

INTEGRATING THEORY, METHODS, & SOCIAL JUSTICE

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*Community Psychology Comprehensive Examination
Major Area Paper Proposal*

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Comprehensive Proposal Outline

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I. Personal Statement

My research is strongly informed by my community-based work. Prior to beginning the graduate program here Oregon, I served as an shelter, crisis line, and legal advocate at an Atlanta-based intimate partner violence (IPV) response and prevention organization¹. Serving as an advocate in multiple settings (i.e., crisis line, shelter, and legal services) allowed me to integrate my academic-based understanding of survivors' and perpetrators' experiences with the contextual framework of the structure and organization of local IPSV coordinated community response and prevention efforts.

¹ Partnership Against Domestic Violence and the Safe Families Office at the Superior Court of Fulton County

As a graduate student researcher, I have continued to be an active member of the violence intervention and prevention community in Oregon by working closely with a diverse network of community partners throughout the state to address the range of community health and social justice issues intersecting with violence and oppression intervention and prevention efforts. In order to engrain myself as a researcher within local and statewide coordinated community response efforts in I relocated to Portland three months before my graduate studies would officially begin. During those initial three months, I began a 12-month internship with the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force's (ORSATF) Prevention and Education Subcommittee (PEC), became a founding member of a local community organizing group focused on engaging men as allies in efforts to prevent violence against women (Men Engaging Now), and volunteered for and completed multiple trainings with the YWCA of Greater Portland's Social Justice Program.

I have since served as an appointed advisory committee member with the ORSATF Prevention and Education Subcommittee and the prevention liaison for the ORSATF Offender Management Subcommittee. My work with the ORSATF included reviewing and updating the statewide sexual violence prevention plan and reviewing rape prevention and education grantee programs' progress and needs assessment data. I co-represented the state of Oregon and Portland State University as part of the ORSATF's Campus Sexual Violence Prevention Workgroup's participation in a two-day sexual violence

prevention action planning meeting hosted by the American Public Health Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Violence Prevention in Atlanta, GA. This action planning meeting was conducted as part of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault's "Not Alone" project.

I also continued to participate in the Tri-County Batterer Intervention Providers Network monthly meetings, and continued my membership with the Men Engaging Now Coordinating Committee, with whom I have co-presented multiple lectures and workshops related to social justice activism and violence prevention. I also worked with the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs where I assisted with the data entry and analysis for the organization's state-wide needs assessment with Oregon families and healthcare providers.

Collectively, these community-based activities facilitated my participation in Oregon's coordinated community response to ending violence against women and marginalized populations, and has led to several practical and intellectual resources vital to the success of my program of research. In particular, my community engagement provides access to the populations of interest for my research (i.e., LGBTQ women and women with histories of IPV perpetration and victimization), and insights on the design and implementation of my research activities.

The knowledge and perspectives I have gained through my work in my local communities, both in Oregon as a graduate student researcher and previously in Atlanta, GA while completing my undergraduate degree, motivated the design and implementation of my National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship program of research. My Masters Thesis project constituted the first phase of my NSF-proposed program of research, in which I conducted a series of one-on-one interviews and one focus group with LGBTQ women recruited from the Greater Portland, OR area. The success of this project hinged on my ability to maintain working collaborative relationships with a variety of community-based professionals, who assisted with direct and indirect participant recruitment and who I am currently working with to disseminate the study's qualitative findings and corresponding recommendations for IPV-related government and community-based service providers in Oregon.

Throughout the course of designing and implementing my Masters Thesis project, I also served as a graduate research assistant on a national survey of IPV intervention programs' standards committees. The data collection management for this study involved my coordination of fellow graduate and undergraduate research assis-

tants to recruit one or more representatives from each U.S. state's IPV intervention programs' standards committee to participate in an audio-recorded telephone interview with a member from our research team. My responsibilities also included overseeing and participating in transcribing the telephone interview recordings, developing and implementing a data analysis plan for both the quantitative and qualitative interview data, and developing presentations and reports to be disseminated to relevant local and national stakeholders (e.g., Oregon's and other states' IPV intervention programs' standards committees, IPV intervention program providers, etc.).

In addition to the project and organizational management skills gained from my roles in the latter national survey project and my Masters Thesis project, I used the unique circumstance of having two simultaneous leadership roles during my first two years of graduate school as an opportunity to further develop and apply several of the data analytic and presentation techniques I learned through my graduate coursework. I became proficient in developing and implementing team-based protocols for qualitative data analytic procedures including Grounded Theory methods (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990), *thematic analysis*, and *content analysis*; as well as quantitative data analytic techniques for both categorical and continuous data (e.g., *cluster analysis*, *inter-rater reliability*, *factor analysis*, *multiple linear regression*, *mixed-effects*, and *structural equation modeling*, etc.). These data analytic skills have further allowed me to become proficient in multiple statistical programming software packages and languages including *R*, *SQL*, *Mplus*, *SAS*, and *SPSS*.

Readiness for Comprehensive Examination

Collectively, my completed graduate coursework (see *Section A.*) and the above outlined community-engaged research activities and experiences have prepared me to demonstrate my aptitude as a community psychology researcher and scholar. I therefore propose demonstrating my expertise in this field via the proposed *Major Area Paper* (see *Section C.*'), an oral examination on the paper's content and community psychological theory and research, and a written and oral examination in the *Community Methods* minor area. Regarding the latter, because a large portion of my graduate coursework (see *Section A.*) has focused on mixed-methods research, I believe my minor area examination would be most reflective of my graduate training in community psychology methods if it were specifically focused around *mixed-methods community psychology research*.

II. Completed Foundational Coursework

CRN	Title	Grade	Credit Hours	Term
<i>Major Area Coursework: Applied Social & Community Psychology</i>				
PSY 610	Top: Community & Social Interventions	B+	4	FA-2013
PSY 614	Advanced Applied Social Psychology & Community Psychology	A	4	SP-2014
PSY 610	Top: Program Evaluation	A	4	FA-2014
PSY 510	Top: Place-Based Research	A	4	WI-2016
<i>Applied Community Psychology Parctica</i>				
PSY 609	Prac: Violence Prevention I	P	1	FA-2013
PSY 609	Prac: Violence Prevention II	P	1	WI-2014
<i>Minor Area Coursework: Mixed Methods Research</i>				
SOC 610	Focus Groups	A	4	SP-2014
SOC 610	Qualitative Data Analysis	A	4	FA-2014
PSY 510	HLM/Mixed Effects Models for Longitudinal Data Analysis	A	4	WI-2015
SOC 610	Mixed Methods Research	A	4	WI-2015
PSY 597	Applied Survey Research	A-	4	SP-2015
PSY 510	Categorical Data Analysis	A	4	FA-2016
PSY 610	Structural Equation Modeling	IP	4	WI-2017
<i>Research Methods & Statistics Coursework Required by Program</i>				
PSY 621	Univariate Quantitative Methods	A-	5	FA-2013
PSY 618	Ethics & Professional Issues in Applied Research and Practice	A	4	WI-2014
PSY 622	Multiple Regression & Multivariate Quantitative Methods	B+	5	WI-2014
PSY 624	Research Design in Applied Psychology	A	4	SP-2014

III. Rationale

There are two core components of my action-oriented research framework: (1) a focus on developing and implementing innovative and inclusive research methodologies, data analytic approaches, and dissemination strategies; and (2) a diligent focus on the importance of critical reflexivity throughout the research process. The action-oriented and values-transparent community psychological research approach was born out of a resistance to research methodologies, social policies, and implementation practices that ultimately served to reinforce and/or strengthen social and economic inequalities. This foundation necessitates vigilance in critical reflexivity throughout and beyond the research process. The critical literature review I am proposing here is intended to serve this key characteristic of community psychology.

IV Major Area Paper Outline

Background & Significance

I propose conducting a systematic critical review of research conducted with marginalized populations, with a specific focus on violence-related research with sexual minority women (SMW).² The critical review will attempt to map core components of community psychological theory and methodologies to the body of research available under the above-defined content and research discipline scopes. In particular, I am interested in evaluating the extent to which community psychological theory and methodologies are implemented, or not, in community psychology-based research related to the phenomenon of interest (i.e., intimate partner violence). I am further interested in examining how the implementation of community psychological research has evolved over time since the origination of the field, as well as potential trajectories based on the current state of discourse within Community Psychology and closely related research and practice disciplines.

² [see relevance to dissertation topic]

Community psychological theory values the notion that the communities in which research is taking place and/or affecting (whether directly or indirectly) should be as involved as possible in all phases of the research process, rather than solely as anonymous data points in the analysis. Community psychology thus favors inclusion over exclusion, participant voices equally with researchers' voices, and participatory and/or purposive sampling methods over convenience sampling methods. The reviewed literature will be evaluated and critiqued according to these types of community psychological standards regarding (1) *research methodologies*, (2) *data analytic approaches*, (3) *interpretations of findings*, and (4) *research dissemination*.

Theoretical Grounding

In a sense, the proposed review's theoretical grounding is best summarized in terms of the of the Community Psychology Practice Council's "*Theory into Action Bulletin*"³. The review will be grounded

³ Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA)

in theories related to action-oriented research and their applications (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003; Chandler & Torbert, 2003; Friedman-Nimz et al., 2006; Kelly et al., 2004; Noffke, 1997; Prilleltensky, 1997, 2001; Seidman, 2012), as well as social and community psychological theories related to female same-sex intimate partner violence. In particular, I am interested in the intersections that exist across these theoretical, methodological, and problem-specific domains in terms of their actual applications and manifestations in various settings. Below is a list of theoretical and conceptual frameworks specifically guiding the proposed review.

THEORY SPECIFIC TO COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY (CP):

- *The Action Research Cycle & Community-Based Participatory Action Research* (Anders, 1966; Brydon-Miller et al., 2003; Chandler & Torbert, 2003; CBPR; Fine et al., 2004; Friedman-Nimz et al., 2006; Kelly et al., 2004; Noffke, 1997; Prilleltensky, 1997, 2001; Seidman, 2012)
- *Ecological systems theory and the Social Ecological Model* (Anderies, Janssen, & Ostrom, 2004; Baral, Logie, Grosso, Wirtz, & Beyrer, 2013; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) & others, 2015; Kloos & Shah, 2009; Stokols, 1996, 1996; Visser, 2007; Walker et al., 2006)
- *Community Empowerment & Individual Empowerment* (Becker, Guenther-Grey, & Raj, 1998; Cobb, 1993; Collins, 2002; Riger, 1993; Speer & Hughey, 1995)
- *[Community] Health Promotion* (Stokols, 1996)

THEORY RELATED TO BOTH COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY AND IPV INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION:

- *Coordinated Community Response* (Barner & Carney, 2011; Dutton & Corvo, 2007; CCR; Gondolf, 2007)
- *Minority Stress Theory & Resilience* (Meyer, 1995, MS; 2003, 2010, 2015)
- *Risk Factors vs. Protective Factors* (Baral et al., 2013; Heckert & Gondolf, 2004; Tharp et al., 2013; Walton-Moss, Manganello, Frye, & Campbell, 2005; Whitaker, 2014)

INTERSECTING COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY THEORY & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- *Grounded Theory Methods* (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1994)
- *Mixed-Methods Research* (Creswell, 2013; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007; Morgan, 2014)

- *Program Evaluation* (Greene et al., 1989; Kidder & Fine, 1987; Mertens & Wilson, 2012; Owen & Rogers, 1999; Royse, Thyer, & Padgett, 2009)

Paper Parameters / Systematic Literature Review Methodology

A. KEY LITERATURE SEARCH STRATEGY

The scope of reviewed research will include published work in the Community Psychology discipline, as well as research published in related fields such as Social and Clinical Psychology, Social Work, Public Health, and Sociology.

B. FOCAL DATA BASES. The collection process will primarily utilize the robust literature search capabilities provided by *PsychInfo*, *Google Scholar*, and *Web of Science/Web of Knowledge*. In addition, resources specific to community psychology, including *The American Journal of Community Psychology*, *"Theory into Action Bulletin"*, and *"The Community Toolbox" (TCB)*, will be surveyed as potential sources of information for this review. In the case that these databases and resources do not collectively yield a substantial sample of literature appropriate under the parameters of this review, additional databases from related research fields will be used in finding additional research for inclusion in the review. Potential additional databases include the *Gender Studies Database* (Social Psychology and Sociology), *PubMed* (Public Health and Clinical Psychology), and *Social Services Abstracts* (Social Work).

C. KEY SEARCH TERMS. Key search terms will focus on both the focal research content area for this paper (i.e., female same-sex intimate partner violence) and terms related to community-psychological methods or theories. Sample *Boolean* search queries are provided below to demonstrate this aspect of the proposed search methodology.

- ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") OR (Aggression OR violence)
- ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") AND (intervention OR evaluation)
- ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") AND (prevention)
- ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") OR (Aggression OR violence) AND (lesbian OR bisexual OR "sexual minority") AND women
- female AND ("same-sex" OR "same-gender") AND ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") AND (intervention

OR evaluation)

- female AND ("same-sex" OR "same-gender") AND ("intimate partner violence" OR "domestic violence") AND (ecological OR multilevel)

D. INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA.

- **Dates published:** Between 1965 & 2016
- **Topics:**
 - Intimate partner violence (IPV) among sexual minority women (causes, correlates, and/or consequences)
 - IPV intervention and/or prevention strategies/approaches
 - IPV intervention and/or prevention program evaluation
- **Research & Practice Fields/Frameworks:**
 - Community Psychology
 - Other Psychology Sub-fields (Social, Clinical, Organizational)
 - Sociology
 - Public Health
 - Social Work

Integrative Literature Review & Critique of Literature

Research conducted within the subset of community psychology focused around intimate partner violence will be initially evaluated according to the level of inclusion and exclusion of the historically marginalized population of interest (i.e., sexual minority women). The implementation of community psychology methodologies and analytic approaches will then be reviewed within each of these categories (i.e., inclusion or exclusion of sexual minority women) in terms of (1) the appropriateness of the methods to the research question, (2) how the methods facilitated the inclusion or exclusion of sexual minority women, and (3) whether and how (where applicable) exclusion of sexual minority women is justified.

Summary of Findings & Applied Implications

1. **METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS.** Are efforts made to ensure that *all available* stakeholders' and informants' voices and accessibility considered equally, and that certain voices are not unjustifiably privileged over others?

3. **INTERPRETATIONS OF FINDINGS.** Is feedback from key stakeholders and informants to the research accepted and genuinely con-

sidered by the core research team? Are efforts made to ensure that *all available* stakeholders' and informants' voices and accessibility considered equally, and that certain voices are not unjustifiably privileged over others?

4. RESEARCH DISSEMINATION. Are key stakeholders and informants to the research given access to reports of a given project's progress and/or findings? Is such access in fact accessible (i.e., free and easy to locate)?

V. Relevance to Dissertation Topic

The proposed review paper is motivated by the program of research I have pursued over the past three years. I intend to continue pursuing this program of research via my dissertation. This program of research is focused on developing comprehensive and intersectional intimate partner violence (IPV) prevention strategies specific to the experiences and needs of historically marginalized populations.

Dissertation Topic Background

My Masters thesis project served as the first phase of this research program. The purposes of this study were to (1) inform the finalization of a working intersectional model of same-gender IPV among sexual minority women, and (2) evaluate the face, construct, content validity, and coverage of existing survey measures related to the model's constructs in terms of their relevance and accuracy to sexual minority women's experiences and identities. A series of in-depth semi-structured, open-ended one-on-one interviews (n=10) and one focus group (ngroup=4) were conducted with fourteen lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) women in Portland, Oregon. Individuals were recruited and engaged in the study via a combination of purposive and convenience sampling methods aided by involvement of multiple community partners working in violence and education related fields. Interview and focus group questions addressed participants' experiences with gender role stress and minority stress. Grounded theory analysis of participants' narrative responses informed the coverage and relevance of constructs in a working intersectional model predicting women's use of violence in their same-gender intimate relationships. Findings from this analysis support an intersectional and contextually-minded approach to IPV intervention and prevention strategies.

Intended Dissertation Research

The first exploratory phase's findings and corresponding conclusions will directly inform the work for my dissertation, which will constitute the second phase of this research program. Specifically, I will use insights gained from this first phase of research to make necessary revisions to the evaluated survey measures, and the modified measures will be used in the second phase of research to collect data from 200-300 LGBTQ women recruited from the greater Portland, OR area. The intersectional model will be subsequently tested for fit using these data, and findings from this second phase will be used in collaboration with local community partners to develop strategies for IPV intervention and prevention specifically tailored to the experiences, identities, and needs of LGBTQ women.

Proposed Review Paper's Relevance

The theoretical and methodological groundings for the proposed review paper have and continue to serve as guiding frameworks for the above-described program of research. Further, the proposed critical review of community psychological theory and methodology applications aligns with the critical review I conducted as part of my Masters Thesis, which focused on the influence and consequences of second-wave feminism on IPV-related research, activism, policy, and practice. Through the latter critical review process, I developed a comprehensive understanding of the context in which the research area I am pursuing is situated. Similarly, I intend to utilize the proposed review paper as an in-depth critical reflection on the community psychology-specific context in which my dissertation research will be conducted.

VI. Reading List

1. Anderies et al. (2004)
2. Anders (1966)
3. Baral et al. (2013)
4. Barner & Carney (2011)
5. Beeker et al. (1998)
6. Brydon-Miller et al. (2003)
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) & others (2015)
8. Chandler & Torbert (2003)
9. Charmaz (2006)
10. Cobb (1993)
11. Collins (2002)
12. Corbin & Strauss (1990)
13. Creswell (2013)
14. Dutton & Corvo (2007)
15. Fine et al. (2004)
16. Friedman-Nimz et al. (2006)
17. Gondolf (2007)
18. Greene et al. (1989)
19. Heckert & Gondolf (2004)
20. Johnson et al. (2007)
21. Kelly et al. (2004)
22. Kidder & Fine (1987)
23. Kloos & Shah (2009)
24. Mertens & Wilson (2012)
25. Meyer (1995)
26. Meyer (2003)
27. Meyer (2010)
28. Meyer (2015)
29. Morgan (2014)
30. Noffke (1997)
31. Owen & Rogers (1999)
32. Prilleltensky (1997)
33. Prilleltensky (2001)
34. Riger (1993)

35. Royse et al. (2009)
36. Seidman (2012)
37. Speer & Hughey (1995)
38. Stokols (1996)
39. Strauss & Corbin (1994)
40. Tharp et al. (2013)
41. Visser (2007)
42. Walker et al. (2006)
43. Walton-Moss et al. (2005)
44. Whitaker (2014)

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