



THE FELLOW

GREETINGS!

Greetings, we hope you all had a great summer and would like to welcome you back for another academic year! This year the Ph.D. program will be greatly benefitted by the addition of Megan Stanton, Dexia Kong, Jia Xue, and Chenyi Ma. We warmly welcome this new cohort, wish them a wonderful start to their Ph.D. studies, and invite them to approach their fellow Ph.D. students with questions and concerns. There will be DSSC events over the course of the semester in which students will get a chance to socialize, mingle, and discuss important topics. We will have a get together at Cavanaugh's (39th and Walnut), September 7th, at noon to socialize and meet the new cohort. On September 8th, we will hold our first DSSC meeting of the semester at 12:45pm (conference room A, 3815 Walnut). More events will follow throughout the year.

This year there will also be opportunities to volunteer to help your fellow Ph.D. students. Specifically, the DSSC is looking for a new GAPSA representative and a co-chair for the colloquium series. GAPSA representatives are some of the few graduate students who get to mingle with students from different schools at Penn. They are also important sources of information about campus events and resources available to graduate students. The co-chairs of the colloquium series serve our community by bringing in speakers to educate us on topics that will help us excel in our studies and careers. We want to extend a special thanks to Tom Byrne, who served as GAPSA representative for two years, and Katy Kaplan, who served as a colloquium series co-chair for two years. We also want to extend a special thanks to Michelle Evans-Chase, who is continuing to serve as one of the colloquium series co-chairs. Lastly, we want to extend our thanks to Samira Ali and Julie Tennille for their wonderful service as DSSC co-chairs last year.

Daniel Curtis and Marlene Walk, DSSC co-chairs

WELCOME!

Welcome to academic year 2011-2012! Here's what's new:

Renovated third-floor Ph.D. student room: As Ph.D. students start the year, thanks to Dean Gelles, it will be in renovated space. New carpet, paint, chairs, a floating desk and group meeting area, and lateral file storage cabinets will await you. Best of all, perhaps, will be the flat-screen monitors to which you can connect your laptops – they will make it much easier to see data analysis output. And, in the coming weeks, a few landscape photographs will be installed to finish the room. Work began last week and, if all goes as planned, everything will be done by the end of August. We hope that an improved workspace will make your lives a bit easier.

New students: We welcome the four new students who are joining SP2's Ph.D. program this semester – Dexia Kong, Chenyi Ma, Megan Stanton, and Jia Xue. Dexia is a graduate of our MSW program so is familiar with Penn and SP2. Not so with Chenyi, Megan, and Jia (who is studying in the U.S. for the first time), so please point them in the right direction as they begin. Orientation is Tuesday, September 6th. Thank you to Samira Ali, Stacey Barringer, Daniel Curtis, and Rosie Frasso for participating in a roundtable with the incoming students. They and the incoming students will have a social hour with faculty at the end of the day. (We decided to keep it smaller in an attempt to reduce orientation-day overload).

Good-bye and hello: I already told you via email but the personnel changes bear repeating here. Please join me in thanking Cheryl Gaffney. Cheryl provided administrative support for the Ph.D. program for the past few years, and her job description is changing so that she'll be doing more finance work. I really appreciate all that Cheryl has done for us and want to publicly extend my personal gratitude. She was a great help to me as I started to learn the ropes of the directorship last year. Thank you, Cheryl! Second, please join me in welcoming Shara Fox, who has assumed Cheryl's duties and is off to a great start. Shara has handled administrative work at 3815 for a bit over a year and is interested in having more contact with students. If you haven't met her, stop by and introduce yourself; she shares a first floor office with Lisa Brown.

Student profiles: Shara has been updating the Ph.D. student profiles section of our website. Please get her your photo, as formal or informal as you'd like. If you don't have one you want to use, I'll offer to take your photo with my new camera.

Website and Handbook update: The website has been reorganized and updated - <http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/programs/phd/index.html>. Same with the Ph.D. Student Handbook - note that you can download a pdf of the Handbook if you'd like - <http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/resources/handbook/phd/index.html>. Both contain information you need to know about courses, dissertations, etc. We have tried to be as thorough as possible, but if you find something missing or to be unclear, please let me know and we'll work on it.

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EDITORIAL BOARD

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PEER REVIEW

We all work hard writing papers for classes, and many papers are worthy of more than just a letter grade. The Fellow provides an outlet to share unpublished manuscripts, essays, book reviews and editorials with colleagues in an effort to distribute ideas, spark debates, obtain feedback, encourage journal submissions, and support interdisciplinary collaborations. Full references are available upon request to the authors.

Three Approaches to Substance Abuse: Implications for Social Work

by Maayan Schori | mschori@sp2.upenn.edu

Two approaches have dominated the field of substance abuse in the U.S. These approaches have been applied in many aspects of policy and practice. One is the moral approach. As its name suggests, this approach assumes that substance abuse is morally wrong. Under this model the use and distribution of certain substances is a crime and therefore deserving of punishment. Thus, the criminal justice system and the legislative system collaborate to establish a society without drugs. This collaboration takes the form of practices demanding zero-tolerance and policies collectively termed the war on drugs. The moral approach demands complete abstinence as a condition for receiving treatment. The other, the medical model, views addiction as a biological or genetic (acute) disease that should be cured or prevented. This approach emphasizes treatment and rehabilitation. Interventions based on this approach target individuals' desire for drugs; are concerned with demand reduction. Despite the apparent differences (and at times competition) between the two models, both are based on the premise that the only acceptable goal should be abstinence. In addition, they both tend to focus on the individual drug user, and as such differ from harm reduction approaches which focus on public health.

Recently, researchers have suggested that substance abuse is comparable to other chronic disorders, such as diabetes, hypertension and asthma. They have called for long-term care practices, such as those utilized in the treatment of various chronic conditions, in addition to insurance policies and evaluation strategies to match them. In the last few decades, one of the most serious damages caused by behaviors associated with drug addiction - such as risky sexual behavior and needle sharing - has been the contraction of infectious diseases such as HIV, hepatitis and tuberculosis. These diseases do not remain within substance abusing populations; rather, they quickly find their way to the rest of society, mainly through sexual intercourse (it has been estimated that at least 40% of injecting drug users maintain sexual relationships with non-users). Since the 1980s, with the emergence of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases among injecting substance abusers as well as the population as a whole, many countries worldwide have recognized the need for more pragmatic approaches to substance abuse. Harm reduction is a term used to refer to "policies, programs and practices that aim to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of legal and illegal psychoactive drugs." These policies are "based on a strong commitment to public health (International Harm Reduction Association, 2009, p.1).

The underlying assumption of harm reduction approaches is that people always have and probably always will engage in risky behaviors (i.e. drug use, unsafe sex). Harm reduction approaches aim to reduce the damages caused by these risky behaviors. They recognize that substance use lies on a continuum between serious abuse and dysfunction and complete abstinence, and that some forms of use are preferable to others. For example, they contend that occasional use is preferable to daily use.

Harm reduction approaches regard quality of life as the desired outcome of policies, and they take a non-judgmental stand towards users. One of the main principles of harm reduction is the recognition that poverty, past experience, race, class and gender affect peoples' ability to cope with harms associated with substance use. Harm reduction advocates see prohibition and criminalization of substance abuse as ineffective and counterproductive, since substance use and abuse are very common despite countless laws and billions of dollars devoted to battling it. Advocates of these pragmatic approaches argue that 'zero tolerance' policies criminalize many people who could otherwise be productive members of society.

Many harm reduction advocates argue that the need to decrease HIV rates must take precedence over the moral reactions to drug use. Some also argue that prohibition and criminalization are simply not effective and that more pragmatic measures should be explored. Despite the US government's tough stance on drugs, some treatment is available and harm reduction programs are not unheard of. In addition, many public health related programs are in place, needle exchange programs are expanding with state support and many cities are adapting these programs to their own at-risk residents.

Each of the three approaches discussed above leads to different policies, practices, and distributions of resources. The moral model tends to suggest that the most resources be allocated to law enforcement. To advocates of the moral model, prevention is secondary, and treatment tertiary. Alternatively, advocates of the medical model tend to put treatment first (primarily abstinence based or medication based), followed by prevention and finally by law enforcement. Finally, similar to the medical model, the harm reduction model tends to favor spending on treatment and prevention versus spending on law enforcement. However, this model also stresses the need for additional funds for interventions that are not necessarily abstinence-based, but that help to reduce the cost of illness to society and to increase quality of life for addicts and their families.

The Social Workers Code of Ethics emphasizes our role in promoting the well-being of individuals within the social context, while seeking to enhance the capacity of people to address their own needs, by various means. To me, this suggests that as a profession, we should not be judging, punishing or trying to cure our clients, but rather advocating for them, treating and helping them in achieving self-determination. Though most of us can probably agree that abstinence is a desired outcome, we must recognize that not everyone is ready, willing or able to set this as his or her only and/or immediate goal. Meeting our clients where they are, rather than where we want or think they should want to be, will serve to expand our repertoire of available interventions and advocacy solutions. Remembering that society has played a part in creating and maintaining the social problem of drug abuse, might offer some insight into possible solutions.

MEET OUR NEW STUDENTS

Dexia Kong

With an immense passion in geriatric care, Dexia moved from China to the United States to attain requisite skills to fulfill her long-standing desire to promote change in the lives of the elderly population. She received her MSW degree from SP2 in 2009. Prior to rejoining SP2, she worked as a research coordinator at Penn School of Nursing on a Geriatric Nurse Education grant. With a strong interest in interdisciplinary research, her doctoral research agenda will be aging related health policy (e.g., home and community based services/care, and health disparities and literacy). She is also interested in Dementia Care and Alzheimer's Disease research among older adults, especially older Asian Americans.

Jia Xue

Jia has just earned her Master of Laws from Tsinghua University in Beijing, China and she holds a B.A. in English Literature. In 2009, she received a first-class scholarship for overall excellence at Tsinghua University and in 2008 she was named a Distinguished Honor Graduate of Beijing City. Her main areas of interest are gender and women's studies, domestic violence, human rights and social justice, children's exposure to intimate partner violence, and policy dimensions of violence prevention. She is interested in researching approaches to reducing violence against women and children.

Chenyi Ma

Chenyi Ma received his MSW from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University in St. Louis. After graduation, he worked at World Wildlife Fund / World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Beijing Office, as Education and Capacity Building Program Officer to promote Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in a well-established national education network that includes 21 key normal universities, People's Educational Press, and hundreds of pilot schools in both rural and urban settings in China. He also worked at Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) as its China Office Manager to manage the Ethnic Minority Development Rights Opportunities Project (EMDROP) in Tibetan communities—a bilateral project of the federal government of Canada and the central government of China. His research interests include disaster preparedness and social capital, networking analysis, and using ethnographic approaches to study hazard vulnerability.

Megan Stanton

After taking some time off this spring and early summer to travel, Megan resumed her work with Families in Crisis in Hartford, CT where she facilitated court mandated intervention programs for men with domestic violence charges. Megan has also been busy as an independent contractor for Families in Crisis, creating policy and procedure manuals for their domestic violence services and the "Tomorrow's Children Program," a program for children with incarcerated parents. She is very excited to come to the School of Social Policy and Practice in the fall. Her research interests include community based and grassroots approaches to poverty and inequality, participatory action research, international comparative research, and the relationships between NGOs and the communities with whom they collaborate.



Welcome (continued from page 1)

New Graduate Group members: We are pleased to welcome several new Graduate Group members: Richard Berk, Bob Boruch, Philippe Bourgois, Carolyn Cannuscio, David Mandell, and John McDonald. Several have already worked with one or more of our Ph.D. students and membership in the graduate group will more fully acknowledge their contributions.

Travel funds: We again are able to offer \$500/student to support your participation in a conference that will further your professional development. You do not need to present a paper or poster in order to use the funding. See Shara or Lisa before you go; they can fill you in on what paperwork is needed for reimbursement. (Hint: save every receipt and boarding pass.) And remember that you can apply to GAPSA for travel support, too.

Curriculum review: It has been a while since the Ph.D. curriculum has been reviewed so we plan to do so this year. We welcome your input about the curriculum and specific courses. More on that later.

A record: In closing, I'm told that the ten 2011 spring and summer graduates may well have set a record in terms of the sheer number who finished and graduated. I know that several of you are close behind!

Best wishes for a pleasant and productive year. If you hit bumps along the way, you know where to find me!

Susan B. Sorenson, Ph.D., Professor

Sources & Tips

Listservs are a very convenient way to stay up to date on the latest news, events, funding and training opportunities in your field. A listserv is basically an email list (like ALDOCS) used to disseminate information. Below is a short list of potentially relevant listservs by topic (source - the listserv organization):

Social Work/Welfare: SWRnet. Receive weekly email updates about funding opportunities, calls for papers, conference deadlines, and newly published research. To sign up visit: www.bu.edu/swrnet

Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare: the JUVJUST listserv provides a link to the latest juvenile justice information from OJJDP and the field. Announcements are sent when new publications are received or for other important newsworthy events.

To sign up visit: https://puborder.ncjrs.gov/listservs/subscribe_JuvJust.asp

Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR): posts information on CBPR and other types of community-academic research partnerships that provide: information (e.g. about conferences, funding opportunities, or publications relevant to CBPR), and discussion, sharing of ideas, collaborative problem-solving, and substantive queries or comments addressing issues relevant to CBPR partnership development and sustainability, research methodologies, funding strategies and resource sharing. To sign up visit: <http://mailman2.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/cbpr>

Mental Health: National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Receive updates on the latest mental health news, research advances, upcoming events, publications, clinical trials, meeting summaries, and more. To sign up visit: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/forms/listserv.jsp?listServName=NIMH-E-NEWS>

Systems Science: NIH Office of Behavioral & Social Sciences (OBSS). The main purpose of this listserv is to keep you informed of events/news at NIH/CDC related to the overlap between systems science methodologies, behavioral and social sciences research, and health. Lectures and articles of interest, training opportunities, and funding announcements are the sorts of things posted. To sign up send an email to mabryp@od.nih.gov with full contact info, including name, title, degree, institutional affiliation, department, discipline, email address, and phone number.

Non-Profit: ARNOVA-L: This list was established as a forum for anyone engaged with or interested in nonprofit organizations, voluntary action or philanthropy. The list enables us to facilitate the rapid sharing of concerns, interests, problems and solutions among interested researchers, teachers, practitioners and students. To sign up visit: <https://listserv.iupui.edu/cgi-bin/wa-iupui.exe?A0=ARNOVA-L>

Publications

- Patrick, G., **Bisgaier J.**, Hasham, I., Navarra, T., & Hickner, J. (in press). Specialty care referral patterns for the underserved: A study of community health centers on the South Side of Chicago. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*.
- Bisgaier, J.** & Rhodes, K.V. (2011). Auditing access to specialty care for children with public insurance. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 364(24), 2324-2333.
- Byrne, T.** & Culhane, D.P. (2011). The right to housing: An effective means for addressing homelessness? *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Law and Social Change*, 14(3), 379-390.
- Culhane, D.P., Metraux, S. & **Byrne, T.** (2011). A prevention-centered approach to homelessness assistance: A paradigm shift? *Housing Policy Debate*, 21(2), 295-315.
- Fargo, J., Metraux, S., **Byrne, T.**, Munley, E., Montgomery, A.E., Jones, H., Sheldon, G., & Culhane, D.P. (in press). Prevalence and risk of homelessness among U.S. veterans: A multisite investigation. *Preventing Chronic Disease*.
- Greenspan, I.**, Sinha, J., & Handy, F. (in press). The road to volunteering is paved with good intentions: Is volunteering in congregations a response to altruism, social influence or instrumental benefits? *IJOVA – International Journal of Volunteer Administration*.
- Tal, A., Leon-Zchout, S., Frankel-Oshri, L., **Greenspan, I.**, & Akov, S. (2011). Israel's environmental movement: Trends, needs, and potential. *Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Be'er Sheva*.
- Schori, M.** & Lawental, E. (in press). Drug control policies: Problems and prospects. In: M. Vaughn & B. Perron (eds.), *Social Work Practice in the Addictions*. Springer.
- Shier, M.L.**, Sinclair, C., & Gault, L. (2011). Challenging 'ableism' and teaching about disability in a social work classroom: A training module for generalist social workers working with people disabled by the social environment. *Critical Social Work*, 12(1), 47-64.
- Shier, M.L.**, & Graham, J.R. (2011). Mindfulness, subjective well-being, and social work: Insight into their interconnection from social work practitioners. *Social Work Education*, 30(1), 29-44.
- Shier, M.L.**, Jones, M.E., & Graham, J.R. (2011). Social communities and homelessness: A broader concept analysis of social relationships and being homeless. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 21(5), 455-474.
- Teitelman, A., **Tennille, J.**, Bohinski, J., Jemmott, L.S., & Jemmott, J. B. (2011). Unwanted unprotected sex: Condom coercion by male partners and self-silencing of condom negotiation among adolescent girls. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 34(3), 1-17.
- Walk, M.** (in press). [Review of the book *The Jossey-Bass handbook of nonprofit leadership and management*, 3rd ed., edited by D. O. Renz (2010)]. *Nonprofit Sector Voluntary Quarterly*.
- Estes, R. J. & **Zhou, H.** (in press). The public-private mix in comparative social welfare policy. *Journal of Global Social Work Practice*.
- Zhou, H.** & Shang, X. (in press). Minimally-trained short-term volunteer teachers in rural China: Challenges and needs. *Frontiers of Education in China*.

Presentations

- Rhodes, K.V. & **Bisgaier, J.** (2011, June). Broken teeth, broken promises. Poster presented at the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine Annual Meeting, Boston, MA
- Bisgaier, J.**, Levinson, D., Cutts, D., & Rhodes, K.V. (2011, May). Access to autism evaluation appointments with developmental-behavioral and neurodevelopmental disabilities subspecialists. Poster presented at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) Program Annual Research Symposium and Poster Day, Philadelphia PA.
- Bisgaier, J.** & Rhodes, K.V. (2011, May) Characterizing provider barriers to specialty care access for children: Implications for policy. Poster presented at the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholars Program Symposium on the Social Determinants of Child Health, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Bohrman, C.** (2011, July). The impact of community context on police perceptions. National Institute of Mental Health conference on Mental Health Services Research, Washington, DC.
- Byrne, T.** (2011, July). Prevalence and risk of homelessness among U.S. veterans: A multisite investigation. Paper presented at the National Alliance to End Homelessness 2011 National Conference on Ending Homelessness, Washington, DC.
- Greenspan, I.**, Katz-Gerro, T. & Handy, F. (2011, June). Multiple dimensions of environmental behavior: Israeli and American students compared. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Israel Studies (AIS), Brandeis University, Waltham, MA.
- Greenspan, I.**, Crossley, H., Handy, F., & Walk, M. (2011, June). The impact of social businesses: The case of the Academy of Computer & Employment Skills (A.C.E.S.). Presented at the 4th Annual meeting of the Association for Nonprofit and Social Economy Research (ANSER), Fredrickton, NB.
- Greenspan, I.** (2011, May). Philanthropic foundations and Israeli environmental NGOs: Donor dependency and Selection Mechanisms. Paper presented at the 2nd bi-annual conference of the Center for the Study of Philanthropy in Israel, Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
- Visaria, A., **Kim, M.**, & **Bisgaier, J.** (2011, August). Exploring the relationship between women's empowerment and healthcare: A structural equations model. Paper presented at 106th American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.
- Dixon-Román, E. & **Kim, M.** (2011, August). Assessing wealth: Family wealth and SAT performance. Paper presented at 106th American Sociological Association (ASA) Annual Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.
- Matone, M., Mollen, C., Zlotnik, S., **Mekonnen, R.**, O'Reilly, A., & Rubin, D. (2011, August). Children's stability & well-being study: Assessing barriers to educational success. Poster presented at the 2011 National Child Welfare Evaluation Summit, Children's Bureau, Washington DC.
- Azar, S. & **Mekonnen, R.** (2011, August). Intellectual disabilities and neglectful parenting: Preliminary findings on the role of cognition in parenting. Poster presented at the 2011 National Child Welfare Evaluation Summit, Children's Bureau, Washington DC.
- Mekonnen, R.** (2011, July). Dismantling placement instability step by step: The Philadelphia case. Research Presentation. APSAC's 19th Annual Colloquium, Philadelphia, PA
- Azar, S., **Mekonnen, R.**, & Stevenson, M. (2011, July). Child neglect: A test of social information processing model of etiology. Presentation. APSAC's 19th Annual Colloquium, Philadelphia, PA
- Mekonnen, R.** (2011, May). Helping hands: Intergenerational resource and information conference for caregivers. Invited panelist by Pennsylvania Senator Anthony H. Williams.
- Schori, M.**, Yagil, Y., & Lawental, E. (2011, June). Findings from a three-year follow-up study of the First Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Project at an Institute of Higher Education in Israel. Collage of Problems on Drug Dependence (CPDD) Annual Scientific Meeting and NIDA International Forum, Hollywood, FL.

Awards/Funding

- Tom Byrne** won Third Prize at the Art of Research Graduate Symposium for a presentation entitled "From Pop Tarts to Social Policy: The Importance of Data -Driven Decision Making"
- Marlene Walk** participated at the 2011 European Summer School on Social Economy, Social Business and Social Innovation (ESSE), University of Bologna (Italy), July 2011
- Joanna Bisgaier** accepted a position as a program analyst with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General. She will be conducting evaluations regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the Medicaid and Medicare programs and health care reform implementation.