when an inside practitioner is charged with responsibility for working as an outsider with respect to a second organization. Whenever APA employees lobby Congress, they are practicing this blended strategy. They have the organizational support and funding that is unique to the insider but their efforts are focused on effecting change in an organization that may not only be uncommitted to change, but may be subject to the countervailing efforts of lobbyists working for policy change that would be anathema to APA.

Moving Forward

It is not surprising that the SCRA Social Policy Committee comprises people who have self-identified interests in social policy. What is more worthy of comment is that they have defined the work of the committee as being concerned in large part with upgrading the policy sophistication of SCRA members who do not think of themselves as policy researchers or policy advocates. This column is one tool for accomplishing that end, and contributions are always welcome. I would also encourage folks to share ideas via the LISTSERV on techniques for incorporating policy considerations into their teaching.

Andrea Solarz (Independent Consultant, Arlington, VA) and Jennifer Woolard (Assistant Professor, Georgetown) provided helpful editorial comments and criticisms. Please feel free to send ideas, comments or suggestions for topics to be at steven.howe@uc.edu.

Student Issues

**Omar Guessous and Sawssan R. Ahmed
SCRA Student Representatives**

Students of Color Interest Group

At the meeting for the Students of Color Interest Group at last summer's biennial a decision was made to survey students of color in SCRA to obtain their input regarding how the various community and clinical/community programs support and address issues related to students of color, including how departments provide resources and address the needs of students of color. Currently a group of students have volunteered to be a part of this small initiative. The purpose would be to find out what type of strategies and resources SOC have mustered to get through their graduate experience, provide direction to the SOC group and to disseminate the knowledge gained to SCRA, programs, students, etc. The survey may consist of an online questionnaire, focus groups, and/or more. The findings will be used to inform the priorities and mission of the SOC interest group, and to inform the larger SCRA body.

We are at the early state of designing and implementing the proposed survey and welcome any suggestions and/or comments. Please e-mail us at oguessous@comcast.net or sawssan@wayne.edu if you are interested in working on this initiative.

Call for Papers- Spring and Fall 2004 Issues of *The Community Student*

Please consider writing a paper for *The Community Student (TCS)*! *TCS* is published twice a year and features articles written by students about their experiences, research and insights in relation to psychology as a whole, and community psychology in particular. Please note that this year only, we will feature *three* editions of the *TCS* as we transition to a new publication schedule. Indeed, because we were concerned that the *TCS* submission deadlines coincided with students' vacation times (*or shall we say "vacation"?* :), the *TCS* editors were kind enough to grant us all this change. A *TCS* has been published in this issue of the *TCP*, and will be included with the Spring and Fall issues of 2004 as well.

By the time you read this, the deadline for the Spring edition of *TCS* should have passed – you should have, however, noticed calls for papers on either of the SCRA listserves. At this point, we encourage you to begin emailing us ideas for articles for the **Fall 2004** edition of *The Community Student*.

The Community Student is a great way to share your insights and experiences with other SCRA members. It's also a great way to add a publication to your curriculum vitae! Articles should be between two and four pages long, single-spaced, and can be submitted electronically to Omar Guessous at oguessous@comcast.net. Please contact Omar for additional information.

Announcing the Special Issues Graduate Student Research Grant

We are happy to announce a new student research grant! The grant is specifically devoted to supporting pre-dissertation or thesis research in under-funded areas of community psychology. This year's grant focuses on funding research in one of three areas: 1) sociopolitical development; 2) under-studied populations in community psychology; or 3) public policy. Grantees are awarded \$500.00 for one year. Applications for the award are due by **July 1st, 2004**. Please see the RFA printed in this issue of the *TCP* for guidelines on submitting an application. If you have any questions, please contact Sawssan at sawssan@wayne.edu.

Please note that a preliminary research report by last year's recipient of the Special Issues Grant – Carmen Luisa Silva Dreyer – will be published in the Spring edition of TCS.

Call for Student Research Grant Reviewers

Now that we are seeking applications for the *Special Issues Graduate Student Research Grant*, we will need individuals to review grant applications. We are looking for two students to review and rate applications. *Students who submit a grant application are not eligible to serve as reviewers*. Please see the formal call for reviewers in this issue of the *TCP*. The deadline for submission is **April 1st, 2004**. If you have any questions, please contact Omar at oguessous@comcast.net.

Seeking Nominations for Incoming Student Representative

The time has once again come to elect an incoming *SCRA student representative*. Student representatives serve on the executive committee and provide student voice to decisions made within SCRA. In addition, serving as student rep is also a fun and rewarding learning experience. Student representatives serve 2-year terms (starting at the APA convention in August). If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for the incoming student rep position, or have additional questions, please contact Sawssan at sawssan@wayne.edu by **April 15, 2004**.

The only criterion for serving as a student rep is that you must be a graduate student for the length of your two-year term. Nominees will be asked to prepare a one-page statement on why they are interested in the position, what topics or issues related to student representation in SCRA concern them, and what (if any) prior leadership or representative service they have held, such as serving in student government. In early June, all student members of SCRA will be sent an electronic election ballot and instructions on how to cast their vote online. If you suspect that the email address that's on record with SCRA is outdated, please notify Sawssan so that your ballot doesn't bounce back.

Student Travel Awards to the 2004 APA Convention

We are happy to announce that we will be awarding travel awards worth \$150.00 each to three students to off-set expenses related to attending this year's APA Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii, July 28th - August 1, 2004. Please see this issue of *TCP* for the application for the award. Alternatively, you can request an electronic copy of the application from Omar by emailing him at oguessous@comcast.net. Applications must be received by **May 1st, 2004** to be considered for a travel award. To apply, please complete the application and submit it to Omar by email or via postal mail.

Summary of Deadlines for Student Opportunities Grant/Opportunity

2004 Deadlines

April 1st – Reviewers for SCRA Student Research Grant
April 15th – SCRA Student Rep. Nominations
May 1st – APA Student Travel Awards
July 1st – SCRA Special Issues Student Research Grant
July 15th – *The Community Student*, Fall '04

Sign on to the SCRA Student Listserv!

The SCRA student listserv is a forum to increase discussion and collaboration among students involved and interested in community psychology. It is also a great place to get information relevant to students, such as upcoming funding opportunities and job announcements. To subscribe to the listserv, send the following message to listserv@lists.apa.org :

SUBSCRIBE S-SCRA-L@lists.apa.org <first name> <last name>

Messages can be posted to the listserv at: S-SCRA-L@lists.apa.org. If you have any questions or need help signing on to the listserv, please contact Omar at oguessous@comcast.net.

Women's Committee Announcement

If you are not a subscriber to SCRA-W, we encourage you to join. If you are interested, please send an e-mail to listserv@lists.apa.org and within the text type SUBSCRIBE SCRA-W your first name and your last name (e.g., SUBSCRIBE SCRA-W Christina Ayala-Alcantar) No comment in the subject box. If you run into problems, please contact the chair of the women's committee, Christina Ayala-Alcantar at christina.ayala-alcantar@csun.edu or Cecile Lardon, list owner of SCRA-W, at ffcsl@UAF.EDU.

Secrets of Successful System Navigators: A Guide for Homeless Women

Elaine Shpungin, Ph.D.
Kenyon College

Is System Navigation in Your Future?

Have you ever wondered how those other women at the homeless or domestic violence shelter where you are staying get the respectful treatment and superior services that always seem to elude you? Have you tried, unsuccessfully, to get the staff to treat you better or help you more by asserting your rights and pointing out the flaws in the shelter policies? Then this simple and effective guide is for you. Secrets of Successful System Navigators was written with the help of actual shelter users and shelter staff¹. For the first time ever, you will be able to get an insider-view of the secrets that have long been followed by women who are successful system navigators. At the same time, this guide can help you identify dangerous habits that may be leading you (even as you read this!) down the road of the dreaded label of "difficult client." Quotes from successful system navigators illustrate how these simple yet effective secrets have been applied in an actual shelter setting, while quotes from women who became known as "difficult" will clearly show you what behaviors and attitudes to avoid.

How The System Stays Alive

You may have wondered at times how 35,000 homeless families, mostly made up of single women with small children, can be successfully assisted every year by what seems to be an inadequate number of underfunded and understaffed shelters. The answer is at once simple and brilliant: in order to make this unreasonable task manageable, many shelters and other social service agencies use an invisible sorting system whose purpose is to separate the "good" clients from the "difficult" ones. The "good" clients know and follow the Secrets of Successful System Navigators. These clients are rewarded with respectful treatment, compliments from the staff, entrance into selective programs, and superior services and goods. Unfortunately, if every client who needed assistance was given this level of service, the system would collapse under its own weight. This is where the "difficult" clients come in handy. These clients are labeled "difficult" by the staff because they insist on being treated with dignity, spoken to like adults, and given equal opportunities, without following the Secrets. By labeling them as "difficult", the staff creates a legitimate reason to shorthand these clients, who wind up being the recipients of fewer

positive staff interactions, less staff assistance, fewer services, and fewer quality goods. This automatically results in more scarce staff and shelter resources for the other group, while avoiding the unpleasant burden of staff guilt. Without a guide like this one, your chances of being sorted into the "good" group are fairly slim, as you have probably already discovered. However, once you learn the Secrets of Successful System Navigators, you need never be misclassified again. If you are tired of carrying the system on your shoulders and ready to reap the rewards you deserve, read on.

Secret #1: The Rules are Always Right

As you could not have failed to notice, shelters have adopted a lengthy set of rules and policies which aim to control the behavior of their 'clients'. In the shelter where we conducted our study, there were rules about how and when to clean the premises, rules about how not to parent one's children, rules about meal-times, snack times, and searching-times (i.e., specified times of the morning and afternoon when all residents have to be outside, looking for housing and employment leads). We also noticed while perusing homeless articles at our local library that other shelters employ similar kinds of rules, and are not afraid to enforce them. Our favorite was the agency which bolted its furniture to the floor to enforce a rule regarding furniture removal – but we digress.

The sheer number of rules and policies, as well as their nature, sometimes sends shelter clients into a defensive stance. However, Successful System Navigators know that the rules are there to help you avoid the temptations that lurk deep within you: to rip and break the shelter furniture; to leave an ungodly mess wherever you and your children touch down; to scream at and beat your children when they displease you; and to do nothing at all to help yourself unless someone forces you to do so. For example, in the following quote, Jamila, a shelter staff member from our study, discusses the rationale for having several hours each day when families must leave the premises:

Jamila ... if they're sitting here, they can't get anything done... But a lot of people will say, 'Well I have a child that's sleeping.' But we're trying to we focus them on: This is shortterm. This is just shelter. Nothing is going to...a job is not going to come in here to you; a house is not going to come in here to you. You need to get out.

Secret #2: If the Rules Seem Wrong, See Secret #1

Despite the noble purposes of the rules, there may occur an occasional instance when a voice inside you questions the fairness or legitimacy of a rule. Perhaps a rule will strike you as arbitrary or patronizing, or you may come to believe that a rule is actually preventing you from bettering your circumstances. Maybe you begin to suspect that a rule is outdated and no longer makes sense, or is creating conflict between you and your children. Before you go any further on this slippery slope, you must remember that you must not give voice to your thoughts and suspicions. Questioning the legitimacy and usefulness of shelter rules will place you on the dangerous path of being labeled "difficult," bringing you ever further away from your goal. This next quote shows an example of rule-questioning which is being conducted by Gladys, one of the mothers who was sorted into the "difficult" group:

Gladys: First of all, I don't need no one to tell me to go out and do searching-time. I mean, damn, I'm

homeless. You know what I'm saying? I'm going to do whatever I can to get out of this situation. I mean, you're homeless, the place is DIRTY, it's nasty. The food lunch and breakfast - is just unacceptable to me. 'Course I'm going to try to get out of here. My babies don't need to be here. This is not the way that I wanted it.'

Ladies – do not make the mistake of believing that your “voice of reason” will bend the rules for you and your children. Remember that the rules are part of an important system of sorting, upon which the very life of the system depends.

Secret #3: Faking Counts

Successful system navigators know that you do not have to believe in the rules, as long as you give the appearance of following them religiously. This little known secret is a true navigation gem. The service-delivery system will reward you equally whether you quietly follow its policies, or quietly pretend to follow its policies. In this next quote, Ambrose, one of our Successful Navigators, explains how she addresses the searching-time policy.

Ambrose: When Tina [a staff person] tells you to do something, do what Tina told [you] and that's it, you know? The policy is keep your kids with you. When you go to the bathroom, your daughter goes to the bathroom - you go to the bathroom with your child. Just DO the rules. Just follow the rules. And a lot of people be like, 'She [staff person] ain't done nothing but pick on me all day.' Well - you know, if you follow the rules you wouldn't hear nothing. I never hear nothing. I'm never hearing my name being called. They have yet to call my name. You know, the rules are the rules. And that's what, to me - that's what makes the place run smooth... Clean up time - get up and clean up. Searching-time - even if you ain't got anything to do, you can walk to the park - which is right up the street - and you can go there and sit and take a bag of Cheerios and sit for an hour and feed the birds...

In contrast, here is how Jamie, from the *other* group, handles searching-time:

Jamie: Well you know, you really have to like, when they send you out, they give you a Searching-Plan. And sometimes, I don't even go by their Searching-Plan... I mean there's nothing wrong with a Searching-Plan, but personally, I don't even go by their plan; I go by my pace of what I can do.

Jamie is making the error of assuming that the pace at which she can search for housing and employment is hers to decide upon. Women who know the Secrets are aware of the fallacy of these kinds of beliefs.

Secret #4: The Staff Are Always Right

The corollary to Secret #1 is that the staff are always right. Successful system-navigators understand that disagreeing with staff, arguing with them, or failing to follow their requests will decrease their chances of being treated with respect and getting the services they deserve. This is particularly important to remember when staff communicates with you in what seems to be a

disrespectful, paternalistic, or unreasonable manner. Here is an example from Kathy, a successful navigator:

Kathy: So they [staff] don't - they ask me one time - I'll do it. It doesn't take twenty, thirty times to tell me, you know, my child is doing so-and-so and I act like I don't hear or don't care — OR get an attitude with them for correcting something that's - that was my fault - not really my fault, but it's something that I should be doing anyway.

Please note that Kathy is also aware of Secret #3: she knows that it is not necessary for her to be in agreement with staff about whether or not a particular action was “her fault”; she simply needs to quickly, and without argument, follow staff requests. In contrast, here is a quote from Gladys about how she reacts when she does not like the way a staff person speaks to her.

Gladys: So I'm not going to kiss their ass. If I have something to say, I'm going to say it. I don't care what - I'll deal with the consequences when the consequences come.

If you want to be a Successful System Navigator, you must leave your self-advocacy and self-assertiveness skills at the door. You can pick them up on your way out to your new place, where you are headed at full speed if you have followed all the secrets up to now.

Do The Secrets Really Work?

Following the Secrets, while not guaranteeing your success, will dramatically improve your chances of getting treated like a human being, gaining access to exclusive programs aimed to help low-income families, and getting you the best services and goods the agency has to offer. But don't take our word for it. Let the stories of our study participants speak for themselves.

Ambrose. For her careful cooperation and non-challenging of the rules, Ambrose was rewarded with superior treatment and excellent services, including entrance into a competitive program which paid the first three months of rent in her new apartment. In the following quote, Ambrose explains how her successful navigation strategy also earned her preferential treatment and access to quality goods:

Ambrose: Like [when] new [donated] clothes come in [I get preferential treatment]. Ms. Suzie brought me clothes this morning. She brought me two beautiful jogging suits this morning - phat jogging suits, you know? And some woman yesterday brought me a bag full of HUGE hairbows and makeup. And you know, they don't bring them to other people [other female residents], they bring them to me... And people be like, "You get everything." And it's not that I get everything, but to get something you have to do something in return. That's just the way the world works. And you can either live in it or you can live out of it. And if you choose to live out of it, then that's nobody's fault but your own.

Kathy. Kathy reported that staff were able to classify her into the “good” group very quickly, and that not only did she and her children get invited into the competitive rent-paid program, but staff also found Kathy an apartment to rent, something that most women have to do without assistance. Kathy also shows awareness of the fact that she received preferential treatment due to her Successful Navigator status:

Kathy: From the point of me walking in the door - and even so much to where [my intake worker] and it was maybe the third day, she came up to me and she said, you know, 'Ms. Kathy, I heard you got approved for that Rent Program.' And I told her yes. She said, 'You know, since I've been here I've never seen anyone do that so fast.' Two days. I told them, Kathy came in on her toes. So, I mean, yes. I was treated separate - you know what I mean (laughs)... I've never had any problems with them [staff]. Even when they speak to me: 'Ms. Kathy, your son is doing something' (because he's a child and I turn my back he's flipping over the furniture). Whereas someone else, it comes out completely different: 'You need to GET YOUR CHILD! [because] they're not with the program...'

Gladys: Gladys reports receiving very poor treatment from the staff and little to no assistance in gaining housing for her and her children. Gladys even acknowledges that she might have had better success in the system if she were able to “bite her tongue”, but states that she is not currently ready to do that.

Gladys: It's like, instead of these people here lifting you up it's like they're standing on your head. I mean, it's like - I'm nothing... And I'm ready to go back [to my abusive husband]. I don't even care if I get a house or not. ... You know, I'd hate for them [staff] to be treated like this because they wouldn't be able to take it. I mean, if they got treated the way we get treated - no respect, no kind words - you know, it's constant just, you know, put downs... They're just RUDE, they talk down to you. They treat you like kids... I do know that they treat different people different ways I mean, as long as you kiss butt, you alright. But I don't like the way booty tastes, so I ain't kissing none... I just can't. I'm not good at this. And I'm not good about biting my tongue...

Jamie: Jamie does eventually find housing for her and her children, but describes her experience at the shelter as being a very negative one, and her interactions with the staff to be completely unhelpful.

Jamie: We have to do it on our own, and I don't think that's fair... [The program] is only seven to fourteen days. That's only two weeks. Who could find a job, who could find a house, who could find an income within seven to fourteen days?

The experiences of these four women are not unique. Their stories were echoed by the many women we spoke to, only half of whom knew the Secrets.

A Word About the Nay-Sayers

As you are getting ready to put the Secrets to work for you, we would like to give you a word of warning about the opponents of our guide. These detractors claim that the Secrets perpetuate an unfair service-delivery system by rewarding clients who are compliant and punishing those who have legitimate concerns or suggestions. The critics also accuse us of focusing attention on the wrong aspect of the system – the individual - at a time when shelters are becoming more mechanistic, less supportive of client human dignity, and less able to assist those clients who

most need the help. It is clear to us that these nay-sayers are simply envious of our incredible success in getting women who are traditionally ignored and disrespected onto the right side of the service-delivery sorter. Trust us when we say that you do not want to associate yourself with anyone sounding like a critic of the Secrets. After all, a critic is just a “difficult” client waiting to be labeled.²

The author can be reached at 302 Samuel Mather Hall, Department of Psychology, Kenyon College, Gambier OH 43022 or shpungine@kenyon.edu

Footnotes

¹ The information in this guide is based on findings from a large study conducted in an urban homeless shelter. Participant observations, as well as qualitative interviews with 16 mothers and 14 staff members, were used to create a model of interpersonal dynamics between staff and clients (Shpungin, 2002; unpublished manuscript). Information in this document that could identify the facility or study participants (e.g., names, sex, program details) has been changed to maintain confidentiality.

² Disclaimer: The opinions presented herein do not reflect the author's true viewpoint but are meant to be a satirical depiction of the author's research findings. These findings suggest that the issues discussed in the piece are complex and are the result of the dynamic interaction of multi-level variables such as cultural beliefs, political rhetoric, funding, and organizational structure – rather than the ‘fault’ of either shelter clients or staff.

Special Feature

Strangers in Strange (Foreign and Friendly) Lands

**edited by Joseph R. Ferrari
DePaul University, Chicago, IL**

INTRODUCTION

These are big decisions that many academics face at some point: *Do I take a sabbatical? For how long? Do I stay local or live overseas?* I recall my situation a few years ago. This leave would be the first of my career, after more than 20 years of teaching. So, it was easy for me to decide ‘YES, I’ll take a sabbatical and I want to go abroad.’ The nagging questions for me were: How long? Where? After a few failed starts, I went on-line and looked for community psychology opportunities. A gentleman in Tasmania, Australia, invited me to conduct an assessment of caregivers at a health care agency and my journey began [see my account]. What I now faced was how to plan such an experience and how do I proceed to reach my goals. However, I found no written resource that could help me think through issues.

This Special Feature of *TCP* was inspired by my leave and a way to offer some insights, personal reflections, and assistance to others who may be thinking of being a community psychologist in a setting different than their native land. The contributors to this issue describe wonderful opportunities they encountered, from how they decided to travel to where, what, and how they conducted their projects. One author describes being a grad student in a foreign country. These authors describe their experiences traveling in

Europe, South America, Asian, Australia, the Middle East, and North America.

Of course, no experience is perfect, some “obstacles” were met along the way. We could not present all the details related to our trips but I am confident that each contributor would talk to you more about their experience and offer suggestions (contact information for each author follows their paper). So, we hope you enjoy our journey.

An American in Paris, and Other European Cities

Paul A. Toro
Wayne State University, Detroit

In the spring and summer of 1999, in conjunction with my first sabbatical, my family and I spent over four months as “vagabonds” in Europe. We spent lots of time in France: Burgundy (including the cities of Beaune and Auxerre, as well as many of the famous vineyards of the region), the Rhone valley (especially Lyon), Provence and the Riviera (including the resort towns of Cassis and St. Tropez), Paris (and nearby Giverny where Claude Monet lived), and Alsace (including the towns of Colmar, Kayserberg, and Riquewihl). We also visited Brussels (and vicinity) in Belgium. In Germany, we briefly visited Freiburg and the Black Forest. In the United Kingdom, we spent significant time in London (and vicinity), Manchester, and Glasgow. We ended our trip with a three-week vacation in Ireland (County Wicklow in the southeast and Dingle on the southwest coast).

How much traveling should I do? As you can see from the long list above, we packed a lot of traveling into four months. This leads me to my first piece of advice to potential future travelers: Try to “stay put” much more than we did. While my sabbatical project (a multi-national study of homelessness) required several moves, we added many other “tourist” side-visits that made the trip rather hectic at times (especially with a 5- and 10-year old in tow). Some of the most enjoyable parts of the trip were the more “leisurely” ones where we had time to get to know our way around and to get to know the locals and their customs. Costs also tend to be lower when you can arrange for more long-term housing (by-the-night hotels can get very expensive). If you do enough advance planning, you can sometimes arrange to stay at the house of someone also traveling, university-supported housing, or other affordable arrangements.

Planning in advance. The bulk of the work on my research project was done in Brussels and Glasgow. We spent nearly a month in each of these areas and I had “visiting appointments,” complete with an office, at universities in each. Arrangements for our time in each of these cities, as well as a few other “long-term” visits (e.g., 1-2 week boat trips on Loch Ness and on the canals and rivers of Burgundy) were made well in advance of our trip. However, much of the rest of our travels were done “on the fly” while we were in Europe. Although this lack of planning was sometimes stressful, it also sometimes led us to find interesting

places “off the beaten path.” For example, in south central England, we made the obligatory visit to Stonehenge. However, while in this area, we learned of several other equally interesting and less crowded ruins (including various “barrows,” huge drawings of horses carved into the chalk on the mountainsides, and a much larger and older “henge” at Avebury). We stayed on several extra days in this region to visit these sites in more detail.

Language barriers. I highly recommend visiting a nation where the spoken language is **not** English. This really helps you to feel what it is like to be “different,” helps you understand how “different” other cultures really are from your own, and helps you to better understand the culture. If you do go to such a nation, do try your best to learn the language (both before you leave and during your visit). Take it on as a challenge! Despite stereotypes to the contrary, even the French appreciate your efforts to speak their language. As long as they can understand **some** of what you say, the “natives” are usually gracious in accommodating your mistakes and your bad accent. As someone who is far from fluent in French, I’ve certainly felt always welcomed when I speak the native language. If you expect the locals to speak English, you’re bound to experience some resentment. While in some circles (e.g., academics), some settings (e.g., large cities), and some nations (e.g., Germany and the Netherlands), you can expect many to speak good English, this is **not** usually the case. Keep in mind that you are in **their** country. Would you expect to speak French if you met a French person here in the US? As community psychologists, we value “cultural diversity.” What better way to value “cultural diversity” than to actually immerse yourself in it in a foreign land where **you** are the “outsider.”

I highly recommend visiting a nation where the spoken language is not English. This really helps you to feel what it is like to be “different,” helps you understand how “different” other cultures really are from your own, and helps you to better understand the culture.

“But I can’t get away right now.” Much as some couples these days wait until they are nearly old enough to retire before they believe themselves ready to become parents, many feel that their lives are too complicated to allow a long-term international trip (whether as a part of a sabbatical or some other arrangement). While I wouldn’t necessarily recommend taking babies on international trips, any child older than an infant can benefit greatly from the experience. Both my 5- and 10-year old benefited from our travels and both children now jump at the opportunity to travel almost anywhere in the world (one daughter recently asked if she could “stow away” as luggage when I suggested I might be going to Japan for a few weeks). Children benefit even more than adults from exposure to different cultures and languages. Even if you don’t have children, still consider spending “quality time” in another culture. In any event, try to spend “significant time” in the nation. The standard two-week vacation is not enough time to really get to know a culture.

Long-term relationships. Based on my sabbatical time in Europe, I have established many ongoing productive collaborative relationships. This has turned out to be a somewhat unexpected but very pleasant surprise. I even got “hired” as a consultant on a grant that some of my colleagues in Brussels obtained (which has taken me back to Europe twice since the sabbatical). The relationships I began during my sabbatical led me to develop an issue of the *Journal of Social Issues* on “international perspectives on

homelessness” (this project is now nearing completion). I had the opportunity to meet most of the authors of the papers in this special issue, which has made the process of preparing the issue much more fulfilling. I have personal relationships with the authors and know a good bit about the contexts in which they live and work. With the advent of e-mail, one can easily maintain regular contact with colleagues one meets during one’s travels, in spite of the large distances between you, the different time zones, etc. I have also had the chance to “return the favor” of hospitality for a few of my European colleagues and friends when they have visited the US. I’m beginning to think about my next sabbatical (probably in 2005-06). I’ll likely spend some time in the nations I know and love in Europe, but will probably spend even more time in parts of the world I’ve never visited (maybe Eastern Europe or Asia) where I might like to expand my international study on homelessness. I presented preliminary findings of my study at the 2002 European Congress on Community Psychology in Barcelona and plan to attend the next European Congress (in Berlin in 2004). Through all these activities I have come to know, at least to some degree, a good number of the community psychologists and persons doing research on homelessness in Europe. The development of these new relationships has been both enlightening and lots of fun.

“How do I begin?” It’s really not that hard to set up relationships with colleagues in foreign nations. And developing one relationship often leads to initiating others, as your colleagues introduce you to people with interests similar to your own. Keep in mind that Europeans, and most other professionals in the world, are quite comfortable with travelers and with traveling themselves. We in the US are probably the least “worldly” of all citizens of developed nations. If you show real interest in visiting a nation, you will likely be welcomed. Even if you contact people “cold” who don’t know (e.g., out of some directory, like SCRA’s), they are often willing to meet you and help you set up work in their settings. There is a “natural tendency” for people all over the world to enjoy “showing off” the most interesting things about their settings. No need to be shy about taking advantage of this tendency.

If you have any questions about travel abroad, etc., feel free to contact me by e-mail at paul.toro@wayne.edu. You can learn more about my multi-national study of homelessness, initiated during my sabbatical, and continuing in the years since, at <http://sun.science.wayne.edu/~ptoro/>.

A Summer in Sevilla and the Friendly Andalucia

Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar & Fabricio Balcazar
The University of Illinois at Chicago

A couple of years ago, we spent a summer at the University of Sevilla teaching a summer seminar, learning about their research projects, meeting wonderful people and exchanging ideas for future collaborations. Sevilla is one of the oldest cities in Spain, filled with art and architectural styles that represent the different eras that dominated the city. From the Moorish style of the 700’s to the Gothic style of the early 1400’s, to the renaissance art from the 1700’s, Seville is a city in which Christian temples were built on top of Mosques. This mixture of historical periods is characteristic of Seville, which made strolls around the downtown area so much interesting as there is a story behind every balcony, every street mosaic, plaza, monument or temple.

It took us a couple of days to get used to our new summer schedule Andalucia (a region in the south of Spain). The day started at around 10 am, lunch at 3pm, dinner at 10 pm and bed at around 1am. Most meals, especially dinners involved 2 hours of eating and conversation. Like in our native Colombia, for most Sevillians and to our gracious hosts, dinner conversations were invaluable opportunities to “fix” the problems of the country and those afflicting the world.

While you are abroad, we recommend being connected to a local university. Many universities in Spain have summer program in which they like to bring in researchers from abroad. In our case, the University of Sevilla, hosted our visit. Our host, Manuel Garcia Ramirez, whom we met through an email he sent us enquiring about our research, is a professor in the Department of Social and Community Psychology. Our summer class was sponsored under the Psychosocial Intervention series, taking place at the university in collaboration with the university hospital. Most of the 40 students in the summer class we taught were practitioners from a variety of disciplines including psychology, public health and social work. They all had a wealth of experience working with immigrant populations. Andalucia is currently experiencing a high rate of immigration, typically coming from both North African countries and Latin America, mostly Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia. Our summer seminar addressed topics such as designing culturally sensitive community interventions and programs, empowerment and participatory evaluation, and capacity building and empowerment models.

Spending time learning about the research interest of faculty and students was very much appreciated by those we met. We learned that many students and faculty alike are studying issues related to immigration. We were also involved in research meetings during which we discussed the design, implementation and evaluation of an empowerment program, funded by the European Union, designed to provide new immigrants with employment training and support services to facilitate their community integration. Most commonly, professionals deal with challenges such as language barriers, cultural and religious barriers when working with immigrant populations. The presence of immigrant populations was most obvious during a long weekend in Granada. Late at night, (Granada’s summer heat can easily reach 100 degrees during the day, so people are eager to be outdoors at night) entire families come out to the streets, fill the plazas, eating ice cream while hundreds of immigrants from Africa offer their beautiful crafts and other products lying on colorful fabrics along the sidewalks of every plaza. There we understood why the community integration and support systems programs, spearheaded by our colleagues at the University of Sevilla, were focusing on employment. Immigrants from Latin America, many of whom are women, are often hired in private homes for childcare and maid duties.

Learning to adjust to a new schedule and being flexible about new ways of doing things and learning about the culture was very important for us. Back at the university, most of our sessions were scheduled from 11:30 to 3:00 pm and then from 5:00 to 8:30pm. This way, we took turns touring the city with the kids. Sevilla is a very beautiful and city, enhanced by the hospitality of its residents. At night, the old city is very lively, the streets are filled with people strolling the streets, music and food. A tapas dinner meant stopping at several bars (3 to 4) for the “specialty of the house” and a “tinto de verano” which is a refreshing mix of red wine, mineral water and ice. These stops also included visits to one of the many “Peñas”

(where poetry, signing and flamenco were common. Our host took pride in sharing with us all these traditions. We recommend, if possible, to have local people take you around, as we noticed we were not necessarily taken to the “hot tourist places” but the places where locals went.

When in Spain, you will notice that people are very proud of their country, their way of life and the products they produce and export, and they want to share this with you. Being a participant observant became important as people asked us what we thought of the important aspects of their society. For instance, we noticed that people in Andalusia were very proud of their abundant production of olive oil. Every dish is prepared with olive oil. We saw thousands and thousands of acres of land with olive trees on our side trips to Malaga, Cordoba, Granada and the Mediterranean Sea.

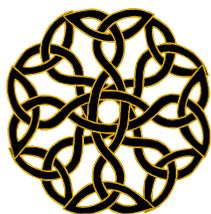
Furthermore, don't be surprised to find Andalucians to be very generous hospitable individuals eager to share with you. We were provided with a small apartment and our host invited our kids to stay with his family, so that they could be immersed into the Sevillian culture. They really enjoyed living with our host family. You can always offer an exchange, so that when they come to the States, the family or the kids can stay with you.

Maintaining international collaborations: During this summer experience, we had the opportunity to establish relationships with our colleagues and plan for collaborative projects we have been engaged in since then. We are currently co-editing a regional journal on participatory research in community psychology with research papers from Spain and the US.

We recently formalized an agreement between the University of Sevilla and the University of Illinois at Chicago to allow for exchanges and collaborative projects. This is a first step to promote mutual collaboration and facilitate access to resources and opportunities at both campuses. Both universities were pleased to be part of it. We later facilitated the visit of Manuel Garcia to UIC as a visiting professor for one semester in the fall of 2002. Before we left Sevilla, we planned a series of articles and projects we wanted to collaborate. Common research interest and a working agenda have helped maintain the collaboration. We are working on another couple of papers and are seeking funding for a cross-cultural project.

To conclude, the Internet has made the world smaller and more accessible. A friendly response to an initial email from a stranger from overseas, requesting information about our research, led to an enduring friendship, productive professional collaboration and trip overseas in both directions. We believe these opportunities to go abroad are valuable to community psychologists as they give us a different view of the world and get us closer to many others interested in similar topics.

Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar & Fabricio Balcazar may be reached at the University of Illinois at Chicago: (312) 413-0256 or ysuarez@uic.edu.



Breaking Out of the Monoculture: Developing Ties with Japanese Researchers and Advocates to Conduct Disability Research

**Chris Keys, DePaul University
Willi Horner Johnson, Oregon Health Sciences University
Kiyoshi Yamaki, University of Illinois at Chicago**

In 1995 along with our colleague David Henry, we created a group to conduct international research concerning attitudes toward people with disabilities, especially intellectual disabilities. At that time Chris had worked with David for five years to develop, field test and begin to use a contemporary measure of attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities. This measure, the *Community Living Attitudes Scale*, is based on emerging views of people with disabilities as empowered and is informed by input from people with intellectual disabilities. Willi was a beginning doctoral student in community psychology who had an interest in things international and in intellectual disabilities. Kiyoshi was a doctoral student in public health, recently emigrated from Japan, who had conducted his master's thesis research on Japanese attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities. Over the last eight years, we have worked together with Georgina Tegart, Monica Soto and researchers from other countries to conduct several studies of attitudes toward people with disabilities. Below are five thoughts about key aspects of conducting international research over time that derive from our experience in learning about attitudes toward people with intellectual disabilities in Japan.

Build a local base. We were fortunate to have resources in Chicago to enable us to launch our research. Chief among these was Kiyoshi's relationships with Japanese researchers. He maintained ties with former professors and colleagues in the field of intellectual disabilities in Japan. He was able to connect us with three first-rate researchers who helped us develop our ideas, prepare manuscripts and identify key issues for future research. They collected the Japanese data from college students and staff who work with people with intellectual disabilities. Kiyoshi also linked us with formal translation services and Japanese friends in Chicago who helped us consider the cultural and linguistic translation issues in our work. By building a local base in a program of ongoing research and ties to the local Japanese community, we were more able to establish an international collaboration. We would encourage you to look around your organization and community to see what local talents, interests and resources may be available for developing cross-cultural collaborations.

Consider multiple ways of connecting with collaborators and culture. With Chris' administrative responsibilities and David's need to attend to other funded projects, there was no opportunity for lengthy sabbatical trips to Japan. Instead, we were fortunate that several of our Japanese colleagues were able to obtain support from their universities, research centers, foundations and the Japanese counterpart of NSF. To date, three have come to Chicago for planning and consultation. We sought to make these meetings as enjoyable as possible. In one instance, Kiyoshi arranged for our visitors to stay in a local Frank Lloyd Wright house because of our collaborators' appreciation of Wright's architectural designs. We have also held project meetings in the relaxed atmosphere of local restaurants. This approach reflects a Japanese cultural norm that we are seeking to import, viz., valuing human relationships and informal social events as well as formal progress on scientific work.

Of particular importance for us was Willi's visit to Japan in 2000. There she received a very gracious and friendly welcome from our collaborators. She strengthened existing relationships by sharing in the expense and effort of international travel. She gained access to collected data that enabled her to progress toward degree completion. She also obtained a first-hand, albeit circumscribed, perspective on the services for and public treatment of people with disabilities. She worked on joint publications with our Japanese collaborators. While we had emailed about drafts and had even discussed one in person during a collaborator's Chicago visit, Willi found the conversation in Japan to be more frank about fundamental issues. She and our collaborators discussed the basic assumptions of the research and how the use of instruments developed in the United States may limit consideration of Japanese perspectives. This greater openness may simply be a sign of a maturing working relationship or it may be due to Willi's discussing these issues with our colleagues on their "home turf". In any case, a greater comfort and collegiality marked a positive turning point in our relationship and led to the next phase of our work. For us and our Japanese colleagues, finding multiple ways to meet has been very helpful in demonstrating our mutual commitment to our research collaboration and in making progress.

Prepare and be shocked. When traveling, Willi found that the more preparation she did the better. Using the web saved much money on train tickets. Making arrangements ahead enabled her to make the best use of her limited time in Japan. Yet no matter how much she prepared, she experienced culture shock. With little background regarding Japanese language and culture, she was flooded with so much novelty that some culture shock was inevitable. Knowing a few words of Japanese helped her make initial connections and was appreciated by her hosts and people in general. She found ordering a vegetarian meal was a challenge met more readily when with a Japanese colleague. It was always good to accept an invitation for a meal with her host no matter what the menu. She learned that avoiding public displays of affection with her partner was a good, culturally appropriate practice. She realized that she was a curiosity who was also seen as someone with whom people could practice English. She was willing to engage in small talk with giggling school children and with a gentleman who wanted to practice his English by discussing everything from shirt sizes to George W. Bush. She found making preparations to be invaluable, especially preparing herself to accept a modicum of culture shock and the unexpected.

Consider the biculturalism of your work. Willi's probing conversations with our collaborators crystallized an issue that had concerned us for some time. How could we hope to understand Japanese attitudes toward people with disabilities only using measures that were made in the USA? Yes, the measures were psychometrically sound for ethnically diverse samples of college students, disability staff, and the public in the United States that included Asian Americans. Yes, we had followed accepted practice for obtaining cultural and linguistic comparability as we painstakingly translated the measures into Japanese and back-translated them into English. Yes, we had verified that the factor structures for the measures were equivalent in Japan and the United States. In short, we had done the things that are considered best practice in cross-cultural research to assure that our measures would be assessing something equivalent in Japan and the United States. Nonetheless, we still were using a North American lens to study an Asian phenomenon. For reasons of feasibility, measurement rigor, and conceptual comparability, we had yet to

take the important, even crucial, step to go outside the intellectual framework we developed for understanding attitudes toward people with disabilities in the United States. Our Japanese team member and collaborators had enabled us to adapt our measures to the Japanese context. Now they were pointing out our need to go further, to break out of the monoculture of the United States and anchor our work more deeply in Japanese culture.

We agreed and decided to pursue a new direction with our research. We began to plan a series of studies to develop a bicultural understanding of attitudes toward people with disabilities that is grounded in both Japanese and American cultures. The first step we took was to conduct focus group interviews with Japanese disability advocates including people with disabilities who were visiting the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. The advocates were learning about how the justice system in the United States addresses issues of abuse of people with disabilities. They were studying a curriculum that Chris and Willi, among others, had helped develop to educate people with disabilities, their families and caregivers about what abuse is and what to do if you have been abused. Kiyoshi was hosting the group and arranged the schedule and the translators. We are now analyzing the results of the focus groups and hope that they will provide a critical understanding of Japanese

. . . we encourage community psychologists to "conduct international research and see the world." Only 6% of the people in the world live in the United States. Through working with those in other countries, we break out of the monoculture of the United States.

attitudes toward people with disabilities. Our expectation is that we may learn about other dimensions of attitudes toward people with disabilities in Japan. These dimensions may also inform our efforts to understand more fully the multidimensional quality of attitudes toward people with disabilities in the United States.

Seek multiple sources of support. We have generally done this work on a shoestring, but not without any string at all! We have donated our time to the research and have sought support for most travel and translation costs. We have contacted multiple funding sources in addition to the Japanese options noted above that our collaborators have used. We have received support from internal university funds for international research, social science research, research-related travel and funds from private foundations. We also have pursued funding from NSF, the Department of Education, and other private foundations, thus far without success.

In closing, we encourage community psychologists to "conduct international research and see the world." Only 6% of the people in the world live in the United States. Through working with those in other countries, we break out of the monoculture of the United States. We gain a broader understanding of psychological phenomena and a more complete perspective on how our assumptions differ from those of reasonable and intelligent colleagues in other cultures. Ultimately, we hope to have a deeper understanding of the planet and ourselves. And we have some fun doing it!

Christopher Keys may be reached at DePaul University: (773) 325-7887 or ckeys@depaul.edu.

Doing Research in Motown, U.S.A.: Unexpected Lessons – Perhaps Not?

Serdar M. Degirmencioglu, Ph.D.
Istanbul Bilgi University

My experience in Motown (aka, Detroit) was as a graduate student and researcher. While readers may spot bits of naiveté in this piece, I believe naiveté often comes with openness to new experience. I ended up in Detroit because the developmental psychology program at Wayne State looked strong and well staffed, and because four other applications were rejected. I noted, “24-hour security is available on campus” in promotional materials, but that did not prepare me for what I was to experience. I lived in Detroit from 1988 to 1995 and saw its good as well as its bad days. Most residents were poor and “Black” (which I later replaced with “African-American” in my lexicon). The sirens were too frequent and too loud to miss at night, and even my parents were concerned as they noted the sirens in the background as we talked on the phone. I lived near campus because I could not afford a reliable car to live in the suburbs and later because I decided not to leave the area. Believe it or not, I considered myself a ‘Detroiter’. Yes, I tasted the unpleasant feeling of making another person feel fear just because I was two or three steps behind, doing nothing but walking. Yes, I walked a couple of miles on the largest avenue heading downtown to enjoy the Labor Day weekend Jazz Festival, and was later asked whether I was crazy. At times I took the bus downtown, and again I was asked if I had experienced an “incident.” Yes, it was the suburbanites asking the questions – they drove in and out of the city, with self-locking car doors. But I stayed in Motown.

There was something clearly “wrong” with Motown. The City Center was not only deserted at night and had a high crime rate; it was also full of abandoned and boarded houses and buildings. Moreover, Wayne State was close to an incinerator that collected garbage from the entire city and some suburbs to burn them! Close to the incinerator, there were slaughterhouses for meat product companies. On many a summer day you could smell them from miles away. I never understood how exactly these industrial structures were built – but something was clearly wrong with Motown.

Perhaps, it was the mayor in his fifth term because things started changing when he was replaced. People in my neighborhood were clearly poor. They were buying “No Brand” products just like I did. There were many homeless people around. Many people were begging. The area resembled the descriptions of the underclass environments in Wilson’s books. The most expensive restaurants in town were in the area – big limos pulled in and out of the parking lots as people laid on the streets just a block away. Some of the Psychology Department people went into these restaurants to celebrate special events – I never found it acceptable to do so. Perhaps it was the violence. Public housing buildings were only a mile away and on Friday and Saturday nights the shootings peaked.

Detroit had seen better days. I did my “real-life” research and learned about the car companies, the big business, the riots in late 60s and the decline. I never took a graduate course in community psychology at Wayne State, but looking back I can see how I actually took a real-life course substitute. Technology gone wild, freeways built through old neighborhoods, the “developments”, the big business, the riots and the flight to the suburbs undid the communities and destroyed the city.

In Motown I fully grasped the fact that living spaces mattered. People lived in cars and in offices, and they did not use public

spaces much. I was stunned, for instance, that Woodward Avenue, the biggest avenue of the olden days, was closed for more than a year to be renovated with cobblestones. No one cared about the few pedestrians, like myself. The downtown Renaissance Center built partly to revitalize the area stood like a space ship that landed on the riverbank. It was obvious that a sense of community was missing and that living spaces were designed to reduce, rather than increase, the time spent in the area and the interpersonal interactions. When people feared each other, when they stepped out of their cars and ran to their offices through high-rise pedestrian walkways that connected parking lots to the Renaissance Center, there was no way a sense of sharing could emerge. With the new structures downtown, the city-suburb gap was simply put on the showcase. Just across the water was Windsor, Canada, and the people-friendly riverbank across the water made Motown look even more strange.

I also learned quite a bit about politics and the distance between daily politics and the politics the political parties were engaged in. I listened to presidential hopeful Dukakis give his campaign speech on Labor Day in 1988, and everyone with me noted the shallowness in the speech. My extended stay in the US (I subsequently spent another two years at Northwestern University in Chicago, as a postdoctoral fellow) allowed me to observe two more presidential campaigns. Time and again, I was struck by the lack of knowledge about the world among my peers. I was particularly dismayed when my peers used words like “white trash” very frequently and comfortably. One day, one of them declared that US would be an easier place to live if the diversity was not there. Years later, it dawned on me that the developmental program students really needed some community psychology exposure.

My co-researchers were not very sensitive to issues around race-ethnicity. The first school where we collected longitudinal data was predominantly African-American, and the data about substance use improved in quality as we collected more waves. To me that suggested increasing trust in us as researchers. My research team was also puzzled when some students checked different race-ethnicity categories at different points in time. I looked into the data set more carefully and learned that most of these adolescents were from “mixed” backgrounds having difficulty fitting into one category. For some, that category had to with color; for me, it was related with where they lived and what they wanted to call themselves.

Having told most of my story of becoming “not-a-stranger-but-a-local,” I suggest that you think about doing the following if you ever do research in another country and stay for an extended period of time:

1. *Get to know the place.* Walk and drive around: go to places where locals hang out. Learn about the history of communities before you research these communities. Be ready for challenges, and some nice surprises. One of the best films I’ve ever seen is “Yol”, a film by Yilmaz Güney, a director from Turkey. I watched this film at the local shop/bureau of the Revolutionary Communist Party – the young medical school student I met there insisted that I watch it with him and I did. It was great!
2. *Talk to the students and others in the department you are visiting.* See what they do, what they care about, and what they are passionate about. Many professors do not talk with their own students, let alone students of others. I guarantee you that you would have a lot of undergraduate and graduate students opening up to you if you approached

them. Also see what types of actions, if any, they are engaged in taking. I take my visitors to public meetings and they often find it an invaluable experience.

3. *Go to conferences and learn about the scientific scene.* Yes, language could be a barrier but these gatherings are a very good way to learn. I learned a lot from pre-conferences, special meetings. My observations about people in these events have helped me decide who is and who is not so good in the various fields I work in.
4. *Observe the processes of the doing and the undoing of communities.*
5. *Observe how "foreigners" deal with the local life.* I was amazed that many visiting students from Turkey soon turned anti-Black, and a few blatantly racist. Dealing with that issue helped me figure some processes out and produce meaningful action years later in dealing with other issues.
6. *Visit a country where they speak a language different from your own.* I suggest, however, you start your visit with your local host or a trusted friend who is a native speaker. Your initial experiences will pave the way to future experiences – better make sure that these are solid and meaningful ones. Try the language, too. At least in Turkey, you would get an enormous positive reception.

I have to say that one of the best things about being a professor is the ability to travel and learn about other cultures. It's an empowering feeling to connect with people from another culture. That's my 22 cents worth of advice. (For accountability purposes, here is the calculation: The usual 2 cents, plus the 20 cents any bank would charge for the wire transfer.)

Serdar Degirmencioglu may be reached at Istanbul Bilgi University: serdard@bilgi.edu.tr.

From Seville to Chicago: A Community Psychologist's View of the Windy City

**Manuel García-Ramírez
Universidad de Sevilla (Spain)**

Arranging one's stay at a university or professional institution abroad is a complex task. Although the exchange of experiences among researchers and professionals from different countries is quite enriching, community psychologists do not always feel motivated enough to carry it out. In order to encourage other colleagues and anticipate possible solutions to the most common barriers on a trip of this nature, in the following paragraphs I will attempt to describe the experience that I enjoyed at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), invited by the Department of Disability and Human Development (DDHD), in the Fall of 2002.

Before Chicago. The aim of my stay at UIC was to get to know the work of community psychologists who focus on immigrant populations and other minority groups. Due to the demographic, economic, and political changes in Europe and Africa, Spain has gone from being a culturally homogenous society to being multicultural and diverse. We community psychologists have a scientific and ethical commitment to offer innovative solutions to given situations, in order to ensure and ease both well-being and harmonious relationships. In response, I sponsored from my university the invitation, of Fabricio Balcázar and Yolanda Suárez to be visiting professors during the Summer of 2000.

During that time we found common interests, designed projects, and considered the possibility of my enjoying a stay at the UIC as a visiting professor with the goals of: a) promoting the institutional relationship between both universities; b) strengthening our ties and developing projects; and, c) establishing paths of communication with other researchers.

An initial step consisted of obtaining the formal invitation of the UIC as a visiting professor so that my university would be able to grant me the freedom and the funding to sponsor my trip. The negotiation of these aspects was long and complicated and the dates did not always coincide. Given that one must insure enough funding, it is likely that more than one sponsor will be needed. For a Spanish researcher, the United States turns out to be rather expensive and one has to take advantage of the available resources. Of course, as community psychologists, we have experience in taking advantage of the available social support sources. My colleagues at the UIC were quite helpful, informing me before the trip of many of the contrasts that I was going to encounter (after their trip to Spain, they were familiar with our living conditions, our food, our climate, etc.). They helped me obtain my visa, social security, housing, etc. In addition, they helped me design my itinerary so that I would have the possibility of contacting all the researchers and representatives of the university in which I was interested. Although this was my second visit to the United States, I relied on "the help of destiny" to prevent barriers and to overcome them effectively.

In Chicago. Chicago is a surprisingly beautiful and welcoming city. With the help of my hosts, from the first day I found that it is a very special city, in which there are a lot of things to enjoy, many walks to remember and a large lake to practice sports, read and reminisce. For a Spaniard, the United States is very far from home, and for my family it was too far. The distances in Europe are not so long and the time differences generally do not prevent the sharing of daily experiences.

My first objective: to live near the lake. A good place is Division Street, centrally located and near the University, via subway. It is both crazy and cozy for those who are used to urban life and to walking to do the shopping. The coincidence of living in the same incredible block of apartments with another visiting professor, Patrick Devlieger, from the University of Lovaina (Belgium) was quite lucky.

My academic agenda was as full as it was interesting. My incorporation into the group research sessions of my hosts from the DDHD soon let me learn about the work they were carrying out in different groups. Their style of work, topics, and methodologies enriched me. I was reminded of the importance of developing alternative styles of work according to the characteristics of the studied topic, the population and the context, but I also assimilated how to be agile at carrying it out. I also examined the differences between the work of my research team and the team in Chicago. I observed the advantages of a culturally diverse research team, the importance of populations, etc., all of which allowed me to contrast them with my experience and to obtain lessons for my return. Additionally, we engaged in very productive sessions that allowed the analysis and evaluation of the influence of psychosocial and community factors in the social-labor integration of immigrants.

The meetings with the university leaders, to arrange my sabbatical, taught me valuable lessons, as well. I observed the differences between the two and the common interest in reaching an agreement that offered more opportunities for their students and

researchers to explore new worlds and compare their work with others with the goal of opening new horizons.

I highly valued the opportunity to discuss my research interests with other Psychology Department colleagues who enriched me with their suggestions and perspectives. This was especially true during the sessions held on many Tuesday afternoons with D. Birman which led to design a proposal to analyze the influence of the community context in the psychological adaptation and satisfaction with the migratory process of Moroccan immigrants.

I also appreciated the opportunity to enjoy the company and affection of the colleagues of the Psychology Department and of the DDHD who made me feel loved and respected. The farewell party that Fabricio and Yolanda prepared for me, to which several department professors came, holds a privileged place in my memory.

After Chicago. The return to routine life was bittersweet, a combination of the desire to return home and the fond memories of my experiences in Chicago. But it was time to return to daily life and to take inventory. The accomplishment of the goals that were laid out in the agreement between the institutions has advanced notably, my UIC colleagues and I have drawn up a draft paper, we

are drawing up one more, and we have prepared a special issue of the psychology journal *Apuntes de Psicología* (edited by my university and the Andalusian psychologist association) to cover the advances in participatory action research, in which researchers collaborate from

It has allowed me to know the joy of feeling connected with a strange land to imagine how terrible it must be to feel isolated. It has allowed me to know how important it is to go beyond our borders to enrich our understanding of the matters that affect others in our communities.

different U.S., Latin American, and Spanish universities. I feel satisfied with the fulfilled objectives.

But beyond the achievement of these objectives, the aspects that I most value are the lessons obtained and the long-term relationships that I have developed. Taking advantage of the opportunity that the University of Seville has offered me, to share my research experience with UIC colleagues, has allowed me to devote some months exclusively to comparing my work with that of others, to observe it in perspective, to polish it and enrich it. The experience of working in the United States, where everything is so different from Spain, with such a different style of work and life, has taught me to be more flexible in my opinions and to value the viewpoints of others. It has allowed me to know what it is like to feel new in a friendly country and to imagine what it must feel like to feel strange in a hostile land, as often happens with immigrants who come to our country. It has allowed me to know the joy of feeling connected with a strange land and to imagine how terrible it must be to feel isolated. It has allowed me to know how important it is to go beyond our borders to enrich our understanding of the matters that affect others in our communities.

With these paragraphs, I want to encourage researchers and practitioners to share their experiences with colleagues from other countries, there, in those other countries, because it has an

important added value. If anyone wants to come to Spain, do not hesitate to contact me through my e-mail address magarcia@us.es. I will do all that I can to help you in your journey and, of course, to enjoy our ever-friendly land.

Manuel Garcia Ramirez may be reached at Universidad de Sevilla: magarcia@us.es.

**Tasmania, Australia:
Look to the Mountains and Not to the Valleys**

**Joseph R. Ferrari
DePaul University, Chicago, IL**

I visited from November through December 2002 the island state of Tasmania, Australia, assessing volunteer and paid staff caregivers at "Southern Cross Care (Tas), Inc.," the largest Catholic non-profit eldercare agency in the country. Tasmania is the geographic size of Ireland, but with a population of only 480,000 residents. The purpose of this reflective article is to share my personal observations on conducting community-based research in Tasmania. I also provide a list of 10 random, simple, and maybe apparent observations that interested readers may want to keeping mind as they consider a foreign trip of their own.

1. An obvious issue is to *listen to the needs of the setting, especially before you visit*. By invitation I visited for a week in September 2000 the Board of Directors and discussed mutual goals in establishing protocol and assessment measures for a follow-up visit. I corresponded with my host, Garry Askey-Doran, the Deputy Director of SCC (Tas), by email for two years before the actual research visit. He warned me that although Tasmanians are English speaking their culture is not identical to what I was used to in the US. Tasmanians are more independent and strong willed, they do not like to be "told" what to do, and they have a suspicion of research "authorities." It took awhile to notice nuances of customs and language. Just prior to my travels, Mr. Askey-Doran reviewed my scales and consent form for language differences in the use of English, and he made valuable contributions to what items should and what should not be included in my scales.

2. I suggest you *collaborate with other psychologists at the site*. There was no community psychologist for me to work with, but I corresponded with a social-educational psychologist at the University of Tasmania with mutual interests, Dr. Ted Thompson. He secured for me, as an "Honorary Visiting Research Scientist," a five-bedroom house, office space with PC and internet access, copying and printing support, and introduced me to wonderful colleagues.

3. Seek funding sources other than the non-profit agency to *cover project and travel expenses*. SCC (Tas) could not afford to pay my time or my travel expenses. Fulbright scholarships and external granting agencies are great if you can get those awards, but I obtained funds from my University and from several sources. My Uni covered my overseas airfare through a small internal research grant, SCC (Tas) provided me with the CEO's three-year "old" company car and a gas credit card, and the University of Tasmania assisted in housing and office support. Accepting visits to people's home for dinner, even lunch with the Italian-Australian Club of Tasmania, covered meals! True, I lived a simple life and there was some out of pocket expenses, but by "piecing" together several, I offset much of the personal expense.

4. If possible, *use your research opportunity to assist colleagues at your school*. Through informal conversations and occasional lunch I noticed that several of my DePaul psychology colleagues (mostly junior faculty and all without tenure) had similar interests in volunteerism, community service, and issues associated with the elderly. I offered my opportunity for data collection to include measures that were their interest. Furthermore, when a colleague from another DePaul department learned of my Tasmania research to assess volunteerism, we decided that he would also visit to provide management assessment of the non-profit agency. I considered this collaboration within and between departments as ways to help others through existing data collection systems.

5. Remember to *be flexible*. It became clear shortly after I arrived in Tasmania that the population of volunteers at SCC (Tas) were difficult to contact and varied in their association to the agency. Consequently, I modified scales and recruitment procedures to fit the natural systems at the site (e.g., attended staff meetings, used direct mailings, email messages, sent staff flyers, and used personal contacts repeated site visitations). We even used donated dinner raffles from the local casino as an incentive to increase participation.

6. *Focus on winning over 'nay sayers' and opponents* to your project. I recall a Nursing Director who previously was supportive of my project but now that I was on site hesitated at being involved in the whole initiative. As community psychologists, we know that it is essential that we include the needs of the agency and population we are serving. I visited her a few days after arriving and listened to her concerns and needs. We went through the measures item-by-item. We shared mutual interests and concerns. She became an important ally, and a friend.

7. Because you have limited, finite time as a resident in this country you need to *be systematic with your limited time*. I had around 6-7 weeks to conduct my project, before my wife and family visited and we took our "holiday-holiday" down-under. After a couple of days to orientate myself to the sites, I made a daily schedule for when and where to establish contacts and collect data. Of course, in keeping with being flexible, I revised my schedule every few days. In short, with limited time in the country there is a need for structure even though you need to be flexible - know what needs to be done.

8. I also suggest that if possible, *develop long-term project goals (with potential opportunities for a follow-up visit!)*. My DePaul colleague and I adapted our roles from researchers to consultants during our brief visit. We collected our data, but also used the opportunity to note areas of development and growth within SCC (Tas). The data we collected assessed an overview of the current functioning of the agency, but we felt a need to outline future growth and opportunities for continued assessment once we were gone. Of course, if you have a wonderful experience, you would want to return and visit. Consequently, I suggest you consider long-term goals that include follow-ups to your initial assessment and subsequent program development. Even if you don't return, however, the agency would be served well by your insights on program development.

9. Another obvious but important bit of advice I share is *being courteous and respectful of the culture and norms of your host country*. During my stay, I had different meals and tasted outstanding wine, beer, apples, salmon, walnuts, brie with blue-cheese, and other delicious wonders. I learned the history of Tasmanians, saw natural beauties and man-made wonders (and yes, even a number of lighthouses along the shore). My family and I

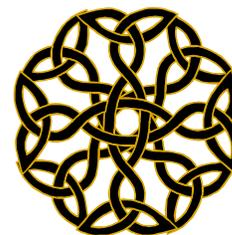
slept as fairy penguins encircled our rented cabin along the beach, and we touched wallabies, kangaroos, possums, sea horses, coral reefs, and even Tasmanian devils. We hiked to one of the world's most beautiful beaches, drove to the top of mountains and across volcanic plains, visited historic sites built by British convicts, traveled by seaplane, jet boat, sailboat, car, bus, and taxi. I can't tell you all the wonders we saw. But, we never heard loud music blasting through car windows, never saw people through wrappers and papers out car windows, never observed rude and obnoxious persons, and never smelt trash and garbage. We respected the sights, the people, and the culture we visited and were cognizant that we were guests in someone else's "house."

During my visit I attended an annual staff run talent show, where staff and residents perform skills and skits to other staff, residents and guests. I recall a poem, "Mountains in the Mind," written by one of the 80 year old residents and read by a staff person. The poem tells of a woman recalling the lessons of life told by her mother: "The mountains in the mind are signs, and they provide a clue, which urges you to climb aloft until you see the view.... She said 'to thine own self be true' ... The greatest of the values, compassion, love, and honesty.... Life will not always be easy - find beauty along the way.... Treat everyone with kindness; bring happiness to other folks.... Don't dwell in the valleys, look upwards to the sky."

10. And this leads me to my last point. No matter what research you are doing, no matter how your personal life may be in turmoil while you work on a project in a foreign land, always remember to stop and notice life's beauty: *Be sure to enjoy the experience!* I sat on the bench between data collection sessions on a beautiful early spring day outside the entrance to Guilford Young Grove in Sandy Bay, one of the elder care facilities of SCC (Tas). I was thinking about issues related to my project but mostly obsessing over upsetting departmental issues occurring back in Chicago. An elderly woman came out the door, seeing me on the bench, walked slowly over to me with her walker and said, "Do you hear them? Do you hear the birds?" She then made tweeting sounds to call them. "Do you hear the birds?" I never heard them until an elderly stranger showed me that we must enjoy the beauty around us. *Look to the mountains and not the valleys* while you are away. Even though things may not go totally smoothly, enjoy your trip - enjoy the journey.

The chance to be a stranger in a strange yet friendly land is now. We are in a unique occupation as academics because we have the chance, every several years, to stop our regular work and (perhaps) travel to foreign shores. I hope the information my colleagues and I shared in this special *TCP* issue helped you get excited about community-based research in foreign lands.

Joseph R. Ferrari may be reached at DePaul University: (773) 325-4244 or jferrari@depaul.edu.



Reflections on LGBT AJCP Special Issue

edited by Gary Harper and Alicia Lucksted

Introduction

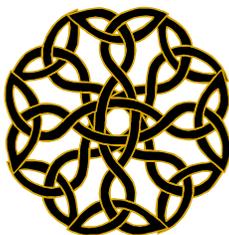
Several years after the establishment of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) interest group, the American Journal of Community Psychology (AJCP) published its first special feature on LGBT issues in the summer of 2003. Presented in this special section of *The Community Psychologist* (TCP), our colleague, Carlton Parks offers a thoughtful critique of this controversial issue. This piece will broaden our thinking on the ways in which the LGBT community and community psychology intersect.

Whether we as professionals are working in research or applied settings on social action issues specific to the LGBT community it is clear that the values espoused and methodologies employed in community psychology helps to deepen our understanding and awareness of issues that impact LGBT communities. In turn, lessons learned through this process can be applied to related and or unrelated areas of community psychology toward the advancement of the field.

For example, ideas from LGBT “coming out” groups might be useful to those working with various self-help groups and social support networks or organizations. Lessons learned from young people’s experience of school-based homophobia could be instructive for overall research for youth identified as being “at risk” for poor developmental outcomes. Those working towards the passage of anti-discrimination legislation for LGBT citizens may also have instructive suggestions for other social policy efforts similar in structure or position—even if unrelated to LGBT issues.

The LGBT interest group hopes to facilitate an ongoing discussion on both sides of this issue by inviting SCRA members to respond to this special section. One way voice your opinion is to participate in the “brown bag discussion” headed by Bianca Wilson that is circulated on the SCRA-L list serve. We also encourage those interested in these issues to join our interest group and its discussion list. We welcome people of all identities.

Finally, we invite TCP readers to submit their reflections on the AJCP special issue (and/or any aspect of the intersection between LGBT issues and community psychology) for inclusion in future issues of TCP through our interest group column. Send your reflections to the attention of: Alicia Lucksted at: aluckste@psych.umaryland.edu or call 410-706-2490. Please also feel free to contact us for more information about the LGBT interest group, how to join our list serve, and the brown-bag discussion group.



Carlton W. Parks, Jr., Ph.D.,
Alliant International University at Los Angeles

There is a growing appreciation of the need to listen purposefully to the voices of oppressed communities in an attempt to accurately reflect on our progress in becoming a truly inclusive society. It is incumbent upon community psychologists to use our expertise to initiate and facilitate this process both within the field of community psychology as well as within our broader society (e.g. Tinsley-Jones, 2003; 2001). Fortunately, our communities of color have already embarked upon this rather circuitous journey. hooks (1990) and Collins (1991) have strongly asserted the benefits of having members of a marginalized group (i.e. “outsiders”) to examine their realities within the context of their diverse roles as social and behavioral scientists (i.e. “insiders”). Needless to say, such professionals need to possess a growing sense of their multiple cultural identities as well as possess some sociopolitical consciousness of their roles and functions within the various communities they navigate and negotiate. The Special Issue focusing on LGBT communities in the *American Journal of Community Psychology* is an instance of listening to the growing voices of a marginalized group as well as being a mirror that reflects our current progress, as a field of study, in combating heterosexism.

The heterosexism as well as ageism that is still pervasive within the community psychology literature, as discussed in Harper and Schneider (2003), has resulted in the invisibility of LGBT communities across the life course. Community action-oriented research psychologists as well as applied community psychology practitioners need to broaden their constructs to better incorporate the bisexual, lesbian, and transgender communities into all of their professional activities. To achieve this goal, it will first become necessary to directly confront and process the internalized homophobia that still persists within various facets of the LGBT communities and beyond.

There still exists invisible “silent” voices across the life course within the LGBT communities that have yet to be fully expressed. More empirical attention has been expended on a restricted range of topics (e.g. HIV infection/AIDS, psychopathology, and victimization experiences among young adult gay males). Unfortunately, the pattern of diverse developmental trajectories that impact the psychological well-being of culturally and ethnically diverse LBT communities (e.g. institutions as well as social policy endeavors) has been virtually ignored.

This reality will hopefully change when a critical mass of ethnically and culturally diverse LGBT scholars are in a position to pursue such questions/hypotheses and develop large scale prevention/ intervention programs. Issues of power and control intersect with the variables of race, ethnicity, gender, SES, and sexual orientation identity over which 1) “experts” get the chance to “define reality” for a marginalized group, and 2) pose the questions/hypotheses that are examined and pursued. Funding sources and social policy agendas play a major role in determining which topics are selected, by whom, and which samples are pursued. More concerted time and attention needs to be paid to the invisible subgroups of men and women engaging in same-sex behavior within the LGBT communities that choose not to self-label as gay

male, lesbian or bisexual. Some unanswered questions include: 1) how does self-labeling across the life course impact the connections these individuals make with their respective communities and, in turn, their overall psychological functioning?, 2) What specific steps can diverse communities adopt to sustain their connections with these various subgroups of men and women, and their families?

These articles, as a group, are a beacon that shine forth several viable pathways of this groundbreaking work: 1) training implications for applied community researchers/practitioners to empower LGBT communities, and the 2) direct impact of public health initiatives geared to address the health implications of multiple minority stressors on LGBT ethnic and culturally diverse communities.

The Incorporation of LGBT Communities into the Training of Applied Community Psychology Action-Oriented Researchers and Practitioners

Pilkington and Cantor (1996) have documented in a national survey that heterosexual bias still exists in professional psychology training programs in the following areas : 1) textbooks and other course materials, 2) instructor comments, 3) research supervision, 4) professional fieldwork practicum and internships, 5) interactions with program administrators and other faculty, 6) teaching assistantships, and 7) course content). Only 35%, 39%, and 33% of clinical and counseling psychology graduates expressed concern about their lack of training they received to work with gay male, lesbian, and bisexual clients respectively.

Similarly, Wiederman and Sansone, (1999) in a national survey of training directors, revealed that 19% to 21 % of professional psychology programs did not offer any training with respect to therapy with gay clients. Sexuality training was even less likely in predoctoral internship settings. Given these disturbing statistics, Stanley (2003) is an illustration of how a community psychology-training program can systematically incorporate students into ethnically and culturally diverse LGBT communities where active learning about cultural diversity takes place outside of the classroom over an extended period of time.

The training necessary to equip a practitioner and/or applied researcher with the skills to empower marginalized and oppressed populations should start early and continue throughout the training experience and beyond. First and foremost, seasoned faculty supervisors/mentors need to role model the desired behavioral outcomes for their trainees. Next, providing their trainees initially with didactic experiences that facilitate the acquisition of the phenomenological experiences of individuals who inhabit a world outside of the trainee's reality (Walker, Wright, & Hanley, 2001).

Then, there needs to be a safe place for both the trainees and the clients can be themselves together while engaging in age-appropriate experiences given their current levels of behavioral, social-cognitive, and emotional maturity under supervision. In such a context, internalized homo/bi/transphobia, racism, and/or sexism can be explored and addressed while trainees are acquiring the community psychology skills. Stanley (2003) illustrates how community psychology training programs can restructure their curriculum and professional fieldwork experiences to equip their graduates to work effectively within ethnically and culturally diverse LGBT communities in the 21st century.

Public Health Initiatives Focusing on the Health Implications of Multiple Minority Stressors on Ethnically and Culturally Diverse LGBT Communities

We are becoming more sophisticated, as social and behavioral scientists, of the impact of minority stressors (e.g. institutionalized racism) and on the physical and mental health functioning of ethnic minority individuals as well as the communities they inhabit and work in (e.g. Harrell, 2001; Harrell, Merritt, & Kalu, 1998). The cumulative impact of these acute as well as chronic stressors places these individuals and their communities at risk for impaired functioning. Sexual prejudice can have a similar impact on the functioning of LGBT individuals in their respective communities (Richie, 2002).

LGBT persons who possess multiple minority identities resulting in multiple oppressions are at increased risk for impaired functioning (Richie, 2002). Community psychologists, in this issue, have provided us with insights that shed some light upon these dynamics.

Ethnic minority applied researchers have made the connection between racism, stress, and the physical/mental health functioning of communities of color (De La Cancela, Chin, & Jenkins, 1998). It is incumbent upon applied community psychologists, to document similar connections within the LGBT communities. Then, use these data as evidence with social policy makers for the need of public health initiatives to assist "at risk" groups. These articles in the *AJCP* reveal several subgroups within the LGBT communities to initiate such an investigation: 1) LGBT youth, 2) LGBT older adults, 3) LGBTs engaging in risky sexual behaviors, and 4) same-sex relationship violence. Practitioners have been successful in the implementation of interventions that bolster protective factors for minority groups dealing with such realities (e.g. Edwards, 1998). I commend these authors for their courage to engage in such important work that propels truth into power.

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Israel's piece about his experiences with initiating and leading a collaborative community project raises pragmatic, philosophical and ethical questions for students – and beyond. His testimony illustrates the rewards and obstacles involved in such a project. It particularly highlights the challenge to strike balance between the sometimes conflicting desires to serve the communities we work with while simultaneously progressing towards obtaining a degree.

Psychology in South Africa – Past, Present, and Future – A Brief Overview

Frances L. Palin
Georgia State University
palinfrances@hotmail.com

The primary function of psychology has been described as, "...healing or alleviation of emotional suffering, and the promotion of growth and well-being for individuals and groups" (Suffla, Stevens, & Seedat, 2001). In understanding psychology's past, present, and future in South Africa, acknowledging the power of psychology to both heal and harm is paramount. Moreover, awareness that this power is inextricably connected to the past, present, and future social realities of South Africa is necessary. According to Martín-Baró (1994), "The concern of the social scientist should not be so much to explain the world, as to transform it." Indeed, psychology does not merely exist within a social context; psychology has the ability to, and does, transform social contexts. The role of psychology in South Africa's system of apartheid and current and future sociopolitical climates portrays psychology's ability to harm, heal, uphold and transform social contexts.

For several centuries in South Africa, a crucial question for white South Africans was, "How shall the various 'races' live together peacefully ...?" (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). Prior to the 20th century, relationships between whites and blacks were seen from a paternalistic perspective, with white supremacy seen as "... part of the natural order of things" (Louw, 1997). However, due to urbanization and industrialization in the 20th century, the need for systematic justification of racial inequality was highlighted (Louw, 1997). Scientists agreed that valid reasons existed to justify the segregation of the races, and attempts to establish racial differences were encouraged among scientists (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997).

Psychology emerged as an academic discipline in South Africa in the 1920s, yet remained relatively unimportant. By the 1930s, only five psychology academic departments existed in South African universities, and psychologists realized that the production of socially useful knowledge was essential for the promotion and advancement of their discipline (Louw, 1997). For psychologists, one of the best models for the production of socially useful knowledge was the application of psychological tests to establish racial differences among South Africans. The influential forerunners of the intelligence testing movement in South Africa were trained in the United States (e.g. E.G. Malherbe at Columbia University under Thorndike). Tests initially used were American-based and later, local revisions were developed (Louw, 1997).

The intelligence test movement in South Africa was used in the 1930s and 1940s for cross-race comparisons (black-white). Although a hereditary/environment debate of the intelligence movement was evident, by the end of the 1930s, intelligence testing was firmly incorporated as a social planning instrument. It

Special Feature

The Community Student

edited by Omar Guessous and Sawsson Ahmed

To kick-start 2004, we have got three exciting articles for you in this issue of *The Community Student!* Together, these articles only begin to convey the breadth and richness of the experiences and thinking of graduate students who identify or are affiliated with the Community Psychology discipline.

Palin's article provides a highly provocative and critical examination of Psychology's history in South African during apartheid, and future in this post-apartheid period. Her discussion of the discipline's relationship to the sociopolitical climate and institutions is fodder for discussion and reflection for psychologists throughout the world.

Christens, Hulan, Ivy and Partridge's discussion of their experiences as American students attempting to do ethnographic work in Ecuador nicely illustrates Community Psychology's promotion of ecological analyses. It also demonstrates the importance of being critically self-reflective psychologists in relation to our personal values, to our work and to the environment in which we operate.

highlighted supposed inherent differences between blacks and whites, suggested that whites were superior to blacks, and provided information that led to unequal educational and vocational opportunities for black South Africans (Louw, 1997). It was suggested that "... biological races exist and are best kept apart because there exists a hierarchy in which 'blood mixing' leads to degeneration" (Louw, 1997).

By the late 1930s, a paradigm shift in the debate of race became evident in the social sciences. The notion of cultural differences based on Christian-nationalism replaced the genetic-biological model (Louw, 1997). The Christian-nationalism doctrine of the *volk* - a group of people brought together by laws of nature due to their common inherited characteristics - allowed politicians and social scientists to justify the segregation of races based on the notion that each race belonged to a different *volk* due to cultural differences (Louw, 1997). The *volk* concept became the justification of the design of apartheid¹ after World War II. The race paradigm shifted from one of biological hierarchy to a notion that the races are "... inherently antagonistic, and should be kept apart for good order and neighborliness" (Louw, 1997).

The issue of race continued to be a defining feature of psychology's development in South Africa from the 1940s onwards, and increasingly divided South African psychologists. This issue was particularly evident in psychology's development of national associations. In 1948, university psychology departments officially founded the South African Psychological Association (SAPA). The opposing racial viewpoints of psychologists became dramatically evident in 1962 when SAPA granted membership to the first non-white psychologist; several SAPA members resigned and formed their own association, the Psychological Institute of the Republic of South Africa (PIRSA), admitting only white members (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). SAPA's constitution did not specifically restrict non-white psychologists' membership (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). However, SAPA's position regarding non-white membership was attributed to the desire to avoid international community censure and maintain professional standards in psychology, as opposed to an attempt to maintain a non-racial stance (Suffla et al., 2001).

The schism that existed between SAPA and PIRSA had implications for both academic settings and research organizations. Indeed, the racial ideologies of universities tended to be either predominantly SAPA- or PIRSA-based. Furthermore, during the apartheid era, separate universities existed for whites and blacks; the universities for black South Africans were under-developed and -funded, and reflected South Africa's racial discrimination policies (de la Rey, 2001). In addition, black clinical psychologists were trained using Eurocentric individualistic models, with the expectation that these models would be directly transposed onto the collectivist African context. This model of training led to a double-bind situation for black psychologists; rejection of these models led to alienation from the training process, whereas endorsement of these models led to alienation from the trainees' experiences and communities (Stevens, 2001). The schism related to racial ideologies also implicated South Africa's two research institutes. These organizations were divided based on opposing racial doctrines, with little or no collaboration occurring between the two institutes (Louw, 1997). The National Institute for Personnel Research (NIPR) was associated with SAPA, whereas the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) aligned with PIRSA (Louw, 1987).

During the 1970s and 1980s, weaknesses in South Africa's social system were becoming more apparent, e.g. student protests, labor strikes, armed conflicts, international isolation, and poor economic growth (Suffla et al., 2001). In the 1980s, the fragmentation of psychology was particularly evident. Four psychology associations existed: SAPA, PIRSA, the Organization for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa (OASSSA), and the Psychology and Apartheid Committee. During this period, a number of psychologists started to critically examine and challenge psychology's collusion with the government (Suffla et al., 2001). OASSSA's role was to "examine and research the causes of social and personal problems," which had their origins in apartheid and economic exploitation (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). The Psychology and Apartheid Committee's mission was to resist political conflict in South Africa from within the discipline of psychology, and raise questions about black psychologists' "... own traditions and their relation to the practice and theory of psychology" (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). It is notable that the government chastised those psychologists who actively challenged its apartheid system by being involved with - and defending - victims of apartheid abuse. Indeed, Saths Cooper, one of these psychologists, was "... removed from society, detained, and subjected to extreme torture" (Magwaza, 2001).

In 1983, PIRSA and SAPA merged to form the Psychological Association of South Africa (PASA) (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). Although PASA was open to members of all racial groups, no acknowledgement was made of PIRSA and SAPA's role in the perpetuation of apartheid (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997), tensions based on opposing racial ideologies continued to exist between PASA members, and PASA was perceived by many as insufficiently responsive to the "real mental health needs of the majority of South Africans" (Wassenaar, 1998). Indeed, it seemed that PASA merely superficially endorsed the changing political rhetoric, i.e. from apartheid to reform (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997). In 1994, PASA was dissolved and a new national Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA) was formed with the aim of reflecting the true diversity of psychology in South Africa (Louw & van Hoorn, 1997).

Psychology's past in South Africa also includes its role in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), implemented by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act of 1994. The TRC's aim was to address apartheid by ensuring that the truth about past human rights violations was uncovered and acknowledged (Magwaza, 2001). Psychologists made submissions to the TRC, providing information about the role of psychology in the "... engineering and perpetuation of human rights violations" during apartheid (Magwaza, 2001). Several issues emerged from these submissions; an essential one related to omission morality, a conspiracy of silence whereby psychology's stance was a detached approach of scientific neutrality and objectivity. In addition, psychologists' contributions to racial opposition were described as negligible, which culminated in the promotion of segregation and inequality of mental health care for South Africans (Magwaza, 2001). Moreover, psychologists were said to have failed to acknowledge and give recognition to the contributions of their colleagues who did attempt to highlight the injustices of apartheid (Magwaza, 2001). The TRC generated a wealth of information that could be used by social researchers to reconstruct and heal South Africa; yet, psychology appeared indifferent to this opportunity (Magwaza, 2001). Prior to the TRC it is argued that South African psychology was involved in both the omission and commission of

human rights' violations; post-TRC psychology appears to be silent with regard to human rights' violations (Magwaza, 2001).

From this brief, non-exhaustive, overview of psychology's past in South Africa, it is evident that psychology did play a crucial role in the apartheid system, be it by the generation of information that could be used by the government for the justification and development of apartheid, active allegiance with the apartheid system, and silence and denial of the social consequences of apartheid. Regardless of the level of involvement that psychologists had in the history of psychology and its role in apartheid, an acknowledgement of this involvement is crucial. Indeed, even 'silent' psychologists are culpable given that:

Psychology is a generous discipline: the key to social penetration of psychology lies in its capacity to lend itself freely to others, who will borrow it because of what it offers them in the way of a justification and guide to action. (Louw, 1997).

Yet, not all psychologists were culpable. Indeed, as was voiced by the TRC, credit is due, and is lacking, for those psychologists who did challenge the government and faced its retaliation.

However, despite some attempts by psychologists to challenge the apartheid system, South African psychology's heritage is portrayed by many in negative terms. To cite one such psychologist:

Rather than standing on the shoulders of giants we stand on the shoulders of midgets who had no courage to apply psychology free from the demands of those in power and in industry, whose main interests were the subjugation and exploitation of blacks and to further racist agendas. (Nicholas, 2001).

With regard to psychology's present status, according to recent statistics, South Africa has a population of approximately 45 million, of which approximately 75% are black, 15% white, 9% mixed race, and 2% Indian. Relative to its population, South Africa has a small number of psychologists (5,000). White psychologists predominate the profession (90%), and practicing clinical psychologists vastly outnumber research psychologists. Furthermore, South's Africa's primarily Western, individualistic psychological paradigm does not acknowledge the country's collectivistic indigenous culture (Murray, 2002). Moreover, the majority of the South African population face post-apartheid issues such as: social inequality, discrimination, violence, crime, poverty, overcrowding, limited access to health care services, poor housing quality, unemployment, health threats (e.g. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis), inadequate facilities (e.g. sanitation), and the weakening of the extended family network (Barbarin & Richter, 2001).

Given South African psychology's history and current situation, psychology faces significant challenges, both within the realm of the training of future psychologists, and in the arena of the myriad of negative outcomes from the apartheid era. It is necessary for current and future psychologists to promote the mental health of all members of society. Training and societal challenges are intertwined; the successful resolution of issues related to the training of future psychologists will increase the effectiveness of psychologists in dealing with post-apartheid psychosocial outcomes.

In terms of the training of psychologists, new programs are being developed with the aim of addressing the needs of all South Africans (Fouché & Louw, 2002). The importance of indigenous psychology has been voiced by psychologists (Murray, 2002). In

addition, the need to train psychologists in community-oriented practice has been recognized (Gibson, Sandenbergh, & Swartz, 2001). Several clinical training programs are attempting to produce "... a new breed of graduate," equipped with community psychology skills (Gibson et al., 2001). For instance, the University of Cape Town bases a part of their selection criteria for graduate students on their commitment to change in South African psychology (Gibson et al., 2001).

According to Saths Cooper, past president of PsySSA and current president of South Africa's Professional Board for Psychology, the current and future relevance of psychology is based on several factors: a) the provision of individual counseling and the development of large-scale social interventions; b) the recruitment of more scholars and researchers into South African psychology, especially blacks; c) the improvement of research training; d) increased focus on the population's unique needs, as well as on indigenous, African psychology; and, e) the promotion of international exchange of ideas and interventions (Murray, 2002).

South African psychologists face a future that is challenging, but one that offers abundant opportunities to fulfill the mission of psychology, "... the healing or alleviation of emotional suffering, and the promotion of growth and well-being for individuals and groups" (Suffla et al., 2001). The ethical obligation of South African psychologists to fulfill their role as healers of all members of society is especially crucial given South African psychology's history of harm. Indeed, millions of South Africans suffered under a system of profound oppression and deprivation, and continue to experience its consequences. According to Saths Cooper, South African psychologists have "... got the intention to make it work" (Murray, 2002). He challenges psychologists to "... develop the confidences and competencies that will make the South African Rainbow Nation the real miracle it can be" (Murray, 2002).

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¹It is notable that HF Verwoerd, the architect of apartheid - and later Prime Minister of South Africa - was the first Professor of Applied Psychology in South Africa (Louw, 1997).

Community Research in Highland Ecuador: Reflections on an International Field School Experience

**Brian Christens, Harper Hulan, Mary R. Ivy, &
William L. Partridge
Vanderbilt University**

Overview of Ecuadorian Highland's Recent History

Over the last 40 years, indigenous communities in Ecuador have mobilized to take collective actions that transformed their lives and created new opportunities for development. Two generations ago, the indigenous peoples of Ecuador still lived as serfs on the *haciendas* of a small land-owning elite. Like their ancestors for hundreds of years, they were denied the most basic human rights including access to education, the right to vote, ownership of property, and freedom of movement beyond their communities.

With support from liberation theologians of the Catholic Church, indigenous leaders and community organizations launched a series of nonviolent but determined "uprisings," massive marches by tens of thousands of men, women and children on the nation's capital, asserting their rights as citizens. The demonstrations were further backed by blockades in which farm products supplied by indigenous communities were withheld from urban markets. The national government eventually addressed the people's demands.

Today indigenous communities own farms and businesses, send their children to school, and their leaders serve as mayors of municipal governments, directors of executive agencies of

government, and representatives in the national legislature. This social transformation, which is far from complete, is being accomplished without the violence or military repression characteristic of other societies in the Americas.

The Vanderbilt-PRODEPINE-FLACSO¹ Fieldschool in Intercultural Education

During the summer of 2003, the Human and Organizational Development Department at Vanderbilt University initiated an international field school on international community development and education. Dr. William Partridge, using contacts from his years working with the World Bank, paved the way for seven Vanderbilt students to live and study in the Andes of Ecuador and begin related programs of research. Dr. Carlos Arcos Cabrera, a professor at a FLACSO, along with several of his colleagues also facilitated various elements of the research.

Preparation for the field school began in earnest during the spring semester when all students hoping to participate read and discussed background material in both Spanish and English as part of a course in Community Development taught by Dr. Partridge. Video teleconferences with colleagues from FLACSO, authors of many of the works studied, provided an opportunity for additional preparation.

In early June, we arrived in Ecuador and spent several days meeting with members of the academic, government, and multinational leadership to receive brief overviews of political, economic, and social conditions in the country. A similar process was carried out at the provincial and local levels after leaving the country's capital. We repeatedly presented our plans for research to these audiences in order to have them critiqued. Some additional changes were made thanks to input from some SCRA Biennial attendees who were able to attend the discussion (Perkins, et al., 2003) on the centers for community research and heard a brief presentation on the fieldschool.

After leaving the capital city, the fieldschool students began research from two locations. Four students - Kambria Hooper, Jorie Henrickson, Erika Jones, and Jacqueline Beals, along with one professor of economic policy, Dr. Trish Kelly - conducted research based out of an urban area. The three students participating in the writing of these reflections - Mary Ivy, Harper Hulan, and Brian Christens - lived together in the distant outskirts of an urban area.

Both groups spent the summer participating and observing as much as possible in the indigenous communities in which we were immersed. We were, for example, fortunate enough to be asked to participate in the indigenous festival of *Inti-Raymi*, a multi-day summer solstice purification ritual. Our specific research topics and the methods used to study them evolved as we learned. This article will not address the whole range of research methods or specific findings, but will focus on some of our experiences and our current direction in the continuation of the fieldschool, and plans for the future.

Reflections on Research

As policymaking in developing countries oftentimes occurs in an environment where institutions are weak (such as the judiciary or the organizations that control production and prices of exports), there is more volatility in the economy. This has contributed to more conflicted interests among diverse groups, less social stability, and less long-term "trust" among individuals (Morsink, Helbling, & Tokarick, 2002). This situation sometimes translated into

uncertainty for us as researchers with individuals neglecting commitments or leveraging their advantage over us. Historically weak institutions and volatile market conditions led to difficulties involving trust and accessibility. While these conditions influenced our ability to conduct research, they also contributed to some important cultural understandings.

We often experienced greater difficulty in gaining the trust of the historically oppressed indigenous populations. Some of this difficulty was undoubtedly due to our own cultural incompetence, and it was further complicated by the fact that it was interspersed with instances of instant trust and hospitality depending on a variety of factors. One important factor was the difficulty we experienced in effectively communicating our purpose as “community researchers” to groups of people who had never interacted with groups such as ours. While this may have slowed our research, we commend the more suspicious groups for their ultimately justifiable reluctance to allow outsiders of European or North American origin access.

During this process of attempting to gain the understanding of groups or communities, we were often stood up for appointments. We also found that we were occasionally forced to behave as tourists. For example, we made one trip to a small village where we had been invited to sit in on a meeting of the indigenous leadership. When we arrived, we were given a lengthy tour of the town and were never able to discover where the meeting was being held. We were then repeatedly solicited to buy products from local retailers. This was followed by the failure of our arranged transportation for our return trip leading to an unanticipated and arduous journey on foot!

While these situations were severely disheartening, they eventually contributed to our understanding of different cultural dynamics. Our perseverance was usually eventually rewarded with access, and we left owing many individuals a debt of gratitude for their time and energy in facilitating our research. One interesting anecdote is that whether due to personality or gender, the two males of our research team had significantly more instances of this sort than the (more socially adept) female.

Our research was made more interesting from the outset by the fact that between the three of us, there was very little substantive overlap in training. Mary’s research focus is public health, Harper’s interest is in the informal economy, and Brian was looking specifically at community organizing. Despite these differing interests, we all shared a similar purpose of using action research to promote community development, and we had all previously lived and traveled in Latin America.

We realized, by the time that we were feeding our results back to our collaborators and participants in August, that while we had perceived our topics to be unrelated at the outset, our experiences had shown us the multiple interconnections between them. Much of this interconnection was demonstrated by our intense collaboration. Administering the qualitative survey of a researcher from a different discipline often revealed key insights, and discussions at dinner or on the bus would cause new themes to emerge. Our collaboration allowed us to better understand how citizens’ concerns in one area were closely related to other issues that we probably would not have connected in the absence of interdisciplinary collaborators. Methodologically, we were also

able to cooperate in designing and administering what would become one of the most effective learning tools for us: the roundtable.

Holding community roundtables allowed us to witness discussion and sometimes debate about key community issues. Thus, we were able to more accurately identify indigenous knowledge and community concerns. In many cases, our

hypotheses were validated by these discussions, but even in those cases, the dialogue tended to provide additional perspective.

Indigenous groups that we interviewed drew distinct boundaries as to whom they considered to be a part of their community, and also had different ideas of what “power” meant. For example, in rural highland Ecuador, groups of men and women saw Non-Governmental Organizations as powerful and important groups, but did not consider them to

be a part of the community, even though the organizations were usually headquartered within the town or province. Perceived power seemed to be a complex mix of family & individual reputation, money, education, and profession.

Another difficulty of conducting research in this region is that many of the poorest indigenous residents speak only Quichua, an indigenous language, and very minimal Spanish. This is particularly true of the women. While we were able to find a translator in most cases, we suspect that much had to be lost between the translation and our Spanish, which is far from perfect.

Reflecting on our experiences, we also realize that living in the rural outskirts of one of the poorest cities in the country contributed strongly to our ability to ask relevant questions. We gained perspective on the typical resident’s concerns after experiencing (to a small extent) the difficulty involved in attaining basic services, maintaining decent health, and completing necessary daily activities.

Interestingly, it was our participation in the daily life of the community that eventually earned us the access to the sort of candid information that we desired. Collecting scrap wood along railroad tracks and building a fire in the dirt road that ran by our residence became one of our typical nightly activities, and it was not unusual to have multiple members of the community come over to our fire and talk for hours. In retrospect, participation not only in formalized activity, but also in leisure, was essential to our purposes as learners and analysts.

By the end of the summer, we were able to identify themes that emerged from the independent research of the members of both groups of students. We identified *capacity building* as a central theme for future research. Indigenous communities are well aware that centuries of exclusion from participation in the major institutions of the nation state have prepared few of them with the skills needed to be effective leaders, professionals and tradespersons beyond their small communities.

The Government of Ecuador has similarly recognized the need to make special efforts to assist talented youth from these communities to acquire such skills, and over the last 5 years has provided over 3000 special scholarships to promising indigenous youth to complete high school and university education. Some have noted, however, that opportunities for employment wherein those skills might be utilized are still severely restricted for indigenous people, and similar scholarship programs are in danger of being cut from funding sources.

Reflecting on our experiences, we also realize that living in the rural outskirts of one of the poorest cities in the country contributed strongly to our ability to ask relevant questions.

The upcoming summer's fieldschool research will trace scholarship beneficiaries – throughout a sample of provinces – who will be interviewed regarding their successes following graduation. This phase of research may culminate in the utilization of results to design an expanded program of such scholarship. Such a program would reach hundreds more of young people with great potential, for the consideration of the Government of Ecuador and of international donors.

We welcome all who are interested to contact us by e-mail with input or further questions.

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¹ PRODEPINE is the Indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian Peoples Development Project of the Government of Ecuador financed by the World Bank. FLACSO is the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences, a UNESCO and Government of Ecuador supported graduate program (MA and PhD) composed of multidisciplinary faculty and students from throughout the Americas.

Starting a Community Project: Panacea or Pitfall?

Nathaniel Israel
Wayne State University

One day as I wandered through the offices of our Community Research Group, Dr. Paul Toro pulled me aside. He said, "I've been talking with this guy from the Detroit Public Schools, and they really want someone to evaluate their program for homeless kids. Would you be interested in doing this?" I quickly nodded my head—of course I wanted to have an interesting project to call my own.

Eighteen months later, this seemingly innocuous project has taken on a shape and form vastly different from what was originally proposed. Three project staff work with me to coordinate longitudinal research, tutoring, and family literacy components of the project. We are currently following up with fifty families experiencing homelessness during the last academic year in order to document their experiences in gaining and maintaining needed school and social resources. In coordination with a number of community groups, we have equipped and staffed academic resource rooms in two shelters that provide children with books for reading and with homework assistance. In short, the project has grown well beyond a simple program evaluation to become a genuine collaborative project with community members and organizations to provide these children with desired educational supports.

Despite the 'glamour' of coordinating this project, a number of issues have arisen over the course of its implementation that illustrate the pitfalls of getting involved in starting a community-based project while in graduate school. In writing this piece my

hope is that my experiences may prove to be helpful to other graduate students in considering the types of projects and the scope of such projects worth initiating while in graduate school. In this column, I will concentrate on three core issues that arose in the course of the ongoing development of this project. These three issues are: a) time b) values and expectations and c) the afterlife. I will conclude with some Graduate Student Survival Strategies that have been useful in allowing me to dedicate myself to working wholeheartedly on this project and to (mostly) retain my sanity.

Time

Considering the issue of time in project development, concerns arose that centered on two distinct categories of timelines: school-related timelines and institutional timelines. School-related timelines refer to the ability to reach milestones in one's program while expending considerable time on the project of interest. When I began this project I quickly realized that I was responsible for almost every aspect of its existence. There were meetings to attend, paperwork to complete, models of effects to consider, and goals to be decided. Dr. Toro was gracious in providing assistance and consultation when necessary, but in the end the work and decisions about the initiation of the project were mine. At the same time, I needed to consider that I had to pass my qualifying exams, then to recruit a dissertation committee, and then to consider where to apply for internship (as a clinical student)—all overlapping activities! Finding some balance between time for the project's development and time for school-related work quickly became a major concern.

This time crunch was soon overshadowed by an even more critical concern: the difference between my personal timeline and institutional schedules for initiating projects. Because project participants were initially recruited from school databases, ethical approval was required from both the Detroit Public Schools' (DPS) research department, and my university's (Wayne State) Human Investigation Committee (HIC). Further complicating matters, the University's HIC required that the DPS formally approve the project before they would consider the proposal. Though all approvals were eventually obtained, the process required substantive revision and effort in order to satisfy one or the other of the committees and to obtain approval in a timely manner. This instance underlines a more general concern: institutional timelines will almost inevitably slow project development and implementation. Accounting for this is critical in creating a reasonable set of expectations and timelines regarding when one will be able to begin one's project.

One final note on timelines is in order. When beginning a grant- or contract-funded project, there is often a significant lag time between when the project is approved for funding, when it is 'funded' on paper (i.e., when a contract is signed) and when project funds are actually available for spending. As a graduate student working on a project, this means that there may be a significant delay between the official initiation of the project and when either yourself or other project-funded employees can receive funds. It is important that you be prepared for this eventuality (both mentally and fiscally) and that potential employees also be made aware of this state of affairs.

Though it may seem onerous to consider all these issues (academic timelines, institutional schedules and delays, fiscal timelines), understanding the time related decisions to be made will help you determine a project's feasibility. Doing so can help one

decide the size of the project to undertake and the investment you can commit to in order to make it work. When estimating your time commitment to a project, be cognizant of our natural tendency to think optimistically—identifying potential barriers to the smooth operation of the project is a useful way to better estimate a range of time and energy you may have to commit to a project.

Values and Expectations

Timelines are not the only, or necessarily even the primary, concern when trying to move forward with a community-based project. Stakeholders from the community, participating organizations, and even one's advisor may have differing views regarding the appropriate specifics of the project. The parameters under question are potentially wide-ranging, and could include everything from the research design employed to the way participants are selected or the extent of their inclusion, the delegation of time and/or funds for specific activities, and the expected allocations of time and resources from each stakeholder. The relative importance of each issue is likely to change over time: as relationships and programs develop, stakeholders may become less concerned about the details of program design and implementation, and may shift to redefining the expected contributions of all persons involved. For example, in our work with the DPS, various institutional changes within their departments have resulted in one school social worker with whom we were working closely, moving from a direct service to an administrative capacity. This social worker remains a highly important resource for the program, however her duties within the DPS and in relation to our program have shifted. In order to respond appropriately to this change we need to re-examine our expectations for her contribution and find a way to reconfigure our staff and their work priorities in order to maintain our program's fidelity to our grant goals.

As seen in the above example, communicating with all stakeholders regarding expectations for particular contributions is an important, ongoing task. It is also time-consuming. Negotiating the continuing development of the program's activities and goals with stakeholders allows for the program to move forward with fewer major crises. Crises often arise when different stakeholders' values and expectations are sharply out of line with each other. Keeping up with stakeholders in a regular, consistent fashion can be viewed as an investment in one's own mental health as well as an investment in the project's progress.

Which brings us to a critical point. The goal of a community-based project should involve mutual good. By that I mean that all stakeholders should benefit from participation in a meaningful way. Being open to hearing what stakeholders value and need, and then being able to present a way to reach those goals within the context of one's own educational goals is essential—and potentially difficult. In the best of cases this could be fairly simple. For instance, our original proposal with the DPS involved a straightforward program evaluation project. This met requirements for a graduate class I was enrolled in, offered an opportunity to work with community and school organizations, allowed DPS officials access to important information for their annual McKinney-Vento related grant application, and gave consumers (families experiencing homelessness) a voice regarding their experiences within the educational system. The time-limited nature of the program was ideal, and these goals have been met. Current efforts to expand from evaluation to program development offer

greater challenges; a key concern from the point of view of stakeholders has been how programs will be sustained once I have left.

The Afterlife

What happens after I am gone? Leaving a project may result from either completing academic program requirements (completing one's degree; leaving for internship, etc), or from a choice you make alone or in conjunction with other stakeholders or your advisor. Either way, it is critical to consider the effect of your leaving. Is there a person who will assume your duties? If you have been the primary program coordinator from its inception, is anyone trained to assume the range of tasks that you have taken on? Have community participants been encouraged to develop the necessary skills to assume additional responsibilities? How important is it that the program continues? These are all potential questions that you or other stakeholders may ask.

It is important to consider the views of all parties involved in the program. Beyond your own commitment in terms of time and effort, it is important to consider that various community participants have also invested considerable effort and trust in the project's existence and continuation. Though you may move on (geographically and professionally) from the project, it is likely that persons in the academic and local community will continue to have dealings with and feelings about the project. Leaving the project in an atmosphere of mutual trust and satisfaction is important and sets a positive precedent for partnership between the stakeholders. Admittedly, there are details of the program that may lie beyond your influence once you leave (i.e., continued funding, interpersonal differences between stakeholders) but keeping in mind the aspects of the program that you can be responsible for and can anticipate dealing with is important in maintaining positive mutual relations. Setting up the conditions under which you will be leaving is also vital. If stakeholders are aware from the outset of the project that you will be there for a limited time, it sets up an expectation that something will have to be done about this eventuality. If it is not possible to know how long one will be involved in the project, it is important to at least communicate the parameters of one's likely involvement (e.g., "I plan to be in school for up to two more years. However, the last year I am in school, I will be working exclusively on my dissertation. Therefore I may be available for up to two years in my current capacity, and in a much more limited capacity for a third year.") Leaving is a critical issue, and may bring up feelings of abandonment, trepidation or fear on the part of numerous parties. The more completely this set of issues and emotions has been processed and strategies for resolving these issues proposed and agreed upon, the more smoothly the transition should proceed.

Surviving as a Graduate Student

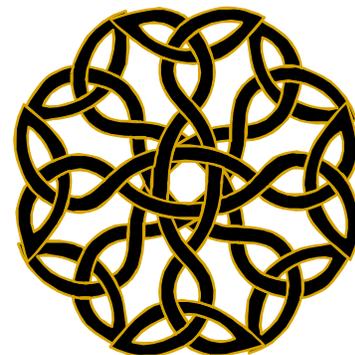
Considering the broad array of potential problems that may arise in carrying out a community project can prove daunting. Experiencing many of these problems and working through them can be even more daunting (For instance, what do you do between funding cycles when you need to retain staff but cannot pay them?) To lose oneself in the saga of project development is a real danger. Below I offer several principles that have been helpful for me while intently working on this project, and yet not letting my emotional well being ride on its somewhat fickle fortunes.

1. *Realize that though the project's progress does reflect one's efforts, it is not solely the result of your own actions, and is not the core of your value as a person or student.* Projects are composed of the workings of persons and institutions, and even persons empowered or constrained by institutions. Often the workings of these institutions seem to constitute some mysterious force upon which the program's progress rests. Ethics committees, their requirements and their level of sensitivity to certain program activities vary by institution and by the persons at their helm. Similarly, the workings of financial bodies are often difficult to discern. Some progress can often be made by identifying a single person or core persons to talk with when it seems that your particular paperwork needs attention; at other times one is left at the mercy of a faceless institutional body. In any case, it is important to realize that it is not solely your actions that allow the project that you value to move forward, and that delays and mishaps are part of the process of engaging in this work, and especially in engaging in this work for the first time. To put this in perspective, give yourself some other outlets that give you positive feedback and a feeling of accomplishment. This can be as simple as participating in a regular social gathering, or engaging in other projects that have a high likelihood of success—anything that reminds you that there are other sources of value than the day-to-day successes or setbacks of a single project.
2. *Outline a reasonable set of accomplishments for the project, and be open to the idea that your project has limits.* It would be wonderful to have a project that does not have the funding, staffing, and time limits associated with most projects. I would love to be able to create a network of educational and mental health supports that children and parents in all shelters in Detroit are knowledgeable of and can access. In fact, I would like to see that happen in the next year or so. However, it will not happen with the resources that we currently have or could conceivably muster. In place of this lofty goal, a more modest goal would be to a) select a limited number of shelters that I believe we can impact through a coordinated effort, and then b) to move forward with that plan, with the agreement and full participation of our stakeholders. Over time, I may realize that this goal needs to be scaled down to something even more modest, or I may come into an expanded set of resources that will allow me to set out new, more ambitious goals. Being able to adjust goals and expectations over the course of the project has been an important coping strategy that I believe allows me to better deal with real-world program opportunities and constraints. Consciously reminding yourself of the real limits of what can be done is an important way to frame how you view program outcomes and your efforts to accomplish them.
3. *Offer others an opportunity to contribute.* It is tempting to see a program as an opportunity to demonstrate one's own competence, and thus as an opportunity to do and control as many tasks as possible. There are real and important functions you may serve in coordinating a program that should not be delegated out. However, it is often the case that community members and program staff have capabilities that will grow your program in unexpected and

positive ways if you allow it to. For instance, Ms. Shantel Williams has been with the program I coordinate ever since it was funded. Her duties have evolved from being an interviewer to working more broadly with homeless families, and with business and community organizations in the area to coordinate the delivery of educational materials and services to homeless families. Had I been committed to seeing her solely as an 'interviewer', this welcome program addition might have gone overlooked. As it is, she has forged partnerships that have allowed us to reach out to families in the community and to partner with area organizations to gain the books, computers, and volunteers necessary to create staffed libraries/resource rooms in two shelters. Though at some points in involvement in a project it may seem that you alone are carrying the weight of completing program tasks, do not fall victim to the 'Atlas' complex. Find ways to involve others.

In summary, starting a community project has the potential to be enormously rewarding and enormously frustrating. Being conscious of your own timeline for involvement and the likely delays inherent in any bureaucratic system is important in gauging the practicality of your involvement in or implementation of a program. Keeping communication open regarding expectations, values, and program development is critical in forging trusting relationships with community partners. Preparing stakeholders and program staff and participants for your departure is essential in maintaining positive relationships between yourself, your academic institution, and community partners over time. Finding strategies that help you cope with the ups and downs of program implementation is key to your psychological health throughout this process. This brief outline of my experiences in community program development will not generalize to all persons or all programs. It is my hope however that it proves helpful to other graduate students in regards to framing your involvement in the worthwhile endeavor of starting a community project.

Questions? Comments? Feel free to contact me about this piece at ae9088@wayne.edu



Candidate Statements for SCRA Officers



CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT Ana Mari Cauce

Current Position

Earl R. Carlson Professor of Psychology and Chair, Department of Psychology; Professor of American Ethnic Studies; Adjunct Professor, Department of Womens Studies, University of Washington.

SCRA Involvement

I cannot remember a time when my professional identity was not as a Community Psychologist. My first, first-authored publication (1981), based on my undergraduate senior thesis, was published in *AJCP*, one of the few venues at the time interested in an article focusing on Latinos. When I began my graduate career at Yale University almost 25 years ago, I learned more about the field and immediately gravitated to it. Both the substantive content of Community Psychology and the values and principles it encompasses best represent what I strive for in my work. As an additional plus, I've always enjoyed the people that our field attracts. When I attended regional and national APA-related meetings, Division 27 quickly my home.

I was most involved with SCRA throughout the 90's. During that time I served in various roles including Chair of the Minority Concerns Committee (89-91), Member-at-Large of the Executive Committee (90-93), Division 27 Program coordinator for the APA Convention (92-93), and Regional Coordinator for the West Coast (94-95). I've also served as a member of the Editorial Board of *AJCP*, as an Associate Editor (93-98) and as guest editor for a special issue on adolescent risk and resilience (99). I've been an SCRA fellow since 1993.

My involvement in formal SCRA activities has been more reduced in recent years due to a combination of greater administrative responsibilities at my University and heightened family obligations as I did primary care-taking for my mother who suffered several strokes in the years before her death. But, despite less formal involvement, my commitment to SCRA has remained as central to me as ever. It would be a great honor to provide service and leadership to a field, and to an organization, that has given me so much.

Goals for SCRA

When I was a graduate student with interests in doing research and intervention aimed at bettering the lot of ethnic minority and poor children and youth, Community Psychology was the only field that could sustain me spiritually and intellectually. Several decades later, we have truly accomplished the task of giving Community Psychology away. Our multiple emphases on prevention, diversity, empowerment, public mental health services, and social justice are no longer uniquely ours. Newly minted psychologists with interests in any, or all, of these areas have a host of organizations (and even divisions within APA) that they can affiliate with. This is a good thing, but it means that we must work harder to attract new members. One of my goals as President-Elect would be to continue

the work begun by President Paul Toro in **reaching out to the next generation of Community Psychologists**. As a corollary to these outreach efforts is **re-affirming our commitment to being an inclusive and diverse community**. All demographic analyses conclude that this is where the future lies.

Together with an emphasis on outreach to new members, I would like to better **explore and exploit opportunities that exist to work together with organizations and divisions with like values and goals**. Kenneth Maton's book project on strengths-based research and policy is a good example of an initiative we should build on. We have many allies in our struggles and we must find more opportunities for working together with like-minded others, within and outside of APA.

Finally, I would look forward to opportunities to **bring our theoreticians, researchers, and practitioners into closer communication**. One of the strengths of our organization is the large number of SCRA members who are involved in both, but we must work harder to build bridges between members at either extreme.

Accomplishments related to Goals

My goals for SCRA are not especially earth-shaking or particularly original, but they are near and dear to me, and I bring specific strengths to the table in support of these goals. I have been extensively involved in the mentoring of young Ph.D.'s in psychology and related disciplines. For the last five years I was co-Director of the Family Research Consortium on Culture and Context that was recently identified by the National Academy of Science as a "model program" for the training of ethnic minority social and behavior scientists. An outgrowth of this group, the Study Group on Culture and Ethnicity, was recently awarded an NSF grant in support of their activities. More recently, I am a member of the National Steering Committee for the National Hispanic Science Network, in charge of their mentoring activities.

Over the last few years I have also been involved in various other professional organizations, including serving on the Public Policy committee for the Society for Research on Child Development and spear-heading the development of a diversity inventory for the Society for Research on Adolescence. I have just completed a term on the Board of Children, Youth, and Families for the National Academies of Science. If elected President-Elect, I hope to draw on the knowledge I've gained from these involvements in the service of SCRA. It would be an honor to work with the membership and others on the Executive Committee in service of our joint goals and commitments.

Most Recent Honors

- Distinguished Contribution Award, Society for Community Research and Action (2002)
- Dalmas Taylor Distinguished Contribution Award, Minority Fellowship Program, American Psychological Association (2002)

Recent Publications

- Cauce, A.M., Domenech Rodriguez, M., & Paradise, M. (2002). Cultural and contextual factors in mental health help-seeking: A focus on ethnic minority youth. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *70*, 44-55.
- Cochran, B., Stewart, A., Ginzler, J. & Cauce, A.M. (2002). Challenges faced by homeless sexual minorities: Comparison of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered homeless

adolescents and their heterosexual counterparts. American Journal of Public Health, 92, 773-777.

Cauce, A.M., Domenech Rodriguez, M., Stewart, A. Cochran, B, & Ginzler J. (2003). Overcoming the odds: Resilience and competence among poor, urban youth. In S. Luthar (Ed.), Resilience Processes: Myth or Reality. Erlbaum Associates.

Cauce, A.M. & Srebnik, D. (2003) Before treatment : Adolescent mental health help-seeking. The Prevention Researcher, 10, 6-9.

Johnson, D., Jaeger, E., Randolph, S., Cauce, A.M., & Ward, J. (2003). Studying the effects of early child care experiences on the development of children of color in the United States: Toward a more inclusive research agenda. Child Development, 74, 1227-1244.

Paradise, M. & Cauce, A.M. (2003). Substance use and delinquency during adolescence: A prospective look at an at-risk sample. Substance Use & Misuse, 38, 701-723.

For fuller vita (through 2002) see <http://faculty.washington.edu/cauce/>



CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT-ELECT Douglas D. Perkins

Employment History

Associate Professor of Human & Organizational Development (Founding Director of Ph.D. Program in Community Research & Action), Vanderbilt University, 2000-present

Lecturer, Asst., Assoc. Professor of Family & Consumer Studies (Head of Environment & Behavior Major); Adjunct, Psychology Dept.; University of Utah, 1989-2000

Director, NIMH project, Visiting Asst. Prof., Criminal Justice, Temple University, 1986-89

Research Assoc., Block Booster Project, Citizens Committee for NYC, 1985-86

Adolescent Psychiatric Counseling/Research Trainee, Devereux Foundation, 1980-81

Education

M.A. (1985), Ph.D. (1990), Community Psychology, New York University

B.A. (1980), Psychology, Swarthmore College

SCRA Involvement

- Chair, Host Organizing Committee, 2004 Interdisciplinary Collaboration Working Conference
- Member, SCRA Interdisciplinary Task Force (2002-)
- SCRA Liaison to Community Development Society (1998), developing relationship between SCRA, CDS, Environmental Design Research Association, and Urban Affairs Association
- Developing *AJCP* special issue proposal on interdisciplinary community development research
- Member, Community Action-Research Centers Task Force, Co-wrote (with I. Prilleltensky & A. Fisher) 2003 International Community Research Network Proposal
- Member, Council of Program Directors in Community Research & Action (1997-2003)
- Editorial Board member: *American Journal of Community Psychology* (1995-1997; Student Ed. Board: 1985-87), *The*

Community Psychologist (columnist: 1987-1989, 1997-99)

- Chair, Community Action/Applied Interest Group (1997-99). Organized debate that led to Awards Task Force, Coedited (with D. Julian) *TCP* issue on applied community psychology
- Co-Edited (with M. Zimmerman) special *AJCP* issue on empowerment (v. 22, #5: Oct, 1995)
- SCRA Dissertation Award Committee (member: 1992-95, Chair: 1994-95)
- Rocky Mountain Regional Coordinator (1990-92); initiated regional newsletter
- Presented at all 9 Biennial Conferences; organized 1993 Town Meeting that led to *AJCP* empowerment issue, 1997 state/local policy panel that led to SCRA policy statement initiative, and 2003 session on development of a new community action-research center and network

Agenda for SCRA

If elected, I will support existing SCRA structures and programs, but my vision for the Society is to help community psychology more successfully live up to its original promise as a socially and politically relevant and global field. After spending my entire post-graduate career in various interdisciplinary programs, where exciting cross-fertilization of ideas occurs, I am convinced that we must expand our theories, methods, and interventions beyond those that are possible within traditional, narrowly defined psychology. We must connect with other applied branches of psychology and, especially, with applied researchers and practitioners of other disciplines, such as community (urban and rural) sociology, geography, planning, environmental design, cultural anthropology, education and human development, policy studies, public health, social work, law, community development, and applied economics.

We must also forge more mutually supportive connections with our international colleagues. My years in Utah and visits with community psychologists in Australia and Italy helped me experience the professional isolation that almost everyone in our field feels. That isolation has its strengths in spreading our impact more widely and forcing us to form useful alliances outside the field. But it also places a great responsibility on our professional association to reach out more effectively to recruit, involve, and support its membership and to work more closely with community psychologists worldwide.

(W)hile community psychology has always been interdisciplinary, it should become even more so to help the field to develop and avoid intellectual stagnation. The argument for greater interdisciplinary collaboration can be based on an even more important and pressing cause. The world's greatest problems—poverty, disease, hunger, violence, war, oppression, environmental contamination, resource depletion...have as root causes, solutions, or both, complex political, economic, environmental, and socio-cultural issues. If community psychology is to contribute anything useful to addressing those problems, we must think more ecologically, act more politically, and actively engage the various disciplines that understand those issues...

Similar to the argument above that to grow the field must become more interdisciplinary, the internationalization of community psychology has led to a tremendous diversity of new ideas, methods, and

intervention strategies tested in very different contexts around the globe (Levine, Perkins, & Perkins, in press).

I will bring my experience in studying citizen participation, social capital, and more recently, learning organizations toward creating a more empowering and politically and globally engaged SCRA.

Recent Publications:

- Levine, M., Perkins, D.D., & Perkins, D.V. (in press). *Principles of community psychology: Perspectives and Applications* (3rd Edition). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Perkins, D.D., et al. (2004). Community development as a response to community-level adversity: Ecological theory and research and strengths-based policy. In K.I. Maton, C.J. Schellenbach, B.J. Leadbeater, & A.L. Solarz (Eds.), *Investing in children, youth, families and communities: Strengths-based research and policy* (pp. 321-340). APA.
- Perkins, D.D., & Long, D.A. (2002). Neighborhood sense of community and social capital: A multi-level analysis. In A. Fisher, C. Sonn, & B. Bishop (Eds.), *Psychological sense of community: Research, applications, and implications* (pp. 291-318). New York: Plenum.
- 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(1), 33-52.
- Perkins, D.D. (2000). Research, teaching, and service in applied, multidisciplinary academic programs and in community organizations. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community*, 19(2), 121-128.
- Perkins, D.D., Brown, B.B., & Taylor, R.B. (1996). The ecology of empowerment: Predicting participation in community organizations. *Journal of Social Issues*, 52, 85-110.
- 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. (reprinted in T.A. Revenson, et al. (Eds.) (2002), *Ecological research to promote social change: Methodological advances from community psychology*. (pp. 127-170). New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.)
- Perkins, D.D. (1995). Speaking truth to power: Empowerment ideology as social intervention and policy. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23, 765-794.

For more information, see: <http://www.people.vanderbilt.edu/~douglas.d.perkins/home.html> or <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/faculty/hod/perkins.htm>

CANDIDATE FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Anita A. Davis

Current Position

Associate Professor
Department of Psychology
Rhodes College, Memphis, TN

Education

1990, B.A., Rhodes College, Memphis, TN
1993, M.A., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
1995, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

SCRA Involvement

TCP contributor (book review, article)
Participated in five biennial conferences (presenter)
Student Editorial Board, American Journal of Community Psychology (1994)

Selected Works

- Davis, A. A. (2002). Younger and older African American adolescent mothers' relationships with their mothers and female peers. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 17(5), 491-508.
- Davis, A., Maton, K., Humphreys, K., Moore, T., and Wilson, M. (1998). Setting the record straight: Towards more positive portrayals of African Americans. *The Community Psychologist*, 31(3), 14-18.
- Davis, A. A., & Rhodes, J. E., & Hamilton-Leaks (1997). When both parents may be a source of support and/or problems: An analysis of pregnant and parenting female African American adolescents' relationships with their mothers and fathers. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 7(3), 331-348.
- Davis, A. A., & Rhodes, J. E. (1994). African American teenage mothers and their mothers: An analysis of supportive and problematic interactions. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 22, 12-20.

Personal Statement

When I accepted the job offer from Rhodes College, my alma mater, I never expected to still be here eight years later. The year that I returned, Rhodes' student body was approximately three percent African American in a city of about a million people (about half of them African American), and there was no reason to think change was on the horizon as the College had only four African American students in an entering class of approximately 300 students. Additionally, the relationship between Rhodes and large segments of the Memphis community was strained at best, hostile at worst, and Rhodes remained oblivious at best, and uncaring at worst to this situation. Furthermore, Rhodes had only one African American faculty member on a faculty of over 120. In all, Rhodes needed a good dose of social change, and I was confident that I was the woman to lead this change. So, in what many considered to be an unconventional decision, I declined the opportunities at larger institutions and returned to Rhodes armed with many of the tools of community psychology that I had learned and utilized at the University of Illinois.

Eight years later, I am pleased with where we have come as an institution (e.g., in the last four years at least 20 African American students have been admitted each year, our African American student population is close to 5 percent of the overall student body, we have eight full-time African American faculty). I am also

pleased with the work that we are doing to build bridges with the Memphis community. For example, we have a top-level administrator who focuses on strengthening town-gown relationships, we award full-pay scholarships (i.e., \$25,000/year for four years) to the top two students in each Memphis high school who are accepted and choose to come to Rhodes, and our faculty now offer over two dozen “service-learning” courses that focus on integrating service to the Memphis community and academics at Rhodes. Over this time, I have served on various committees geared toward addressing these issues (e.g., Diversity Task Force, Admissions Committee), served as an advisor to the Black Student Association, integrated community psychology into our Psychology Department curriculum, and worked with my old high school, various other schools, and numerous community organizations in the city to help bring resources to them via our students and our resources at Rhodes. For those of you who know me, I know you are not surprised; I have always worked very hard to challenge the status quo, push for change at all levels, and motivate students to strategically demand to be heard. Certainly I have not single-handedly done all of these things, but I am proud to have played a significant role in leading other people who were unwilling to allow things to remain the same.

As you can see, I have been committed to social change and the tenets of community psychology over the past eight years, albeit primarily in my immediate community. Therefore, I am delighted to have been nominated as one of your candidates for the Member-at-Large position and welcome the opportunity to serve SCRA in this broader capacity. Being elected to the Member-at-Large position when the initial responsibilities emphasize recruitment would allow me to supplement current strategies to increase membership by focusing on increasing SCRA membership among faculty and students at traditional liberal arts colleges. Similar to my own institution, many of the faculty members at these schools are doing impressive community-based research with their students. These faculty members are from diverse disciplines and few are aware of the support and resources community psychology could offer them as they endeavor to strengthen relationships between their institutions and their communities. In this position, I would be committed to increasing the visibility of SCRA on campuses like mine and increasing ties between SCRA and the faculty and students at these small liberal arts colleges.

In this position, I also hope to educate more Clinical/Community graduate students about the opportunities that exist for them at these small liberal arts schools after completing their doctoral degrees. We are needed at these institutions and in the communities in which these schools are located.

Thank you for allowing me to share a little about me with you. I am very excited about this opportunity that would allow me to begin to serve SCRA in a more formal capacity. And, I would be honored to have your vote.



CANDIDATE FOR MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Bianca L. Guzmán

Current Position

Director of Research and Program Evaluation. Public Health Foundation Enterprises CHOICES Program. La Puente, California.

Education

Ph.D. in ecological community psychology, Michigan State University.

SCRA Involvement

My involvement in SCRA began in 1992 and since then I have taken many roles in the society. While in graduate school at Michigan State University, I attended several biennials and actively submitted symposium and paper presentations. In 1997 I served as the Western Regional Coordinator for three years. In 1999 and 2001 I have also served as an SCRA APA program reviewer. In 2000-2001 I served as the co-editor, along with Kim Eby for the Community Psychologist Special Issue: The New Millennium: Women’s Health and Well-being. In 2001 I also served as the Diversity Accountability Representative at both winter and spring meetings of the Executive Committee. I enjoyed my role as the diversity accountability representative because it allowed me to voice the role that many ethnic members of the society desired SCRA to take when addressing issues of cultural competency. In 2001 I also began my term as the chair elect of the Women’s Committee. I am now in my last term in this role and I feel that I have made a contribution along with the current chair Christina Ayala-Alcantar to this committee by creating a “trailblazing women of community psychology” presentation that they society can preserve and display at future SCRA conferences. Finally in 2004 I was asked to serve as a Western Regional Coordinator and for me this signifies a full circle of serving the society for the last 12 years.

Personal Statement

I am delighted to be nominated for the Member-at-large position in SCRA. Community psychology has been my discipline since I was an undergraduate student I just did not know that what I was doing was called community psychology until I visited the campus of Michigan State University (MSU). When I saw what all the people at MSU were doing I knew that I was home. I am grateful for all the support that the division and the field has given me over the years and feel honored to be asked to serve. As a socially conscious Latina scholar I have always strived to advance community psychology in the areas of public policy, prevention and culture. With regards to policy I am currently serving as a member of the APA Committee on Psychology and AIDS (COPA). In this committee I have had the opportunity to write resolutions that APA will enact with regards to HIV and AIDS. With regards to prevention I have created many programs to educate ethnic youth, primarily Latinos, on safe sexual behaviors. I have always used the principals of community psychology in my research and evaluations plans. I also feel that one of the key aspects of community psychology is creating social justice therefore all the programs that I have created always have a component that makes the team working on the project realize that social justice is a must in any research and evaluation endeavor. Finally, with regards to culture, I have strived to create social justice for ethnic minorities with regards to health disparities. As a Latina woman I am well aware of how culture and ethnic status can hinder individuals who live in the United States. I have dedicated my career to ensuring that future generations of Latino children have the ability and opportunity to have a healthy lifestyle.

As member-at-large I would strive to increase unity and communication among SCRA members. I realize that when I talk to members at biennials or correspond with them via e-mail that many

of us are doing work that is related and we could be supporting one another. One of the things I would like to accomplish is a strong network base where members can turn to when they need information not only in their topic area but also with regards to advocacy and community organizing. My goal is to create a site on our webpage where individuals could post and dialogue about these issues. In addition to this, I am strongly committed to increasing the role the women and people of color play in the society including the executive committee. As member-at-large I would be responsible for the SCRA program at APA. Through this avenue I will actively recruit and engage women and ethnic minorities to participate in the planning of the event. I would also like to have a piece of the program dedicated to issues that impact women and people of color.

Recent Publications

- Guzmán, B.L., Casad, B.J., Schlehofer-Sutton, M.M., Villanueva, C.M., & Feria, A. (2003). C.A.M.P.: A Community-Based Approach to Promoting Safe Sex Behavior in Adolescence. *The Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*.
- Guzmán, B.L., Schlehofer-Sutton, M.M., Villanueva, C.M., Dello Stritto, M.E., Casad, B.J. & Feria, A. (2003). Let's Talk About Sex: How Comfortable Discussions About Sex Impact Teen Sexual Behavior. *Journal of Health Communication*, 8.
- Guzmán, B. L., & Feria, A.(2002). Community Based Organizations and State Initiatives: The Negotiation Process of Program Evaluation. *New Directions For Program Evaluation: Responding to Sponsors and Stakeholders in Complex Evaluation Environments*, 95, 57-72.
- Guzmán, B. L. (2002). Examining the Role of Cultural Competency in Program Evaluation: Visions for New Millennium Evaluators. In S.I. Donaldson & M. Scriven (Eds.), *Evaluating social programs and problems: Visions for the new millennium*. Hillsdale NJ: Erlbaum.

CANDIDATE FOR SECRETARY

Sarah Cook

Current Position

Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Georgia State University
Director of Undergraduate Studies

Education

Ph.D. Community Psychology, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia

SCRA Involvement

Southeastern Regional Coordinator 1997-1999
Chair, Public Policy 2000-2002
Biennial Local Planning Committee 2000-2001

Recent Works

Smith, S. & Cook, S. L. (in press) Are reports of posttraumatic growth positively biased? *Journal of Traumatic Stress*

- Koss, M. P., & Cook, S. L. (2004). Facing the facts: Date and acquaintance rape are significant problems for women. In *Current Controversies on Family Violence, 2nd Ed.* R. J. Gelles & D. L. Loseke, (Eds.), Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Cook, S. L., Conrad, L., Bender, M., & Kaslow, N. (2003). The Internal Validity of the Index of Spouse Abuse in African American Women. *Violence and Victims*, 18.
- Bender, M., Cook, S. L., & Kaslow, N. J. (2003). Social support as a mediator of revictimization of low-income African American women. *Violence and Victims*, 18, 419-431.
- Baker, C. K., Cook, S. L., Norris, F. H. (2003) Domestic violence and women's problems in housing: A contextual analysis of women's helpseeking, received informal support, and formal system response. *Violence Against Women*, 9, 1-30.
- Goodman, L. M., Dutton, M. A., Weinfurt, K. & Cook, S. L. (2003). The Intimate Partner Violence Strategies Index: Development and Application. *Violence Against Women*, 9, 163-186.
- Cook, S. L., Woolard, J. L., & Russell, H. M., (2003). Violence against women: Policies that promote strength, resilience, and resolution. In *Strengths-based research and policy: Investing in children, youth, families and communities*. K. Maton, C. Schellenback, B. Leadbeater, & A. Solarz (Eds). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Salazar, L. S., & Cook, S. L. (2002) Violence against women: Is Psychology part of the problem or the solution? A content analysis of psychological research from 1990 through 1999. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 12, 410-421.
- Cook, S. L. (2002) Self-reports of sexual, physical, and nonphysical abuse perpetration: A comparison of three measures. *Violence Against Women* 8, 537-561.
- Cook, S. L., & Reppucci, N. D. (2002). The nature and efficacy of child-centered, neighborhood-based, child protection programs: The record thus far. In *Toward a child-centered, neighborhood-based, child protection system*. G. Melton, (Ed.), Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
- Cook, S. L. & Koss, M. P. (2001). Action-research: Informing male violence against women interventions. In *Integrating behavioral and social sciences with public health*. N. Schneiderman, J. Gentry, J. M. Silva, M. A. Speers, & H. Tomes (Eds.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Woolard, J. L. & Cook, S. L. (2000). Common goals, competing interests: Preventing violence against spouses and children. *University of Missouri-Kansas City Law Review*, 69, 197-214.

Statement

Effective communication and documentation of an organization's process are essential to healthy development. If elected secretary, I would apply personal and professional organizational and interpersonal skills to fulfill the responsibilities of the office of secretary, which include facilitating communication, recording the Society's progress toward its mission, as well as serving as an effective member of the Executive Committee. My current work and position betray where my energy would focus. As a member of the executive committee, I would work to promote new membership development, particularly in the international community, and among students, particularly undergraduates. Within the membership, I would address the need to promote women as leaders in the division. I would also strive to continue

past efforts at improving communication within the Division, and take an active role in increasing our scholarly and public policy activities with other divisions, particularly the Society for the Psychology of Women (35) and continuing the fruitful collaboration with Child, Youth, and Family Services (37). I have benefited from SCRA membership as a student and scholar, and believe that I am able to give back to the organization through service as an officer.



CANDIDATE FOR SECRETARY

Colleen Loomis, Ph.D.

The Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) plays an important part of my life as a community psychologist. I joined SCRA the summer of 1995, attending my first SCRA biennial conference, before I began my graduate education at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC). This experience was formative. I met many students and faculty and was impressed with the people, places, and ideas represented. My involvement in SCRA ranges from membership, to conference presentations, committee work, and contributions to *The Community Psychologist*. These experiences provide a foundation for ongoing work in our organization. My training in both qualitative and quantitative research methods has provided numerous opportunities for note taking and report writing, which are necessary skills for secretary. Positions held in other organizations also prepared me to serve as your secretary: Literacy Council of Montgomery County (1997-1998) (Secretary) and UMBC Graduate Student Association Senate (1995-1997, 2001). During six years of graduate school and two years of postdoc experience the Society served me. Now it is my turn to serve SCRA.

SCRA Involvement

Member since 1995
 Attended and presented at every biennial since 1995
 Associate Editor, *American Journal of Community Psychology*, since 1997
 Member of 6th Biennial Conference Planning Committee, 1997
 Mentor at the biennial conference, 2003

Educational Background

B.A., University of Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA, Psychology
 M.A., University of Maryland Baltimore County, USA
 Human Services Psychology - Community-Social Program
 Ph.D., University of Maryland Baltimore County, USA
 Human Services Psychology - Community-Social Program

Current Position

Assistant Professor of Psychology, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada (I teach undergraduate and graduate (M.A. and Ph.D.) courses in Community Psychology as well as undergraduate courses in Educational Psychology and Psychology of Women.)

Recent Publications

Loomis, C. (accepted, November 8, 2003). Understanding and Experiencing Class Privilege in Psychological Research. In S. K. Anderson & V. A. Middleton (Eds.), *Explorations in oppression, diversity and privilege*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Co: New York.

Loomis, C. & Humphreys, K. (accepted, September 8, 2003). Mutual help organizations for distressed children and their families: A Vygotskian developmental perspective. In H. Steiner (Ed.), *Handbook of mental health interventions in children and adolescents: An integrated developmental approach*. Wiley: New York.

Loomis, C. (in press). Commentary on the chapter "Gender, Power and Community Psychology." In G. Nelson & I. Prilleltensky (Eds.), *Community psychology: In pursuit of liberation and well-being*. MacMillan: London.

Loomis, C., Brodsky, A. E., Arteaga, S., Benhorin, R., Rogers-Senuta, K., Marx, C., & McLaughlin, P. (in press). What works in adult educational and employment training? Case study of a community-based program for women. *Journal of Community Practice*.

Loomis, C., Dockett, K. H., & Brodsky, A. E. (2004). Change in sense of community: An empirical finding. *Journal of Community Psychology*.

Loomis, C. (2003). Review of community psychology: Linking individuals and communities. *The Community Psychologist*, 36, 17-19.

Mitchell, S., & Loomis, C. (2000). Faculty-Graduate student mentoring: A community psychology perspective. *The Community Psychologist*, 33, 19-20.

Loomis, C. (1998). Creating an apprenticeship: An alternative to "surviving" graduate school. *The Community Psychologist*, 31, 29-30.



CANDIDATE FOR REGIONAL NETWORK COORDINATOR

Gary W. Harper

Education:

1995, Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, University of California, San Francisco, CA
 1994, M.P.H. in Epidemiology, University of California, Berkeley, CA
 1993, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
 1989, M.S. in Psychology, Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN
 1985, B.A. in Biology and Psychology, Washington University, St. Louis, MO

Current Positions:

Associate Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, DePaul University, Chicago, IL
 Program Director, Community-Clinical Doctoral Training Program
 Co-Director, Center for Community and Organization Development, DePaul University

SCRA/APA Involvement:

SCRA Midwest Regional Coordinator (1997-1999)
 Program Chair for the Annual Affiliated Meeting of SCRA at the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference (1998)

Founding Chair, Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) Special Interest Group (1998-2000)
Co-Editor, LGBT Column in *The Community Psychologist* (1999-present)
SCRA Diversity Visibility Task Force (2000-2002)
SCRA National Conference Planning Committee for Atlanta Biennial (2000-2001)
Chair, APA's Committee on Psychology and AIDS (2001-2002)
Member, APA's Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Concerns (2003-present)

Recent Awards/Honors:

- Psychology and AIDS Leadership Award, APA Office on AIDS (2003)
- Fellow, SCRA and APA (elected 2002)
- Ethnic Minority Mentorship Award, Society for Community Research and Action (2000)
- Illinois Psychological Association's Humanitarian Award (2000)
- Excellence in Teaching Award, DePaul University (1999)
- Excellence in Public Service Award, DePaul University (1998)

Selected Recent Publications:

- Harper, G. W. (in press). A journey toward liberation: Confronting heterosexism and the oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people. In G. Nelson & I. Prilleltensky (Eds). *Community psychology: In pursuit of wellness and liberation*. London: MacMillan.
- Harper, G. W., Bangi, A. K., Contreras, R., Pedraza, A., Tolliver, M., & Vess, L. (in press). Diverse phases of collaboration: Working together to improve community-based HIV interventions for youth. *American Journal of Community Psychology*.
- Harper, G, Contreras, R., Bangi, A., & Pedraza, A. (2003). Collaborative process evaluation: Enhancing community relevance and cultural appropriateness in HIV prevention. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community*, 26(2), 53-71.
- Harper, G. W., & Schneider, M. (2003). Oppression and discrimination among lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people and communities: A challenge for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31 (3-4), 243-252.
- Harper, G. W., Lardon, C., Rappaport, J., Bangi, A. K., Contreras, R., & Pedraza, A. (2003). Community narratives: The use of narrative ethnography in participatory community research. In L. Jason, C. Keys, Y. Suarez-Balcazar, R.R. Taylor, M. Davis, J. Durlak, & D. Isenberg (Eds). *Participatory Community Research: Theories and Methods in Action* (pp. 199-218). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Harper, G. W., Hosek, S. G., Contreras, R., & Doll, M. (2003). Psychosocial factors impacting adolescent condom use: A review and theoretical integration. *Journal of HIV/AIDS Prevention & Education for Children & Adolescents*, 5(3/4), 33-69.
- Suarez-Balcazar, Y., & Harper, G. W. (Eds) (in press). *Empowerment and Participatory Evaluation in Community Intervention: Multiple Benefits*. Binghamton, NY: The Haworth Press, Inc.

Statement:

I am honored to be nominated for the position of SCRA Regional Network Coordinator, and would consider it a privilege to serve the society in this capacity. In this position I would strive to increase the visibility of SCRA and the field of Community Psychology by educating psychologists and other professionals/students in allied fields about the work of our society through the coordinated activities of the Regional Coordinators. The system of Regional Coordinators allows the society to create and implement programs in the various regions that respond to the needs of the specific geographic areas. As the Regional Network Coordinator I would work to increase communication and contact between the Regional Coordinators in order to share ideas for programs and activities that have been effective within the various regions. Through coordinated regional efforts, it is my hope that the Regional Coordinators and I can increase the number of professionals and students who become involved in SCRA-related activities and ultimately increase the membership and strength of the society.

I have been dedicated to the field of Community Psychology and SCRA for several years, and have taken an active approach to positively impacting the society. During my tenure as the SCRA Midwest Regional Coordinator from 1997-1999, I worked to increase the visibility of SCRA in the Midwest Region and doubled the number of sessions conducted at the Annual Affiliated Meeting of SCRA at the Midwestern Psychological Association Conference. In 1998 I worked with Marg Schneider to establish the first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) interest group within SCRA as well as the first LGBT column in *The Community Psychologist* (which I still co-edit). Marg and I co-edited a special section of *The Community Psychologist* on LGBT interventions in the community in 1999, as well as the first special issue of *American Journal of Community Psychology* on LGBT theory, research, and practice (published in 2003). I also recently completed what I believe will be the first full-length chapter in a Community Psychology textbook that is specifically focused on heterosexism and the oppression of LGBT people. I promise to take this same passion and activism that I have used to bring focus and attention to the issues that impact LGBT people to my role as Regional Network Coordinator.

As a member of the executive committee, I would encourage my fellow committee members to continually examine our actions to assure that we are inclusive of all forms of human diversity and to strive to break down barriers that may exist between "academic" Community Psychology and applied community work. I will also work to assure that student voices are heard in SCRA executive matters, since students often feel disempowered in academic-related activities and have much to contribute to the society. As an executive committee member, I also hope to find ways to include community members in more SCRA-related activities, especially those people who are conducting front line work in small non-profit agencies that typically do not have access to academic societies and resources.

In much of my research and action work, as well as in my training of students, I strive to build partnerships with community agencies in order to work in a collaborative manner that is beneficial to all parties involved. I hope to bring this collaborative spirit and inclusion of non-academic community interventionists and activists to the executive committee by finding ways to integrate such individuals into the work that we do as a society. Even though I am in a "traditional" academic position, I still

continue to work actively with small community-based non-profit agencies in Chicago and elsewhere. My interactions in the community constantly remind me that even though academics and communities may have similar goals and visions for social change, there are often differences with regard to organizational structure and culture that can impede true collaborative relationships. My past activities show a commitment to including community members in academic arenas. I was able to incorporate community members in an academic conference when I organized the Annual Affiliated Meeting of SCRA at the MPA Conference, and worked with Alicia Lucksted and others to do the same during town hall meetings at the last two Biennial conferences where we invited members of several LGBT-related community organizations to interact with members of SCRA. As Regional Network Coordinator, I hope to work with the executive committee to break down some of the barriers that have prohibited inclusion of more community members in the work of SCRA.

I hope that this brief overview has been helpful in helping the membership to understand some of my thoughts regarding general issues that I would like to see addressed if I am elected. My involvement in SCRA and in APA governance (I am a former member and past-chair of the Committee on Psychology and AIDS and a current member of the Committee of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns) has given me an understanding of how both our society and the larger APA work from an organizational perspective. If elected, I will do my best to fulfill my responsibilities as Regional Network Coordinator, and will seek to increase the visibility and membership of SCRA through increased regional programming. In addition, as a member of the executive committee, I will be a voice for those who are often not heard. Thank you for your time.



**CANDIDATE FOR REGIONAL
NETWORK COORDINATOR**
Eric Mankowski

Current Position: Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Portland State University

Education: Ph.D., Personality and Social Ecology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1997);
B.S., Psychology, University of Washington (1989)

SCRA Involvement:

- *Chair*, Committee on Interdisciplinary Linkages, 2003 - present
- *Chair*, Self-Help and Mutual Aid Interest Group, 2001-2003
- *Western Regional Coordinator*, 2000-present
- *Proposal Reviewer*, SCRA Biennial Conference, 2000, 2002
- *Ad hoc reviewer*, AJCP, 1997-present
- *Member*, Conference Planning Committee, Midwest Ecological/Community Psychology Conference, 1993, 1996
- *Participant* in 6 of the past 7 Biennial Conferences and presented at 5

Recent Work:

Stein, C.H., & Mankowski, E.S. (in press). Asking, witnessing, interpreting, and knowing: The process of conducting qualitative research in community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology*.

Mankowski, E.S., Haaken, J., & Silvergleid, C. (2002). Collateral damage: An analysis of the achievements and unintended consequences of batterer's intervention programs and discourse. *Journal of Family Violence*, *17*, 167-184.

Mankowski, E.S., & Humphreys, K., & Moos, R. (2001). Individual and contextual predictors of involvement in twelve-step self-help groups following substance abuse treatment. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *29*, 537-563.

Mankowski, E.S., Maton, K.I., Burke, C.K., Hoover, S.A., & Anderson, C.W. (2000). Collaborative research with a men's organization: Psychological impact, group functioning, and organizational growth. In E. Barton (Ed.), *Mythopoetic perspectives of men's healing work: An anthology for therapists and others* (pp. 183-203). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Mankowski, E.S., & Rappaport, J. (Eds.) [special issue] (2000). Qualitative research on narratives of spiritually-based communities. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *28*.

Mankowski, E.S., & Silvergleid, C. (1999-2000). A review of self-help and mutual support groups for men. *International Journal of Self Help and Self Care*, *1*(3), 281-299.

Personal Statement

When I talk with students about their interest in psychology, a common theme is their strong desire to use their skills in applied and community-based settings to address social problems. Despite this interest, relatively few seem aware of the field of community psychology or SCRA and the support, belonging and identity that the organization can offer. Backing this perception up, my informal survey of recent introductory psychology textbooks shows that community psychology is rarely represented in their pages. Community psychology is often invisible to undergraduate students. Yet, when I am able to talk with them at conferences or during advising sessions about the field and about SCRA, or when they attend a conference presentation by community psychologists, they often voice strong interest and regret not having known about the field. These repeated experiences motivate my interest to serve as SCRA Regional Network Coordinator.

As Coordinator my main concerns would be for developing new SCRA membership and also encouraging communication and interaction among existing members. Two actions I would pursue to address these concerns are: 1). establishing a listserv to facilitate communication and engagement among regional coordinators, and, 2). encouraging regional coordinators to conduct biennial needs assessment surveys of members in their region. The regional coordinator listserv would improve how coordinators exchange ideas, understand and respond to membership concerns, and report their activities. Currently, *The Community Psychologist* (TCP) and the Biennial and APA conferences are the main vehicles through which regional coordinators communicate. Many regional coordinators are not able to attend these meetings and consequently communication and engagement suffers. Relative to TCP and the informal conference meetings, a listserv would provide more immediate, accessible, and personal contact among coordinators. Learning in this way about the activities in other regions, coordinators might have a greater sense of purpose and belonging, thus becoming more energized in their local efforts. Biennial needs assessments would also improve how coordinators identify local concerns and encourage regular contact and communication between individual members and coordinators.

These ideas stem from my experience serving as an SCRA Western Regional Coordinator for the past 3 years. In this role, I have worked to identify and assess the needs and concerns of regional members, to develop programs, activities, and resources that address these needs and concerns, and to introduce students to the field of community psychology. Specifically, this work has involved:

- Conducting a needs assessment survey for all Western regional members
- Disseminating findings from the needs assessment at conferences and meetings
- Organizing an annual program (for 4 consecutive years) of scholarly presentations (i.e., symposia, keynote address) and social meetings in conjunction with the Western Psychological Association (WPA) for regional community psychologists, based on the findings of the needs assessment

The meetings have introduced dozens of new students to the field, some of whom have become student members of SCRA, and given an opportunity for current Western Regional SCRA members to connect and support each other in their work. Because the Western Region is geographically large and because community psychology didn't develop originally in the West, members commonly experience some isolation from colleagues. Creating an annual, centralized meeting was identified in the needs assessment as the best way to facilitate increased involvement and communication through SCRA.

The work I have done in two other roles within SCRA also demonstrates my experience using these and related ideas to develop local and regional networks of community psychologists. As Chair of the Self-help and Mutual Aid Interest Group, I contacted all members of the Interest Group to update the membership directory for the first time in 4 years and disseminated the directory to all members. Previously, as a member of the graduate student committee that hosted the 1993 and 1996 Midwest Ecological/Community Psychology Conferences, I recruited conference speakers, organized presentation sessions, and managed the site arrangements. I also started a listserv for students' issues and communication needs in the region. The listserv helped support Eco-Community conference organizers' needs for better communication during the planning process and streamlined the submission and review of conference proposals.

More recently, I have been working within SCRA as part of a new committee on Interdisciplinary Linkages that is working to foster multidisciplinary research and action among community psychologists. Another way to foster SCRA membership development and engagement is to encourage regional coordinators to consider ways in which their local activities could be integrated with those of others in related disciplines. For example, community psychologists might find new colleagues and opportunities and support through increased collaboration with local university and community-based sociologists, anthropologists, social workers, public health workers, political scientists, artists or educators, especially in geographically large regions.

I am honored to be nominated for Regional Network Coordinator and if elected would be dedicated working collaboratively with regional coordinators to develop new avenues of communication and interaction, and to increase SCRA membership through promoting regional outreach activities, particularly those that connect us with colleagues in related disciplines and settings.



Announcements

Nominations Sought for the Chair of SCRA's Publications Committee

We are seeking someone to serve in this 3-year position, beginning in August, 2004. The Publications Committee's job is to identify, encourage, implement, and oversee effective ways of disseminating information about community research and action; to oversee the society's publications (TCP and AJCP); and to initiate other projects such as book or monograph series, video tapes, electronic networks, textbooks, and publication of intervention materials. Send nominations to Paul Toro, SCRA President, Dept. of Psychology, Wayne State University, 71 W. Warren, Detroit, MI 48202 (e-mail paul.toro@wayne.edu). Self-nominations are welcome.



Exemplars of Community Psychology

SCRA announces the availability of this 2-DVD set of interviews with 17 "founders" of the field of community psychology (many purchased them at the New Mexico Biennial, when they first became available). James G. Kelly, himself one of the "founders," has worked on this project over the past 7 years. The DVDs, consisting of three and a half hours of material, include interviews with: Jack Glidewell, George Fairweather, Emory Cowen, George Albee, Marie Jahoda, Steve Goldston, Bob Newbrough, Seymour Sarason, Murray Levine, Will Edgerton, Rudy Moos, Jim Kelly, Don Klein, Stan Schneider, Ira Iscoe, a feminist panel including Stephanie Riger, and others. Persons can purchase the DVDs (\$50 per set, plus \$10 shipping and handling) from: SCRA Membership Services, 1800 Canyon Park Circle, Building 4, Suite 403, Edmond, OK 73103. All proceeds from the sale of the DVDs will go to SCRA.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: STUDENT RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR AY 2003-2004

The SCRA Student Research Grant is presented by the Society for Community Research and Action to supplement the financial needs of students' independent research projects. The goal of the SCRA Student Research Grant is to provide pre-dissertation level students an opportunity to devote themselves to a period of intensive research without additional employment obligations. The Award is competitive and is given on the basis of the quality of a student's grant application. It is anticipated that 1 award will be made for AY 2003-2004. Deadlines for applications are **June 1, 2004**. Applications will be reviewed and decisions regarding award disbursement will be made by the Student Research Grant Committee by August 31, 2004.

Terms of the Award:

Recipients of the SCRA Student Research Grant will receive a stipend of \$500.00 for one year. The funds will be disbursed upon notification of the award. The grantee will submit a report detailing progress on the research project and justification and proof of appropriate use of funds to the SCRA Student Research Grant committee.

Eligibility:

To be eligible for the SCRA student research grant, you must be:

- A. a graduate student or apprentice within a non-academic setting that has not obtained doctoral candidate status within their program
- B. a member of SCRA
- C. in the planning or pilot stages of the research project for which you are seeking funds (i.e., this award is not for projects that have been completed prior to RFP)
- D. advised by a faculty member or professional supervisor who is a SCRA member

Grant Review Criterion:

Grant proposals will be reviewed and judged by a committee, overseen by a member of the executive committee, which is comprised of: the two current student representatives, one past student representative, and 1-2 student members of SCRA, using the following criteria: 1) relevance to community psychological theory and concepts; 2) extent to which it fulfills research in one of the areas listed below; 3) clarity of writing; and 4) feasibility of project completion.

Relevance to Community Psychology. The grant proposal's relevance to the theoretical perspectives, goals, or concepts prevalent in community psychology will be weighted most heavily in award disbursement decisions. The proposal must clearly reflect how the research utilizes, contributes to, or expands on existing community psychological principles. Applicants should demonstrate their knowledge of community psychology principles and ability to implement sound research based on existing theories.

Proposed Research Focus. The extent to which the proposal meets the specific criteria/research areas listed below will be evaluated. These research foci were chosen because one of the primary goals of this grant program is to encourage more researchers to pursue those areas of research that have been understudied or under-focused within community psychology but have been highlighted as relevant and critical aspects of the field. The areas of research are chosen each year by the student representatives. Proposals that do not fit into one of the three specific criteria defined above will not be eligible for an award, and thus will not be considered.

AY 2003-2004 Research areas:

- Public policy

This area of inquiry includes projects focused on the application of research methods to the analysis of health or social policy issues. This area of research may also include projects designed to document or evaluate the implementation of city, state, and national policies.

- Under-studied populations in community psychology

Although our discipline has done a good job at reversing a historical tendency of ignoring "minority" populations and

historically oppressed groups, certain groups remain largely unattended to. These groups include gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) people, the elderly, immigrants, and refugees. This area of inquiry therefore includes action and research projects that concern themselves with the experiences, development, and/or actions of groups that Community Psychology needs to pay more heed to.

- Sociopolitical development

This area of inquiry includes multiple approaches to examining or affecting individuals' or groups' *sociopolitical development (SPD)* and individual and collective understandings of, and/or responses to oppressive or unjust conditions. SPD is a psychological process that covers the range of cognitions, skills, attitudes, worldviews, and emotions that support social and political action in its many forms. the effects of oppressive social systems on individuals and communities as well as the perpetuation of oppressive structures by individuals and communities.

Clarity of Writing. Weight will be given to the clarity of writing evident in the proposal. The grant submission process provides an opportunity for students to prepare for writing other competitive grants, scholarships, and fellowships offered by other institutions (both private and public). Thus, applications will be judged on the brevity and clarity of the proposal.

Grant Proposal Sections

We are requiring applicants to submit an approximately *10 to 15-page* grant proposal in order to be considered for funding. The proposal should be comprised of four main sections: 1) a brief literature review, 2) a methodology section, 3) a proposed plan for analyses, and 4) a budget. Incomplete grant proposals will not be reviewed. Please submit 5 copies of the application.

Literature Review. The literature review should be a brief *one to two pages* in which the applicant provides background information on the problem and sufficient justification for the proposed study. The literature review also must contain the specific research questions, and, if appropriate, hypotheses under examination in the current proposal. Literature reviews will be judged on the extent to which the applicant successfully conveys the need for the current research, and its' role in addressing a problem identified in the literature or community in which the research will be conducted.

Methodology. The methods section of the grant proposal should be a detailed, *six to seven pages* component in which the applicant describes in detail how the proposed study or project will be conducted. Characteristics of the intended target group/ participants should be fully described. Additionally, applicants should address how participants will be recruited for the project and what they will be asked to complete as part of the project. Any sample measures, if available, should be attached as appendices. Consent, assurance of confidentiality and debriefing procedures must be addressed as well. Finally, the study design should be discussed, including resources utilized. If the applicant will be collaborating with any other facility or program, a letter of collaborative intent from a representative of that facility or program should be attached as an appendix. Applicants are also encouraged, but not required, to conduct a power analyses when determining the number of participants needed, and to provide information on this analyses in the methodology section of the application. Methodology sections will be judged on their scientific merit as well as their demonstration of the applicant's ability to initiate and

conduct the research. Funding for grants will be contingent upon proof of local Institutional Review Board approval.

Analytical Plan. The grant application must include a *two to three page* proposed plan for analyses. In this section, the applicant should address how program or study effects will be tested. This entails addressing each research question or hypothesis, and discussing a respective analysis procedure. Analytical sections will be judged on the applicants' ability to evaluate her or his hypotheses with appropriate techniques. Statistical or qualitative procedures must be detailed and justified. However, applicants who wish to apply but whose grant application requires highly specialized, new, or relatively little-used techniques are encouraged to seek out individuals (such as statisticians, professors, or other mentors) to collaborate with on analyses; if an applicant desires to do this, it should be mentioned in the grant application.

Budget. The grant application must include a budget for the entire research project. This section should include all expected costs and additional sources of funding. Applicants must indicate which expenses they intend to cover with the SCRA student research grant if they are awarded. This section may be formatted in a table or standard text.

Feasibility of Project Completion. Applicants must demonstrate that the funded portion of the research project can be completed within one year of receiving the grant. A proposed timeline must be submitted with the application.

Status of Human Subjects Review Process. If the applicant is housed in a university or college setting, a statement regarding the status of the project's human subjects review/institutional review board process must accompany the application. If human subjects/institutional review board approval has been received for the proposed project, letters stating approval should accompany the application. Although human subjects/institutional review board approval is not necessary prior to submitting a grant application, if the applicant is housed in a university or college, proof of approval by a human subjects/institutional review board is required before awards will be disbursed.

Supporting Documentation

In addition to the above proposal, the following supporting documents must accompany the grant application:

- An abstract of 100 words or less summarizing the proposed research
- A cover sheet stating the title of the proposal, name of the investigator/grant applicant, and applicants' mailing address, phone number, fax number, and email address.
- A letter of support from the departmental chair, or mentor if from a non-academic setting, verifying that the applicant has not yet advanced to candidacy
- A letter of recommendation from a faculty member or academic or professional supervisor who is a member of SCRA

Complete grant applications must be received by June 1, 2004.

Please mail complete applications to:

Sawssan R. Ahmed M.A.
Department of Psychology
Wayne State University
Detroit, MI 48202



Call for Grant Reviewers 2004 SCRA Student Research Grant

We are seeking three student members of SCRA to serve on the grant review board for the SCRA student research grant. The SCRA student research grant is presented by the Society for Community Research and Action to supplement the financial needs of students' independent research projects. The goal of the SCRA Student Research Grant is to provide pre-dissertation level students an opportunity to devote themselves to a period of intensive research without additional employment obligations. Students serving as grant reviewers will be asked to review grants during the months of May to June, 2004 (with an award deadline of June 31, 2004).

Criteria for Becoming a Student Grant Reviewer.

The following criteria must be met in order for a student to be eligible to become a student grant reviewer:

- Must be a student member of SCRA
- Must have obtained a Master's degree, or have completed two years' worth of graduate work, by April, 2004
- Must be available to review grant applications during the period of April to June, 2004

To Submit an Application to Become a Student Grant Reviewer.

Application packets for becoming a student grant reviewer should contain 3 copies of each of the following:

- A cover page stating the applicant's name, mailing address, phone number, fax number, and email address
- A letter of support from the applicant's academic mentor, department chair, or supervisor (if housed in a non-academic setting) stating the applicant's standing in their university, college, or apprenticeship
- A one-page statement of interest

Please send grant reviewer applications by **April 1, 2004** to:

Omar Guessous
Dept. of Psychology, MSC 2A1155
33 Gilmer, Unit 2
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303-3082

Applications for grant reviewers will be reviewed by a committee comprised of: the two current SCRA student representatives, one past SCRA student representative, and one other member of the executive committee. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by **May 1, 2004**.



Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association

Honolulu, Hawaii
July 28th – August 1st, 2004

1. Contact Information

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City *State* *Zip* *Country*

Daytime Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

2. Are you a SCRA student member? Yes No

3. Presentation Information

Type of Presentation: Poster Symposium Roundtable Other _____

Title of Presentation: _____

Are you participating in more than one presentation? Yes No

If so, please list the name(s) of the first author(s):

4. Please include a brief description (no more than 300 words) of how your proposal meets the criteria for this award (i.e., quality of the proposal, relevance of the proposal to community psychology interests, distance traveled, etc.).

5. Please attach your Curriculum Vitae and a copy of your acceptance letter(s).

If you have any questions, please contact Omar Guessous at oguessous@comcast.net

Send completed applications to: oguessous@comcast.net
Alternatively, you can submit your application via postal mail to:

Omar Guessous
Dept. of Psychology, MSC 2A1155
33 Gilmer, Unit 2
Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA 30303-3082

Applications must be received by **May 1st, 2004**

Decisions will be announced by May 15th