



4th International Conference on Sociology and Social Work

Presentation Abstracts

(Alphabetical by last name of Presenter 1)

Collaborative Research Possibilities: The Computers for Families Program

Presenter:

Juan Carlos Araque, PhD
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenters:

Paul Maiden, PhD

Chris Floyd

Ingrid Estrada

Abstract:

The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate the benefits of establishing collaborations between schools of social work and local non-profit organizations in researching the effectiveness of community programs. The Computers for Families research project focused on participants (1) general computer usage, access and knowledge; (2) employment; (3) education; and (4) their children's-computer access, usage and academic performance. The study examined the effects of home computer access on low-income families living in public housing. The study methodology consisted of a quasi-experimental design using qualitative and quantitative approaches, including focus groups, pre-tests and post-tests, and self-reported surveys with experimental and control groups. Statistically significant findings suggest that participants in the Computers for Families program were more likely than nonparticipants to have access to the Internet from home, use a computer for more than one hour per day, complete online job applications, and submit job applications and resumes electronically.

Reducing Unintended Pregnancies among Homeless Youth: Exploring and Advocating for Evidence-Based Policies and Interventions

Presenter:

Stephanie Begun, MSW

Doctoral Student

University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work

Abstract:

Homeless youth face some of the very highest risks for unintended pregnancies, a phenomenon that is associated with additional concerns, such as maternal-child health outcomes and longer-term experiences of economic, health, and education-related disadvantages. Approximately 1.6 million youth are homeless in the United States, and pregnancy rates among homeless youth have been shown to be up to five times higher when compared to their housed peers. National and regional studies have displayed that up to 60% of female homeless youth have reported past or current pregnancies, and 73% of pregnancies to homeless youth are unintended at the time of conception. Policies, such as the Personal Responsibility Education Program's (PREP) Innovative Strategies competitive grant program, have been adopted to explore how existing evidence-based approaches may be used to ameliorate the problem of unintended pregnancies among various groups of high-risk youth. To date, however, no PREP competitive grantee programs have been adopted specifically for use within homeless youth populations. This paper examines how social workers and other individuals involved in the policy-making process may work to further optimize policies such as PREP to ensure that the sexual health and prevention needs of this particularly vulnerable population are better met.

Examining Ambivalent Sexism's Relationship to Abortion Attitudes: Implications for Social Work Practice, Research, and Policy Advocacy

Presenter:

Stephanie Begun, MSW

Doctoral Student

University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work

Abstract:

Myriad viewpoints exist across the spectrum of attitudes toward women as well as abortion. Ambivalent sexism theory provides a framework for evaluating the complex nuances of sexism, which is comprised of old-fashioned, or hostile forms of sexism, and also modern, benevolent forms. Few studies have examined potential relationships between ambivalent sexism and abortion attitudes. This study aims to explore the research questions: 1) do higher endorsements of sexist beliefs relate to higher levels of anti-choice attitudes, 2) are there differences between how hostile and benevolent forms of sexism are associated with abortion attitudes, and 3) what implications do these findings have regarding policy and social work practice? Secondary data analysis examined data collected from a webbased survey of undergraduate students (N=626) from six U.S. colleges and universities. Participants answered demographic and attitudinal questions, in addition to the 22-item Ambivalent Sexism Inventory and questions on abortion attitudes. Findings supported preliminary hypotheses that as individuals increasingly endorse sexist ideals, they tend to also increasingly endorse anti-choice attitudes. Statistically significant relationships were found between both hostile and benevolent sexism subdomains and anti-choice attitudes, suggesting that sexism, whether justified through old-fashioned, hostile rhetoric or through a "kinder, more gentler," benevolent rhetoric, continues to play an important role in opposing abortion rights for women.

Long- term multi-problem-families and their struggle with social services: professionals' perceptions of this phenomenon

Presenter:

Elisabeth Berger

PhD Student

Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

Abstract:

This paper aims to present the professionals' perceptions of the phenomenon of long- term multi-problem families and their long- term assistance in public social services. Throughout the history of the Italian Welfare State long- term assistance of families by social services has always existed. Nonetheless, nowadays as social structures are changing and resources are decreasing, the phenomenon becomes an important issue within an often one-sided public debate: families who are struggling with multiple problems are frequently seen as responsible themselves for their difficult life situations. Concurrently, strengths of families and structural, socio- political and organisational factors deteriorating life situations of highly stressed families remain often not perceived. In times of increasing demand of efficiency and efficacy, long- term- interventions with multi- problem families are seen as a great challenge for social workers. This ongoing dissertation project focuses on analyzing the structural and political context which is the framework of social work practice applying a 'multi- strategy- approach'.

Futile Knowledge: The Disconnect between Evidence-based Research and Medicare Home Health Policy and Practice

Presenter:

William Cabin, PhD, JD, MSW, MPH
Adjunct Lecturer, University of Michigan School of Social Work
Visiting Professor, Skidmore College

Abstract:

There are no studies of nurse and social workers' knowledge of, attitudes toward, and use of evidence-based in specific practice settings. The presentation involves preliminary results of a study to determine social worker and nurse knowledge of, use of, and attitudes toward specific psychosocial evidence-based care interventions for persons with Alzheimer's disease receiving Medicare home health and their caregivers. The study is based on a mailed survey administered to home care social workers (n = 127) and home care nurses (n = 321) between October 2012 and May 2013. Preliminary results are:

- 92% of nurses and social workers combined had no knowledge of the two specific psychosocial interventions, with social workers' lack of knowledge being higher (98%);
- 98% of social workers and nurses combined have not used either of the two specified interventions in practice;
- 88% of social workers and 95% of nurses responded they were taught evidence-based practice (EBP) in their education;
- 100% of social workers and 92% of nurses responded that Medicare policy limited their ability to use evidence-based practices.

Analysing loneliness, internet use and ‘virtual communities’ among elders in Cheshire, North West England

Presenter:

Professor Malcolm Carey
University of Chester

Abstract:

As the proportion of older people increases extensive social isolation remains a growing concern. This problem relates to shrinking service provision within health and social care provisions in England and Wales alongside problems faced by policy makers and professionals in establishing efficacious means of intervening. Among others, factors contributing to isolation link to loss and bereavement, poor physical or mental health, communication difficulties, location and economic or political exclusion (Findlay, 2003; Phillipson, 2007). Traditional interventions regarded as beneficial include increasing exercise and improving diet, volunteering, day centre care and promoting access to services. Nevertheless among others, Bennett and Glasgow (2009) stress the increased use of internet platforms by oldest old adults in the Fourth Age to overcome loneliness; yet highlight the importance of understanding how users utilise this resource as well as for how long and to what end. They also note the limited qualitative evidence identifying the most effective long-term interventions which reduce social isolation among older people. Such details may help us to provide more sustainable technologies of care with which to better target finite health and social care resources.

Although online ‘virtual communities’ among elders have been criticised for lacking the perhaps more tangible bonds held within past collectives, other evidence highlights how internet use and social networking can spill into non-virtual spheres (Bennett and Glasgow, 2009). Such new social spaces may provide an important resource for new active age communities (Means and Evans, 2012), including at a time when older adults are ‘expected to generate identities from their own imaginative resources’ (Estes *et al*, 2003: 36).

This paper presents initial findings from an ongoing piece of case study research into internet use among elders over 70 living alone in a semi-rural setting. It draws from critical social gerontology and social work theory to:

- Evaluate the ways by which older people utilise and engage with internet platforms
- Explore the means and impact by which non-virtual contacts may form and develop among older people following their internet use
- Identify possible techniques and strategies that social care professionals might use to promote and support virtual networks of communal support to limit loneliness

Psychosocial oncology care in Romania: building professional capacities

Presenter:

Csaba L. Degi, MSW, PhD
Babeş-Bolyai University
Department of Social Work
Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract:

In Romania, the psychosocial care of cancer patients is not yet included in the National Cancer Plan. Moreover, there are no guidelines, published clinical guides, or any professional recommendations at the national level for the psychosocial care of cancer patients and there is no official certification for psychosocial oncology care and/or psychooncology. Now, the quality of life and distress experienced by the cancer patients are completely omitted from the standard cancer treatment plan. The present research project is a first assessment of the present situation regarding the unattended and unconsidered psychosocial necessities and needs within the oncological treatment in Romania, from the perspective of involved specialists. This research project uses a mixed methodological approach with a quantitative component (questionnaires) and a qualitative (in-depth interviews) alike. The questionnaire was applied in 2013 to a sample of 100 psychosocial professionals in Romania (Romanian and Hungarian professionals will be represented proportionally), out of which a total of 25-30 oncology professionals will be included in the heterogenic group of interviewees. Key data will be presented about the emerging needs of psychosocial professionals in cancer care in Romania. This work was supported by the Babeş-Bolyai University, grant number GTC 34020/2013.

Managing Risk through Sports Based Welfare Technologies

Presenter:

David Ekholm

PhD Student

Department of Social and Welfare Studies

Linköping University, Sweden

Abstract:

Sport based social interventions have become an emerging feature of late modern welfare provision. In this study the Sport program conducted by municipal authorities, local schools, sport clubs and a social entrepreneur in a Swedish local municipality applying sport as a response to social problems are analyzed. The aims of this paper are: (1) to examine how the construction of sport as a responding solution to social problems is enabled and (2) what political consequences the construction produces. Texts from interviews, political debates and documentation, social entrepreneur presentations and newspaper articles are analyzed from a discursive perspective. Preliminary analysis indicate that groups of claimed passive youth in disadvantaged urban areas are constructed as particularly exposed to risk of social exclusion and prone of criminal life-styles; and as a response, sport is represented to activate individuals at risk and empower them to choose the right track away from passivity and social exclusion and moreover to take on responsibility for their own life. Such discourse both enable sport as a problem solution and produce representations of individuals as responsible for their own welfare which also contributes to individualist understandings of the social problems at hand. This is discussed in terms of how late modern (neo-liberal) welfare agendas, emphasizing individual change and self-governance as general responses to social problems, operate in discourse and how such technologies in this case are deployed by social welfare institutions and embraced by politicians and entrepreneurial providers.

Families created in the institutional context of pre-adoption services

Presenter:

Pia K Eriksson

PhD Student

Department of Social Research

University of Helsinki

Abstract:

In Finland becoming a parent through adoption involves statutory pre-adoption services including the assessment of suitability and preparation for adoptive parenthood. The creation of a family through adoption takes place in the cutting point between public and private when a very personal and emotional process of becoming a parent is strictly regulated by law and guided by institutional practices. The setting of inter-country adoption and the pre-adoption services in the receiving country, hold many tensions on different levels. This presentation scrutinizes, from the point of view of the service user, the institutional context of pre-adoption assessment where the suitability for parenthood is evaluated in the interaction between the social worker and the prospective adoptive parent. In this interaction emotions on the individual level and power structures on the other hand are present and influence the experiences.

The empirical data used in the study consists of narrative interviews with former prospective adoptive parents who have gone through an adoption process that has ended either in the adoption of a child or a termination of the adoption process. Theoretical frameworks used are Layder's theory of social domains, Foucault's writings on power and Lazarus' cognitive-motivational-relational emotion theory.

What works? Three models of access to social services in comparison

Presenter:

Silvia Fargion
Free University of Bolzano

Co-Presenter(s):

Elisabeth Berger

Andrea Nagy

Abstract:

This paper aims to discuss an ongoing research project regarding the access to social services in South Tyrol/Italy. Social work literature shows that the way how people get in contact with social services has a huge significance and impact on the quality of social work interventions, on the use of resources and on how the rights of people are promoted and respected.

In Italy the Law 328/2000, which provides a political and organisational framework for the first contact between citizen and service, acknowledges information and first counselling as an essential service and respects and promotes the right of citizens to access those services as easy as possible. However, the implementation and operationalisation of the principles as outlined in the framework are left to the regional units of social service organisations, which led to several versions of citizen's service access. The research project aims at researching this variety. First results have shown that all 20 social service districts applied distinct criteria for the facilitation of access. On that basis the research team has selected three most distinct organisational modes of access and further researched and analysed those.

A mixed- strategy- approach was applied in order to depicture the complex situations and systems of citizen's first access. Whereas the value-based access model proofed to be outreaching, the organisationbased is strongly regulated, what helps the workers there to deal with ,risk', and the profession-based is high-threshold. Related ,cultures' or better ,climats' in the three involved social service districts, which proofed to be equally shaped by their specific histories as services as by the workers attitudes, support the respective access models.

We would like to offer a "work in progress" presentation on the three most distinct social service access models in South Tyrolean social services and ask: what works?

Understanding Non-Heterosexuality: The Application of Three Epistemological Frameworks

Presenter:

Richard A. Friedman, LCSW, LCAC

Doctoral Student

Indiana University School of Social Work

Abstract:

The myriad theories about sexuality and various frameworks through which sexuality can be understood may lead to confusion amongst professionals who engage with individuals that do not identify as heterosexual. Discursive shifts surrounding sexuality have raised questions regarding the epistemological frameworks that have constituted the traditional understandings of the process of sexual identity formation, with proponents of post-structuralist frameworks, such as queer theory, advocating for the displacement of traditional stage models of sexual identity development in favor of a conception of sexuality that is less heterosexist, less infused with hegemonic powers of normality and more encompassing of a wide variety of self-created identifications. At the same time, traditional models that suggest a normative, essentialist view of how an individual comes to understand and accept his or her sexual identity have maintained a strong presence, not only throughout the sociological, psychological, educational, medical and social work literature, but also in direct practice at the micro-, mezzo- and macro- levels. Through an evaluation of the core concepts of self and identity and how they interact within the boundaries between the individual, his or her family, his or her social environment and the larger politics of identity and self-definition, this paper explores how the sociological and social work professions can engage with the questions raised when these seemingly contradictory frameworks collide within research and practice. The historical roots of each of the frameworks are explored along with how they influence each other and in turn are influenced by each other. Finally, through an examination of a population whose sexual identity belies easy categorization, those who identify as “on the down-low,” consideration is given to what this dialectic means to sociologists and social workers, ultimately finding a middle ground within the theoretical frameworks of symbolic interactionism.

The concept of well-being in old age and the implications for social work practice

Presenter:

Dr. Stephen Gethin-Jones
University of Central Lancashire

Abstract:

The neo liberal Social work model of care provision within some European states has focused on the provision of tasks to ensure that an individual can live independently with a move toward a personalised model of care focused around market choice and consumer sovereignty. This paper reports on an alternative provision of care focused on a person centred approach. This model of care with older people has been termed within the United Kingdom as Outcome-focused care (Qureshi and Henwood, 2000 and Glendinning, 2008). A longitudinal study of this model of care has demonstrated that it has the ability to improve the subjective well-being of the older service user and their familial carers over and above the market orientated task model of domiciliary care. This study has also demonstrated that its use led to a reduction in hours used and was potentially cheaper than the existing market driven task model.

This study brought together the social science of subjective well-being (Diener, 1984) and demonstrated the effectiveness of using this concept to improve and become integrated into social work practice. This study also examined by the use of realistic evaluation (Pawson and Tilley, 2006; Kazi, 2003) the processes involved in the implementation of a social program from its inception to its eventual implementation and evaluation.

This study demonstrated the importance of the integration of wider social science concepts into social work practice, and its impact in development of effective community alternatives to the increasingly market driven model of social work provision.

**The Social Context of Depression Symptomology in Young Men who Have Sex with men:
Determinants of Depression in a sample of Geosocial networking application users**

Presenter:

Jeremy Gibbs, MSW
Ph.D. Student
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenter:

Eric Rice, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
USC School of Social Work

Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to understand which social context factors most impact depression symptomology among gay youth. In 2011, 195 young men who have sex with men and use Grindr, were recruited to complete an online survey in Los Angeles, California. Items focused on social context variables and depression symptomology. Hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted using an ecological framework. The best fitting model accounted for 29.5% of the variance in depression. Experiences of homophobia, gay community connection, presence of an objecting network member, and emotional support were found to be significant predictors. Past experiences of homophobia continuing to affect youth indicates the need for intervention at the school level to reduction of homophobia. Interventions that teach youth skills to deal with objecting viewpoints or help youth to reorganize their social networks may help to reduce the impact of an objecting network alter.

Familiarization of life course regimes in transforming welfare states- Understanding Foster Family Care in a new theoretic fame: Transdisciplinarity in Social Work Research

Presenter:

Dr. Monika Goetzoe
University of Applied Sciences
St. Gallen, Switzerland

Abstract:

The relations of welfare regimes and families are ambivalent. Though a historically grown complex interplay (Donzelot 1980, Rose 1999), families still are to be culturally categorized in terms of the private/public dichotomy as an intimate, nongovernmental form of *Vergemeinschaftung*. Researches and theoretic contributions on foster family care in Europe emphasize the need for a clear division of labour between professionals of social work or legal guardians and foster families to allow the unfolding of their potentials as implicit education in a private frame (i.e. Wolf 2013). Our just concluded research on potentials of foster family care offers a different interpretation of foster family care. With explicit view on sociological contributions as life course, we propose to analyze foster families as part of life course regimes (i.e. Walther/ Stauber 2013). Actions and interactions in everyday practices can though be interpreted as ambiguous interplay between the many involved persons. To discuss our standpoint in our contribution, we will look at the beginning and the end of a placement in terms of trajectories and transitions, shaped by the involved, and how their acting can be interpreted in terms of differentials of power. To understand foster family care in these terms brings the advantage to reflect upon currently enforced discourses in Europe on the significance of familial resources as precondition for education, employability and social mobility (i.e. Europe 2020, OECD job strategy 2006). The familialization of social integration (Rosenbauer 2013) is to be interpreted as sing of a transforming welfare state.

Integrated Care in Underserved Ethnic Communities

Presenter:

Benjamin Henwood, PhD, MSW
USC Social Work

Co-Presenter(s):

Samantha Hurst, PhD

Todd Gilmer, PhD

Abstract:

The LAC Department of Mental Health (DMH) is currently conducting a policy experiment to fund several models of integrated behavioral and physical health care. One model is designed specifically for underrepresented ethnic populations (UREP) by addressing the fragmentation inherent in the current public mental health system of care and by building on the strengths of a given community. This presentation will focus on the implementation and outcomes evaluation of the 14 programs targeting UREPs, specifically African/African American, American Indian/Native American, Asian and Pacific Islander, Eastern European/Middle Eastern, and Latino communities.

Experiences with the involvement of peer support specialists in Amsterdam

Co-Presenters:

Max Huber and Joep Holten
Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

Abstract:

The interest in the involvement of peer support specialists in the field of social work is rapidly growing in the Netherlands because the need for methods that stimulate more the empowerment of clients. In this research there is a first exploration of this involvement and how Dutch organizations are trying to facilitate this.

The main research question is in which way regular professionals, the peer support specialists and the organizations can function in a way that supports the involvement of specialist peer support? This is an important question for the Dutch social work because although the willingness to stimulate the involvement of peer support specialists is growing, still the most social work teams in the Netherlands work only with social work professionals, also the recovery model has relatively small influence in the common way Dutch social workers approach clients. To answer questions around this topic researchers of the Amsterdam University of Applied Social Sciences did several smaller and bigger researches the biggest social work organizations of Amsterdam. In total 4 organizations were intensively followed during the period of a year. The research gained a lot of positive attention in the Dutch welfare system and the results can stimulate a start for organizations to think about how they can professionalize the involvement of peer support specialist in the future.

Finding Empirical Correlates of Advocacy Engagement by Frontline Health Professionals in Acute-Care Hospitals

Presenter:

Bruce S. Jansson, Ph.D.
Driscoll/Clevenger Professor
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenters:

Lei Duan, Ph.D.
Gretchen Heidemann, Ph.D.

Abstract:

The Codes of Ethics of Social Work, Nurse, and Medical Professions and accreditation standards of the Joint Commission *require* professionals to engage in patient advocacy and policy advocacy. Millions of patients who possess unresolved problems might benefit from advocacy, including violation of their ethical rights as well as lack of quality care, culturally competent care, preventive care, affordable and accessible care, attention to mental distress, and care linked to their households and communities. Both qualitative and quantitative research indicates that many health professionals never or seldom provide advocacy at either patient or policy levels in contrast to other professionals who provide relatively high levels of advocacy.

Little research examines predictor variables and scales that might shed light on reasons why specific health professionals do or do not engage in advocacy. This pilot research project, funded by PCORI, has validated a Patient Advocacy Engagement Scale that measures the extent 300 frontline health workers (social workers, nurses, and medical residents) provide patient advocacy for patients for 33 specific problems in eight acute care hospitals in Los Angeles County. This presentation discusses empirical correlates of this advocacy engagement including the extent they report skills needed for patient advocacy, the extent are ethically committed to providing patient advocacy, and the extent they believe their professional peers provide patient advocacy. Implications for advocacy training in acute-care hospitals will be discussed.

A critical approach to study the consequences of active labor market interventions

Presenter:

Sophie Danneris Jensen, PhD

Fellow

Denmark, Aalborg University

Department of Sociology and Social Work

Abstract:

Among vulnerable cash benefit recipients, it is difficult to measure the short term employment outcomes of program interventions. Possible long term outcomes, such as employment or participation in education, are difficult to link causally to program interventions. For this group of clients these kinds of outcomes might not even be within reach. Thus we need different kinds of indicators to measure the outcomes of active labor market interventions on the most vulnerable clients. We need a different approach to analyze the more latent consequences of the activities, measures and interventions. This includes an approach to understand the professional work social workers do in their interaction with the clients on a daily basis. The main purpose of the PhD project is to study the consequences of active labor market programs and interventions for vulnerable cash benefit recipients in Denmark. The project is designed as a longitudinal case study. 30 clients are included in the study, and data is constructed over a two year period. Data is gathered using a multitude of qualitative methods such as observations, active interviews, and collecting case files. The starting point of the data collection is explorative. The aim is to study the clients' actions and resources and how it is expressed in their narratives. The qualitative data is supplemented by quantitative data on employment effects and data on selected indicators showing clients' progression on work readiness (eg. health, social competencies and network).

The Practices of Sexuality and Social Work: interactionist sociology and the question of diversity theory

Presenter:

Dharman Jeyasingham
Dept. of Sociology
Lancaster University, UK

Co-Presenter(s):

Dr. Stephen Hicks

Abstract:

This paper addresses the ‘grand challenge’ of diversity theory via a micro-sociology of sexuality and social work. Influenced by C. Wright Mills, feminist & queer sociologies, we argue that social work’s often abstract approach to sexuality has much to gain from engagement with an intellectual craft located in everyday practices. Much of the UK and USA-based social work literature and research on sexuality relies upon what is termed an “ethnic identity” model, in which social workers are required to understand the needs and culture of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender individuals. Based upon our research into the fields of lesbian, gay, and queer foster care and adoption, and ways of knowing sexuality in social work, we make an argument for a sociology of sexuality and social work, which draws upon interactionist and discursive traditions, and demonstrates how notions of sexual equity must be located within their local, interactional context if we are to engage social work with everyday sites of power. We examine two such sites: lesbian experiences of social work adoption assessment, and contemporary debates about localized, ‘street grooming’ of young people, to examine some of the current contradictions in dominant articulations of sexuality in social work, and to consider what insight a sociology of sexuality and social work offers.

Founding a Practice-Based Research Network: Empowering Mental Health Agencies to Address Health Care Integration Research

Presenter:

Erin Kelly, PhD
Postdoctoral Fellow, UCLA Semel Institute
Visiting Scholar, USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenters:

Rebecca Gaba, PhD
Holly Kiger, RN, MN
Laura Pancake, RN, LCSW
Lezlie Murch, MA
David Pilon, PhD
John Brekke, PhD

Abstract:

Background: Practice-based research networks (PBRNs) have become the vehicle for translational research within healthcare. A PBRN is composed of a group of community-based healthcare providers who collaborate with experienced researchers to identify study questions directly impacting their practice and to improve their quality of services. Surprisingly, only 7 of the 131 PBRNs in the US include mental health providers (McMillen et. al., 2009), and none have focused on services for persons with Severe Mental Illness (SMI). The Recovery Oriented Care Collaborative (ROCC), a PBRN focused on integration of health and mental health services for SMI consumers being served by four non-profit community mental health agencies in Los Angeles County, was developed to fill that gap. In this presentation we will describe how the ROCC project got started, lessons learned, results of the first research study, and next steps.

Method: The three phases of the project included establishing the ROCC, identifying research questions, and building awareness and sustainability of the ROCC. The ROCC utilized the *Reflective Practitioner* method to “generate, refine, select, and implement a research topic generated by community practitioners” (Knox & Lomonaco, 2005). Then the ROCC team designed and conducted a *card study* at the four agencies.

Results: The ROCC used a 12 question survey to collect data from 237 participants with SMI. Questions focused on the impact of the first 18 months of integrated health care services (i.e., mobile health units, Health Navigation, or coordinated care). Respondents reported substantial improvements in health (56%), reduced use of emergency rooms (70%), better access to health care (68%), and improved lifestyles (72%) since beginning integrated services.

Conclusion: A mental health based PBRN was successfully established that will seek NIMH funding to further research issues of concern to mental health agencies who provide integrated healthcare services and provide a linkage between evidence-based practice and practice-based evidence.

**Social Networks: A Mediator in the Association Between Incarceration and HIV Risk Behaviors
Among Homeless Women**

Presenter:

Liat S. Kriegel, MSW
Ph.D. Student
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenter:

Suzanne Wenzel, Ph.D.
Professor
USC School of Social Work

Abstract:

Background: There is a dearth of social network research to specifically understand homeless women's experiences with the criminal justice system. Research on women with histories of homelessness shows both higher rates of incarceration and higher rates of sexual risk behaviors associated with STI/HIV infection. In an effort to enhance approaches to risk reduction among homeless women, we ask whether history of incarceration may contribute to risk behaviors among women who are already vulnerable due to homelessness. Further, we explore whether social networks mediate the potential effect of incarceration on risk behaviors.

Method: Participants in this study were 445 homeless women who were randomly sampled in temporary shelter settings in Los Angeles County between June 2007 and March 2008. Women were asked whether they had ever been incarcerated in their lifetimes. Social network characteristics, which included number of network members who had risky sexual behaviors and number of network members who had ever been incarcerated, were included as mediators. Risk behaviors included having multiple sex partners in the previous 6 months and having need-based sex in the previous 6 months. Age, education, race, total months homeless and history of child abuse were also included as covariates. Correlations and regressions were run using STATA 12.0.

Results: Multivariate regressions showed that incarceration was significantly associated with number of alters who engaged in risky sex ($p < .05$) and number of alters who were ever incarcerated ($p < .01$). Likewise, logistic regressions showed that women with network members who engaged in risky sex were more likely to have multiple partners ($p < .01$) and more likely to engage in sex trade or need-based sex ($p < .01$).

Discussion: The analysis shows that incarceration predicts social networks that are in turn associated with risk behaviors. This enumerates a cycle among women that has previously only

been discussed conceptually. Though limited by the temporal structure of the data, associations between incarceration, social networks and risk behaviors suggest that incarceration has a potentially insidious impact on women's social networks. Social network interventions might then be a more appropriate means for addressing risk among women who have experienced the dual traumas of incarceration and homelessness.

Tracing Changes Through time: Implications of Qualitative Longitudinal Research for Policy and Practice in Social Work

Presenter:

Søren Kristiansen, PhD
Aalborg University

Abstract:

In Europe and in the US, it seems to be a general trend that policy decisions are made on the basis of quantitative research evidence. Likewise, reforms on social work practice are often based on evidence produced through large scale quantitative research. While quantitative research is helpful in a variety of ways in terms of providing evidence for policy and social work practice, the widespread preference for this type of evidence calls for considerations of the potential of qualitative research in context of evidence based practice, understandings of causality etc. On the basis of a qualitative longitudinal study of gambling among young people in Denmark, the paper addresses the question of the potentials of qualitative longitudinal research for policy and practice in social work. Employing dynamic and holistic approaches, and thus studying various factors that impact individual's lives in process, it is concluded that qualitative longitudinal research have strong potentials in terms of understanding how individual changes are produced over time and how myriads of factors interact in specific contexts to produce individual change.

Blame, culture and child protection: Notes from behind the scenes of a demonized profession

Presenter:

Dr. Jadwiga Leigh

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Health and Social Care

Edge Hill University

Abstract:

The social work profession in England faces persistent scrutiny and growing criticism in terms of its reputation and standing within society from agencies such as the media, the Government and public opinion. As a profession various academics have challenged some of the complex problems that arise from this censure. Yet it is also imperative that certain organisational issues are highlighted and made explicit in order for a serious public debate to take place in relation to blame and its effect on the identity of social workers.

This presentation will discuss data collected from a comparative ethnography which explored what being a professional in contemporary child protection actually meant to those who are working within this context. The epistemological perspective of social constructionism was used to underpin the study and post-structuralist theory was drawn from to unravel the meaning of identity and culture for social workers who worked in two dissimilar settings, England and Belgium.

The findings demonstrated that social workers in the England setting were firmly situated within an incongruent agency which was deeply entrenched in a context of blame. Subsequently, a blame posture had been established which encouraged various forms of destructive discourse to emerge. Practitioners found they were stigmatised and labelled as professional failures by both society and the agency they worked for. In Flanders, however, by drawing from a discourse which evoked compassion for abusers, professionals perceived themselves differently. As well as feeling confident and passionate about their practice they felt valued and revered by their agency and society.

This presentation will demonstrate how sociology and social work do not only interface with one another in the deliberation of serious professional issues but can also work together to improve organisational performance and service delivery for children and families.

USC Humanitarian Mission to the Philippines: Sustainable and Strength-based Approaches to Community Re-building Post Natural Disasters

Presenter:

Carrie Lew, EdD, LCSW
Assistant Dean of Professional Development
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenter(s):

Ernelyn Navarro, DM, LCSW, BCC
Manager of Community Outreach and Education
St. Joseph's Hospital

Abstract:

This presentation shares how an international disaster inspired a social work response that is centered on rebuilding stronger and laying down a foundation for sustainable, empowered recovery. The social work perspective moves beyond physical reparations of disaster relief and addresses issues of trauma, community building, child protection, and intergenerational needs. The USC School of Social Work Humanitarian Mission to the Philippines was developed in response to the devastation caused by Typhoon Haiyan. Also known as Typhoon Yolanda, it has been reported to be the second deadliest Philippine typhoon on record. According to the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council, over 2 million families were affected; over 8,000 are reported dead; and thousands still reported missing. The massive destruction brought on by this tragedy was unprecedented and the world has responded in different capacities. As a School of Social Work, this event presented a chance to contribute positively at the local, provincial and federal levels and subsequently to explore ways to develop and enrich student learning opportunities.

Employability and Readiness to Practice in Social Work

Presenter:

Arthur Limbach-Reich,
University of Luxembourg
Research Group INSIDE

Abstract:

Objective: To analyze higher education and professionalization in social work relating to employability (Smith, McKnight & Naylor 2000), requirements of the labor market, and employers' desires (Cremin 2009). Our research project aims for determining whether the new program on higher education in social work fits to the recent social challenges and how the program contributes to disciplinary development.

Context: 10 years after the creation of the European Higher Education Area, which adopted main features of the Anglo-Saxon system and particularly the employability approach (Teichler 2008), we take stock of the national reforms and changes in social work education in Luxembourg. Further more, as Wilson & Kelly (2010) pointed out evaluating the effectiveness of social work education has become a topic of major interest in many parts of Europe triggered by child-care tragedies, challenging public confidence in education and practice of social work.

Methods: Over ten years (2002-2012) annual alumni surveys with a total of 448 individuals deliver data about transition from university to labor market. A standardized questionnaire and selected interviews cover job search experiences, employment, and competencies perceived as essential to work. Questionnaires (40) completed by employers and focus groups provide data from services in the social sector. A review on job advertisements completed the analysis of requirements in social work. Finally a vignette study to compare competencies of practitioners and graduating students (N= 42) completed the research.

Results: Compared to the program prior to the Bologna process the new schedule of higher education in social work gains better scores. Students and employers agree in appreciation of reaching readiness to practice. The vignette study confirms similarity in responses of practitioners and graduates.

Conclusion: Despite of public concern about Bologna and social work education our results indicate the fit and success of the new higher education program in social work.

Family structure and health changes following widowhood among older Americans

Presenter:

Donald A. Lloyd, PhD.
Edward R. Roybal Institute on Aging
School of Social Work
University of Southern California

Abstract:

Among the grand challenges facing our society in the coming years is the need to protect the health of an aging population and extend the years of healthy functioning as our lifespans increase. This paper addresses the 4th International Conference on Sociology and Social Work subtheme of *interdisciplinary linkage to facilitate evidence-based practice*. Sociological studies of health and aging frequently invoke theories of stress and coping to explain health disparities and growing inequality over the life course. Evidence-based social work intervention to mitigate the deleterious effects of stressful events could draw on theory that is empirically supported in real-world situations. This study will test variations in family structure, including intergenerational coresidence, as a social contextual factor that can protect or exacerbate trajectories of functional limitation among older adults who lose their spouse through widowhood or divorce. For this study a subsample of 4300 aged 50 and older from the US Health and Retirement Survey was identified, who lost a spouse during the span of time they were followed longitudinally. The analysis employs a piecewise latent growth model across 8 waves (16 years) of data that captures abrupt change in growth trajectories of functional limitation. Hypotheses of family structure influence on trajectory change will be tested; the pre- and post-loss slopes are random variables, regressed on measures of family structure. Parallel trajectories of basic and instrumental activity limitations will be assessed. Preliminary analysis confirms a sample-wide average pattern of steepening trajectories of functional limitation following spouse loss; variation in the intercepts and slopes is associated with social factors.

Health Promotion as an action and research field for Social Work - Promoting Health Equity

Presenter:

Sigrid Mairhofer, MA, MSc

Social Worker

Free University of Bozen – Bolzano

Abstract:

The research project deals with the issue of health (in)equity in rural areas of European welfare states. The research focus is on discussing why Health Promotion is an action and research field of Social Work, explaining the connection between social and health inequalities and showing how we can promote health equity. Even though the number of publications on "Social Work and Health" rises continuously and Social Work has always been addressing issues of Public Health, the topic is not yet in the disciplinary self-understanding of Social Work. A holistic approach of the concepts of health, Health Promotion and health inequalities (WHO) leads to a socio-political debate about a fair distribution of health opportunities in welfare states. The discussion about health equity becomes a task for all policies (health in all policies). Health equity is not only equity in using health care services, but in opportunities, capabilities, basic goods and commons. Health Promotion cannot be only responsibility of the health care sector. It has to be also a field of Social Sciences, of Social Work. Based on a comprehensive literature research about health inequity the project has the goal to elaborate an action strategy for local policy. The actual local situation will be analyzed (quantitative secondary study and expert interviews), the method (Equity) Health Impact Assessment will be tested on its effectiveness and through a transdisciplinary participatory action research project community-based health promotion programs will be elaborated.

Mixed Methods Evaluation of Multi-Family Groups Which Systematically Shift Power Relationships and Build Social Capital Across Families of All First Graders In Primarily Low-Income Latina Communities

Presenter:

Professor Lynn McDonald
Social Work, Middlesex University, London

Co-Presenter(s):

Professor Ruth Zambrana
Sociology, University of Maryland

Abstract:

Sociologist James Coleman's theory of social capital developed in part in schools (1990) suggests that if parents of children attending a school become friends, it is 'intergenerational closure.' If the average parent in a school knew 4-5 other parents, there would be increased child well-being and learning. This paper evaluates whether a parent empowerment programme in schools serving primarily low-income communities could build 'intergenerational closure.' Multi-family groups (FAST-Families and Schools Together) were offered to all families of first graders in 26 of 52 schools in Latina dominant areas randomized to condition (NICHD funding) to attend one or more sessions held weekly after school to address income disparities. Culturally representative teams were trained in adult education techniques of Paulo Freire with 25% local parents working alongside professionals to support and coach parents to lead structured activities with their young children and meet in parent groups with an open agenda. On average 44 families per school attended at least once, and 22 attended six or more weeks. Monthly booster sessions for two years were made available for families to gather. Quantitative results show statistically significant differences in 'intergenerational closure' in schools assigned to FAST with Intent To Treat analyses. When comparing participants with a comparable group, the effect sizes tripled. Increased child social skills, reduced bullying and misbehaviour (SDQ) were also reported. Qualitative data from focus groups and interviews suggest parents experienced feeling more respected and connected. United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (2010) ranked FAST as in the top 20 world family skills programmes for strong evidence. With quality assurance structures run by a non-profit, new sites get training, supervision for programme integrity, and pre post evaluation of each new implementation. In partnership with health, education and social care, FAST parents often become community leaders. FAST is in 20 countries.

Insight in everyday life as a way of understanding transitions

Presenter:

Anne-Kirstine Mølholt

PhD-fellow

Department of Sociology and Social Work

Aalborg University

Abstract:

This abstract is concerned with young people leaving out-of-home care. From a Danish social policy perspective the concepts highlighted are 'independent living', 'development' and 'adulthood'. All young people experience transitions into adulthood, but where the general transition processes have been characterized as 'emerging adulthood' by research, transitions by care leavers have been portrayed as a meeting with 'instant adulthood'. There seems to be different processes at stake for young people in general and young people leaving care. Outcomes in quantitative studies points to challenges experienced by care leavers in comparison with their peers such as lower degrees of education, higher levels of unemployment, homelessness and convictions. In Denmark there is a growing focus on the securement of care leavers' transitions into adulthood. Often social policy, social work practice and research on the field points to the challenging changes and the insecurities characterizing care leavers. It is in many ways feared processes. My PhD-study has a qualitative longitudinal design and aims to nuance the perception of the lives of care leavers. During a period of two years I follow ten care leavers age 19 to 33 to get an insight in their stories about everyday life and experiences. This insight in developments, changes and continuity is important if we are to understand how transitions can be modified from chaotic and insecure experiences for care leavers to experiences of a wholeness of circumstances where care leavers have the possibilities of constructing meanings.

Thinking Big, Theoretically Speaking: Beyond Anti-Oppressive Practice

Presenter:

James P. Mulvale, MSW, PhD
Dean, Faculty of Social Work
University of Manitoba

Abstract:

This paper critically examines Anti-Oppressive Practice (AOP) theory in Social Work. While there is much of value in this approach, a claim of sloppy eclecticism can be made about at least some renditions of AOP theory. While drawing upon various critical theoretical streams that have conceptual power and utility (e.g. Marxism, feminism, anti-racist theory, decolonization, disability theory, and queer theory), AOP theory often does so in indiscriminate and imprecise ways. It is also often posits a simplistic and unexamined notion of “oppression” that misses the complexity of oppressive and exploitative circumstances in diverse societies and groups, and that fails to take adequate account of the ways in which individual and collective agency can make a difference. Finally, a fixation on AOP theory as the 'new orthodoxy' has limited discussion of how Social Work as a discipline and practice can draw upon largely unexplored streams of social and political thought. Relevant bodies of work include diverse theories of social justice and human rights, environmental ("green") theory, recognition theory, and theorization of social movements and social change.

How can care-leaver research improve youth residential care practice?

Presenter:

Andrea Nagy

Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

Abstract:

Focussing on the individual and on his or her specific biography is a preferred approach in care-leaver research. This approach is indeed effective in revealing structural barriers to the development and well-being of the young care leavers inherent in prevailing social policy and institutional practices which facilitate care leaving. It is also useful in discovering similarities in the narratives of care-leavers as they describe their life situations. The limitations of this approach, however, become obvious as one considers the possibility that these life situations are actually co-constructed by the residential care institutions that were „home“ for the care-leavers. The systematic denial of the link between the care setting and the later performance of care-leavers is due to the inclination to ascribe care-leavers' deficiencies or their lack of achievement in education and economic independence to their family systems of origin.

In my dissertation, I will show that focussing on the group-based social patterns in care-leaver research can give valuable insights into structural experiences young people share in institutions of residential care, which are disadvantageous for their future performance, but could eventually be positively influenced by the care setting, through the development and application of adequate methods or routines. Group discussions were conducted with three groups of young care-leavers in a residential setting in South Tyrol/Alto Adige, Italy, in which the young people were asked to discuss with each other their prospects on leaving the care setting and living autonomously. The analysis of the group discussions shows, that stigmatisation was a common experience in all three investigated groups. The young people have developed group-specific strategies to handle stigma, which I will be able to describe in my presentation. The findings should inspire a discussion about the need to take action from the side of the residential care institutions in order to confront stigmatization, and reduce the disadvantages resulting from that common experience young people share in residential care settings.

Microenterprises as a tool to alleviate poverty among women headed household: Successful Community Based Initiative

Presenter:

Murali D. Nair, PhD
Clinical Professor
School of Social Work
University of Southern California

Co-Presenter:

Deepak Gopinath, PhD
Lecturer
School of the Environment
University of Dundee
Dundee, United Kingdom

Abstract:

Every now and then in the life of a grassroots level non profit organization, everything seems to come together with a unique blend of mission, passion, and vision for the future. This presentation as a case study provides ideas on how women from the poorest of the poor community become effective and sustainable in setting up profitable micro enterprises and leading productive family life styles. It is based on the idea that Grassroot-based organizations (GBOs) can be a powerful force for empowering people to take charge of their lives by engaging in a process of democratic participation. Through case study approaches, following concepts will be elaborated at this presentation. What is the rationale and scope of Community Based Initiatives (CBIs) at the grass root level in a globalized society? How can we make the poor women's CBI organizations more effective? How should we develop strategic and operational planning? How can we go about seeking resources for the organization? What is the role of micro-enterprise in CBIs run by poor women? How can we develop income-generating micro enterprise activities for poor women? How we establish successful CBIs?

**Multi-disciplinary perspective in Sustainability:
Case study approach to enhance better living**

Presenter:

Unni K. Nair, MBA
Sustainability Manager
CISCO Inc.
San Jose, CA

Co-Presenter(s):

Murali D. Nair, Ph.D.
Clinical Professor
USC School of Social Work

Abstract:

Sustainable development is multidisciplinary concept in its nature and is covered by various bodies of sciences. Yet, its literature is fragmented and each specific discipline of knowledge analyzes it from its narrow perspective. This presentation suggests a new framework for conceptualizing sustainability through case scenarios from different discipline. This framework consists of different concepts, a distinctive theme, and each one represents a specific domain or field that is related to sustainability. The themes represent the ethical, social, economic, ecological, spatial, and political aspects of sustainability. These proposed concepts intertwined and interconnected and together they construct the holistic scene of understanding sustainability. There is so much potential to take advantage of technological advances in sustainable development. Sustainability datasets are highly advanced in business and industries. United Nations Global Compact is working closely with multi national corporations to compile sustainability information. European Union, Canada and United States governments are also leading its way to enhance sustainable development. Authors of this presentation plan to highlights case studies of non-profit (non-governmental) organizations, social entrepreneurs, social entrepreneur and even informal citizen group efforts in sustainability in diverse field. This presentation also recognizes the importance of reflecting environmental, social and economic considerations in sustainable development operations.

Healthcare Providers' Roles and Responsibilities for Advancing Conversations about Dying

Presenter:

Frances Nedjat-Haiem, PhD, LCSW
Research Fellow, Veterans Affairs
Associate Professor, New Mexico State University

Co-Presenters:

Iraida V. Carrion, PhD, LCSW
Associate Professor
University of South Florida
School of Social Work

Kathleen Ell, DSW
USC School of Social Work

Abstract:

Interdisciplinary linkages that facilitate evidence-based practice with severely ill, older adults at the end of their lifespan are needed. While older adults are living longer, many are faced with serious illnesses and frailty in the final years of life. Consequently, healthcare systems will need a comprehensive, targeted approach to end-of-life (EOL) care. Providers must understand how to navigate through complex layers of problems that create communication gaps and trigger misuse of medical care or unwanted treatment. Despite the importance of early engagement, we know little about shared roles and responsibilities of medical and non-medical providers for confronting these issues. Some providers might evaluate patients' issues from a medical framework, while others recognize problems from a psychosocial/cultural/ecological perspective. We examined healthcare providers' roles and responsibilities for engaging terminally-ill patients in EOL discussions to compare their unique and shared roles for patient care. We conducted semi-structured interviews with providers (n=54) working in a public, safety-net healthcare system (physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains) asking them: 1) How do you define your role for EOL discussions? 2) Who should initiate them; and why? Using constant comparative analysis, we explored providers' experiences across disciplines. While most providers (89%) felt responsible for engaging patients in EOL discussions and expected to begin them as soon as possible, differences across provider types exist, which sometimes triggered frustration between providers. Physicians emphasized their role as primary, providing medical information and expertise to engage patients in dialogue. Whereas, nurses, social workers, and chaplains reported advocating for patient-centered values and preferences, being a liaison with physicians, facilitating shared communication between patients, family, physicians, organizations, and the community. Recognizing when and how to begin EOL discussions can be problematic for some providers; therefore, education is needed. Social workers are uniquely positioned to help all providers improve care through advocating for early engagement.

Activation in practice: Which professionalism for activation as a practice of citizenship?

Presenter:

Urban Nothdurfter
Free University of Bolzano/Bozen

Abstract:

Individualized activation services have gained in importance in all European welfare states making lower level discretion an intrinsic feature of activation policies. Thus, the debate on activation policies and challenges to social citizenship has to go beyond formal policy and to take into account also its operational and street-level dimension which shapes what is eventually produced as policy on the ground. In this context, frontline practice plays a crucial role since it constitutes the very moment where activation policies encounter their target groups and real world solutions have to be found.

The proposed presentation is based on a research project aimed at studying the challenges, interpretations and reactions of frontline workers in activation services and analyzing them in the light of a combined theoretical framework which understands frontline practice as part of the policy making chain and addresses issues such as the use of discretion, power and situated agency.

The research project consists in a qualitative study undertaken on the frontline of Public Employment Services in the cities of Vienna (Austria) and Milan (Italy). The findings contribute to the debate on constraints and possibilities for a practice of citizenship in a practice field whose challenges are often neglected both by social policy and social work research, although it has become a central arena for welfare state intervention and, eventually, for the concretion of social citizenship. Particular attention is given to the questions whether and to what extent professionalizing “activation work” could counteract the precarious and highly individualized role of frontline workers in this ambiguous public domain.

Social work research on mental health recovery as a public sociological enterprise

Presenter:

Hans Oh, MSW, EdM,
Columbia University School of Social Work

Co-Presenter:

Jordan DeVylder, MS
Columbia University School of Social Work

Abstract:

The recent revival of public sociology has created an opportunity for social work researchers to consider their unique place within the larger academic community. Burawoy posits four kinds of sociology -professional, critical, policy, and public -that vary according to audience (academic vs. extra-academic) and purpose (instrumental vs. reflexive). Ideally, these sociologies depend on one another in mutually beneficial ways, though the past century of mental health research shows us that the instrumental sociologies (professional and policy) can prevail over their reflexive counterparts (critical and public), resulting in the oppression of people with mental illnesses. Now in an era of recovery, social work researchers are playing a crucial role in producing and translating knowledge into recovery-oriented policies and practices. As we grapple with challenging issues in the field of mental health, our identities as social workers - specifically our moral commitments to social justice -compel us to engage in conversations with disenfranchised publics so that their voices can guide us as we respond to the research demands of recovery.

Depression care for chronic illness patients: Double-edged sword

Presenter:

Hyunsung Oh, M.S.W.
School of Social Work
University of Southern California

Abstract:

Depression is an important comorbidity factor for patients with chronic illness. Comorbid depression predicts lower self-care behaviors which can lead to poorer glycemic control, higher blood pressure, and higher mortality risk. Primary care providers are often asked to provide effective care for comorbid depression to expect better disease outcomes which can include complication reduction to reduced mortality rates. However, little research has focused on the possible negative effect of treating depression. In clinical trials, reduced depression is often observed with no change in self-care management and physical health outcomes. Some studies have shown worse health outcomes in groups with improved depression. Understanding this complicated effect of depression care on disease outcome among chronic illness patient is significant for social workers who are being asked to take on a more active role under the Affordable Care Act. This presentation will demonstrate mechanisms by which depression care or alleviated depression can negatively affect disease outcomes and possible solutions to minimize the conflicting effects from depression care. One example involves discussion about how psychotherapy for depression might distract patient's attentions on disease management. Cognitive therapy often gives a patient homework, which may reduce time and energy focused on following prescribed self-care behaviors. Second, alleviated depression may put patients in a situation where disease management may not be implemented. Many patients who have recovered from clinical depression may start visiting extended family members or friends and offered high-fat diet, which is not available at home. Thus, social workers, who are asked to provide depression care, need to be cautious of possible effects on disease management. One solution to minimize the side effects is to find activities that decrease depressive symptoms as well as disease progression together. Exercise and family engagement are possible candidates for this goal.

Discussing sociological and social work perspectives

Presenter:

Søren Peter Olesen

Associate Professor

Aalborg University

Institute for Sociology and Social Work

Abstract:

Sociology and social work are closely connected as regards origin, academic organisation and societal focus. At the same time, they are clearly distinguishable as separate disciplines or fields. The contrasts between the two fields, despite the close relationship, are manifest, not least when they are taken as wholes. Many sociological concepts and theories have been preoccupied with describing and explaining the antecedent conditions of action and its multiple outcomes, whether intended or unintended. This has even to some extent been the case in Danish social work research. Thus, there has been a period of 'tensions' between research on social work informed by ('macro') sociological theories on the one hand and on the other hand social work practice. As argued by Boden (1994) much social theory emphasises structure "over" action, making the latter invisible in the shadow of the former, and making social work an 'invisible trade' (Pithouse 1987). A number of sociological approaches, however, emphasise (inter)action. Discourse and narrative approaches to social work, for instance, offer opportunities for looking inside professional practice (Hall & White 2005). More generally, approaches to social work research based on ethnomethodology, conversation analysis and actor-network-theory offers opportunities for a more close relationship between the two disciplines. In this paper I will outline some of the major developments in Danish social work research, giving examples of interconnections rather than contradictions and tensions between the two disciplines.

Social Relationships of Dual Diagnosed Homeless Adults Following Enrollment in Housing First or Traditional Treatment Services

Presenter:

Robin Petering, MSW
Ph.D. Student
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenters:

Benjamin Henwood

Anna Stefancic

Deborah Padgett

Abstract:

Background: This study examined how social relationships differ for participants newly enrolled in Housing First and traditional care programs. *Methods:* Using a mixed methods approach, the study assessed group differences among participant's relationships based on program type or having left the program with 75 consumers. *Results:* All participants had networks that were similarly sized and composed, but those in a program had more positive relationships. Residential stability could facilitate positive relationships but fear of jeopardizing one's housing can limit these relationships. *Discussion:* Housing First participants were not more socially isolated than those in traditional care although neither type of program appeared to expand one's social networks in a significant way, pointing to a need to work with pre-existing network members. Additionally, just as the living alone does not necessarily lead to social isolation, neither does congregate living necessarily provide participants a sense of belonging to a community.

Participative biographical research with people with intellectual disabilities: ethical implications and methodological challenges

Presenter:

Sylvia Rainer

Social Worker

PhD student, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano

Italy

Abstract:

This on-going dissertation project is aimed to explore participation experiences in old age, and to explore elderly people's participation strategies, the resources available in communities and the socially constructed barriers to meaningful participation. The study does not exclusively focus on the ageing mainstream population, but draws particular attention on people with lifelong intellectual disabilities entering old age who appear to remain underrepresented in social research. The research tools encompass the collection of life histories and the involvement of a scientific advisory board consisting of elderly people. Conducting ethically sound, participatory biographical research with vulnerable subjects implies important ethical and methodological challenges. First and foremost, it is the researcher's responsibility to carefully assess the risks and benefits on the part of the participants. Further, informed consent needs to be shaped as an on-going process of communication embedded in a research relationship of trust, equity and reciprocity. Against this background, the design of the present study entails a person-centred use of the research tools that are constantly adjusted to the needs and interests as well as to the individual forms of interaction of every single research participant.

Creating Opportunities for Critical Consciousness at an Urban Community College

Presenter:

Adelaide Sandler, MSW MS
PhD Candidate
University of Connecticut
School of Social Work

Abstract:

This presentation will explore how teaching sociology at a community college is important to reducing oppression an important commitment to social work. Paulo Freire (2012) envisioned that oppression could be eased by a process of education that included raising the critical consciousness of learners, in order to decrease the effects of internalized oppression and increase praxis and social action. This is consistent with the goals of social work, especially section six of the NASW Code of Ethics that focus on social welfare, public participation, and social and political action. Community colleges are the gateways to higher education for students from traditionally oppressed backgrounds and therefore offer an environment for social work practice that focuses on both micro and macro issues, in the tradition of the settlement movement or social goal methods of social work. Because sociology is part of the general requirements at community colleges it can be used as a vehicle to combat internalized oppression. Exploration of sociological theories and topics provide opportunities for critical dialogue that can lead to increased critical consciousness among students and the foundation for change.

The presenter will share her experiences of using social work practice informed by empowerment practice to teach sociology in an urban community college. Using the empowerment model developed by Carr (2003), the presenter will relate practical strategies for engaging students in learning opportunities that can create conscientization---process to discover political/structural causes of personal troubles caused by powerlessness and oppression (Gutierrez & Lewis, 1999). This is achieved by creating classroom experiences that allow students to critically analyze their positions and social locations within society, recognize structural barriers and power dynamics in the social structure, cultivate the recognition that the “personal is political”, and reduce the internalization of oppression.

The hazards of integrating theory and practice in Social Work

Presenter:

Dr. Werner Schirmer

TEFSA - Platform for Theory-driven Research in Social Work
University of Linköping

Co-Presenter(s):

Prof Dimitris Michailakis

TEFSA - Platform for Theory-driven Research in Social Work
University of Linköping

Abstract:

Despite mutual dependency, the history of social work provides evidence of a permanent conflictive relationship between theory and practice. Much of what researchers deal with is said to have little relevance to practitioners, the transfer from (scientific) knowledge to real-world action is poor and limited, and there is a lack of coordination between research projects and professional needs. In short, there is a call for integration of the academic discipline (social work research) and the practical field (social work practice). In this paper we argue against this quest for integration because of its negative effects for both parts. Integration implies limitation of degrees of freedom, loss of autonomy and even abandonment of theoretical and practical pluralism. Integration leads to the subordination of one part to the other. This happens either when practice determines research, i.e. research topics are prescribed by and funding bound to the practical needs. Or when research determines practice, i.e. research paradigms and results prescribe how practitioners need to do their work (at the cost of professional autonomy). Despite being united under the label 'social work', social work research and social work practice are both the activities of different social systems (the scientific system and the help system) each operating in incongruent ways and fulfilling different societal functions. We argue that 'social work' is best served by protecting and respecting the parts' autonomy in a way that none prescribes the other how to execute its activities. Only in this way, both parts can be a resource to each other.

Transition of Social Work professions towards enabling citizenship

Presenter:

Dr. Martin Stam

Professor

Outreach Work in Innovation

Amsterdam University of Applied Studies

Abstract:

‘The classic welfare state changes slowly into a participatory society. Anyone who can, must be asked to take responsibility for his or her own life’. King Willem Alexander, 2013.

The policies in the welfare state made vulnerable citizens used to the idea: ‘Give it to me, I’m entitled to it .Together with meritocratic and individualizing tendencies in society this lead to the diminishing of the principle of ‘Gemeinschaft’: it’s your duty to help your family and neighbors. This contributed to impoverishment of social cohesion and practical solidarity in the life world of the most vulnerable citizens.

The concept of a participatory society implies transformation of people in vulnerable positions into citizens. How do they, used to consumer, customer and client roles, become co-producers of their role in society? Our studies resulted in the following conclusions (M. Stam 2012, 2013; M. Stam c.s. 2013). In general: a transition of social work from caring for to taking care together (from help offerer to enabler). This transition consists of three parallel changes of social work:

- A. From inside out instead of from outside in (= more life world and less system world).
From the **inside out** means: taking the life and perception world of citizens in vulnerable circumstances as starting point. And: (S)he who isn’t part of the problem can’t be part of the solution.
- B. From bottom-up instead of from top down (arrange the work from ‘uncertain knowledge’ (inductive) instead of ‘sure knowledge’ (deductive)). This means: use crises and conflicts (uncertainties) instead of avoiding them.
- C. Together instead of separately in silo’s (participants of co-creative practices acknowledge different kinds of expertise). This implies: where no one claims to have the wisdom, better solutions are possible. Creative space is closed by competition, fragmentation and specialization.

The developing mental-health support program for the parents of children having disabilities

Presenter:

Shinji TANI, PhD
Ritsumeikan University

Abstract:

The support for mental-health problems such as depression, anger, and self-remorse is an important clinical issue for the clinicians working with parents of children having disabilities. We have been developing the mental health support program based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and examined the effectiveness of the program. After finishing two preliminary researches, we made the textbook and the manual. The research using randomized waiting list design and the RCT research were conducted to show the effectiveness of our program with using the textbook and the manual. The social workers and the psychologists working with the parents in each research area attended to the program as assistants. They were expected to continue the program after finishing the research. The program was conducted with a group format. Two pre-test and two post-test were implemented in all research. BDI-II and GHQ-28 were used as the outcome measures. 34.7% of parents attended the program showed the above of the cut-off point in BDI-II. 57.3% of parents showed the above of the cut-off point in GHQ-28. The score of BDI-II was decreased between the pre-test and post-test significantly. The score of GHQ-28 was also decreased significantly. The 40% of the parent who showed above the cut-off point of BDI-II at the pre-test improved to below the cut-off point. About GHQ-28, 50% of the parents showed the usual level at the post-test. This evidence shows the effectiveness of the program. We conducted the preliminary projects at China and Taiwan in order to enhance the generality of the program.

Identification of Children's Need for Psychosocial Support in a School Environment- Teachers as Informants

Presenter:

Erna Törmälehto
Lecturer of Social Work
University of Tampere
School of Social Sciences and Humanities
Department of Pori

Abstract:

Research on identification of children's psychosocial problems is necessary, because their emotional disorders and mental health problems frequently go unnoticed. Early identification and treatment of physical illnesses are cornerstones of health care systems all over the world, but assessment of children's social and psychological well-being is not as clearly defined and uniform. For many children the first experience of help for their emotional problems comes when they encounter child welfare. School is a significant environment in the follow-up of children's growth and development.

The purpose of my study was to describe to what extent teachers notice children's socio-emotional problems, and how teachers see their role in the identification of children's problems. My study focused on a municipality in western Finland, more specifically on 11-12-year-old pupils (N=129) in nine different classes and six different schools. The pupils, their teachers (N=9) and parents (N=129) filled in a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). Additionally, a Pupil Welfare Services Survey was carried out among all teachers in the municipality's primary school system (N=134 / 240).

In the analysis of the SDQ Questionnaire the pupils' self-reports were compared with the Teachers' Questionnaire using a non-parametric sign test. The analysis indicated a significant discrepancy between the assessments of pupils and those of teachers as far as emotional symptoms were concerned ($0.000 < p < 0.05$). My study material shows that the majority of teachers think that they identify children's emotional symptoms, when in fact they do not. In the Pupil Welfare Services Survey 89 per cent of the teachers said that they identify the psychological problems of their pupils. In this study material teachers do identify peer problems and behavioral disorders. The children's self-reports are vital in the recognition of emotional problems in order to help and support them while there is still time.

Using Transdisciplinary Knowledge to Implement Evidence-based Practices with Support from Client-level Outcome Measures

Presenter:

Betty A Walton, PhD, LCSW

Assistant Research Professor

Indiana University School of Social Work

Indiana Family & Social Services Administration

Abstract:

Social work researchers, accustomed to working in complex systems with a focus on human change (Brekke, 2012), are well positioned to link research and practice (Nurius & Kemp, 2012). Partnering with allied professions strengthens translational research (Nurius & Kemp) to improve the lives of individuals.

The gap between evidence-based practice (EBP) and usual community based mental health services (Beidas, et al., 2013; New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003) exemplifies the need for transdisciplinary research and practice. Science recognizes implementation of an EBP as a complex, incremental processes (Fixsen, 2005). After fitting an innovation (EBP) to an identified need, the innovation is modified to fit the organization; structures are altered (Rogers, 2003). Implementation theory and research support using client-level outcomes in public settings as a strategy to implement EBPs (Raghavan, Bright, and Shadoin, 2008; Torrey, Bond, McHugo, & Swain, 2012). To be effective EBPs and outcome measures must be integrated into public system requirements, agency protocols, and every-day practice.

This workshop explores the use and adaptation of system-wide outcome measures, specifically, the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) and the Adult Needs and Strength Assessment (ANSA, Lyons, 2009), to support effective practice. Client-level outcome measures support decisions, monitor progress, and help improve services (Lyons, 2009). At the direct service level, identified mental health needs can be mapped to EBPs to support referral decisions. Information from a holistic assessment informs individualized plans and reflects progress. Aggregated information helps identify successes, service gaps, and areas for improvement. Provider profiles are linked to funding. Changes in system-level outcomes reflect the impact of policy. We will discuss tactics and challenges implementing outcome measures to support EBPs for children, transition-age youth, and young adults with mental health needs.

First Take Your Meds: The Role of Social Work in Medication Adherence in Mental Health

Presenter:

Ruth C. White, PhD, MPH, MSW
USC School of Social Work

Abstract:

The standard treatment protocol for people living with mental illness is psychotherapy and medication. As medications improve in effectiveness and a wider range of medications become available, the goal of mental health practice is to have clients adhere to medication regimens so that they are stable emotionally and psychologically and ready to engage with psychotherapy.

Focusing on medication often reduces the client to a vessel for medications that often disregards the myriad reasons why clients do not adhere to medications. In particular the negative side effects related to physical side effects that often create other ill health such as obesity, renal disease and thyroid malfunction are often disregarded with primacy given to brain function at the sacrifice of other organs.

Clients then often become defined by their resistance to submitting their bodies to the 'experimentation' that is inherent in finding the 'right' drug regimen. Instead, the social work ethical concern of autonomy and dignity of the person.

Integrating Social Science and Engineering to Implement Evidence-Based Social Work Practices in Health Care Settings

Presenter:

Shinyi Wu, PhD

Assistant Professor

Schools of Social Work and Engineering

University of Southern California

Co-Presenter(s):

Naihua Duan, PhD

Professor of Biostatistics in Psychiatry (retired)

Division of Biostatistics, Department of Psychiatry

Columbia University

Kimberly Eaton Hoagwood, PhD

Professor

Department of Child Psychiatry

New York University

Abstract:

Social science and engineering, overlapping but distinct disciplines, are two pillars supporting some of the most profound and enduring accomplishments of humanity. It is important for the nascent field of implementation to embrace the integration of the two distinct and complementary paradigms to produce the most effective outcomes for implementation: the scientific task of studying social work practice in the health care system as it is, and the engineering task of creating new and better social work practice in health care system. While the scientific aspects of implementation are widely recognized, the engineering aspects are less acknowledged. Therefore, we highlight the importance of the engineering aspects of implementation, namely, tailoring interventions or processes to accommodate local conditions so that they work effectively in specific health care settings. This engineering work often entails the production of local knowledge to address specific local conditions. At the same time, the local knowledge thus produced might also lead to generalizable knowledge to advance science, including the science of implementation. Technology, including information technology, is an important instantiation of the engineering paradigm. We give examples of implementation engineering using telecommunication technologies for patient-provider and provider-provider information assessment and communication for depression or for stroke care management. We discuss the impact of this paradigm shift on academic research and social work practice.

Spirituality-Infused Mental Health Services in Los Angeles County Wellness and Client-Run Centers

Presenter:

Ann-Marie Yamada, PhD
Associate Professor
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenter(s):

Min Ah Kim, Ph.D (lead author)
Andrew M, Subica, PhD
Adrienne Cedro Hament, LCSW

Abstract:

Spiritual coping is associated with positive mental health outcomes for individuals with serious mental illness. Infusing spiritual components into existing mental health services or developing activities that foster hope and provide meaningful connections to people or a higher power is in demand by consumers and family members. However, these types of spiritual activities have long been controversial as public sector mental health agencies are reluctant to invoke treatments perceived as centered on religion or faith-based organizations. For the past decade the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health has incrementally addressed spirituality, culminating in a policy in 2012 to address clinical parameters for spiritual assessments and interventions. This study aimed to describe the breadth and degree to which spirituality-infused activities were offered in 53 Los Angeles wellness and recovery centers in the months following dissemination of the policy to staff. Interviews with administrators of the centers provided open and closed-ended survey data. Participants from 98% of the centers reported currently offering spirituality-infused activities; the majority did not involve religious practice or rituals. Based on our broad conceptualization of spirituality, recreational activities (e.g., craft making, journal and poetry writing, and dancing) were the most frequently endorsed type of spiritual activities (at 84.9% of centers). Self-awareness programs (e.g., meditation and mindfulness) were offered at 83% of centers. Religious programming was the least commonly reported (28.3%). Spirituality, especially as conceived as broader than religious practices, is an important component of culturally responsive recovery-oriented services. The findings of this descriptive study highlight multiple paths available to develop programs and services to mobilize consumers' use of their spiritual strengths to support their quality of life and sense of purpose. Los Angeles's progress with policy development may facilitate implementation of spirituality-infused services in other state or local public mental health systems.

Exploring the Mediating Role of Network Risk Factors on the Relationship between Foster Care Experience and Methamphetamine Use

Presenter:

Amanda Yoshioka-Maxwell, MSW
Ph.D. Student
USC School of Social Work

Co-Presenters:

Eric Rice, Ph.D.

Harmony Rhoades, Ph.D.

Hailey Winetrobe, MPH

Abstract:

Objective: Emancipated foster youth experience high rates of methamphetamine use and homelessness. Current research has failed to understand why homeless youth with foster care experience engage in methamphetamine use at higher rates compared to other homeless young adults. This study aims to examine the impact of network characteristics on recent methamphetamine use among homeless former foster youth in Los Angeles.

Method: The YouthNet data set was used for this analysis, comprised of a community-based sample of 652 homeless youth ages 13-25 from two drop-in centers in Hollywood and Santa Monica, CA. A path analysis was run to examine the mediating effect of time homeless and network characteristics on the relationship between foster care experience and recent methamphetamine use.

Results: Controlling for all other variables, results of the path analysis indicated that significant effects exist between foster care experience and recent individual meth use only when network meth use and time homeless mediated this relationship.

Discussion: These findings add to the literature on substance use among both homeless young adults and former foster youth, suggesting the key to successful interventions may target network influences and the impact of time spent on the streets. Results indicated that foster care experience impacted recent methamphetamine use, only when accounting for network methamphetamine use and time homeless; it was only through the inclusion of network drug use behaviors and an accounting of time homeless that the relationship between foster care and meth use was significantly impacted.

Enhancing Diversity in Science: An Effort in Working Across Social and Behavioral Science Disciplines

Presenter:

Joan Levy Zlotnik, PhD, ACSW
Director
Social Work Policy Institute
NASW Foundation

Abstract:

This presentation summarizes efforts of the Collaborative for Enhancing Diversity in Science (CEDS), a multidisciplinary group, with sociology and social work leadership, housed at the Consortium of Social Science Associations in Washington DC. Recognizing the value of a diverse science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) workforce to address the grand challenges facing our society, CEDS hosted two successful workshops on diversifying the science workforce. These workshops engaged universities, professional and scientific societies, government agencies and foundations to explore strategies and identify metrics for ensuring diversity in science. The May 2012 workshop focused on challenges in establishing common data measures and standards around historically underrepresented groups, and was followed by a 2013 Congressional Briefing, “Innovative Strategies for Building a Diverse Scientific Workforce.” Collaboration on a common set of high-priority measures can inform, target, and strengthen efforts to increase diversity in the sciences across participating institutions. The process of working toward common measurement in itself provides an opportunity for mutual updates on data tracking efforts and initiatives that government agencies sponsor, and in which colleges, universities, foundations, and nonprofits participate. Prominent university researchers and leaders from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation joined with scientific societies’ stakeholders to present overviews of issues related to participation and achievement in the sciences across diverse groups, evaluation of approaches to support STEM diversity, and efforts to develop common measurement approaches. Smaller discussion groups focused on building consensus on issues related to broadening participation in scientific fields. These workshops strongly confirmed that steps to increase the comparability of both administrative and survey data collected on diversity in the scientific workforce are needed. Achieving agreement on collection of high priority data elements and on specific measures will make it possible to aggregate findings across studies and coordinate efforts to increase diversity across settings.