2008

ECPA Newsletter 3

European
Community
Psychology
Association

Message from the President

Dear fellow community psychologists,

at the end of the year 2008 there is an ambivalent hope that the topics of community psychology (sense of community, empowerment, promotion of (mental) health and well-being) will matter to the world more than ever before. People in many parts of the world are realizing that community building is the key for our common future; the global financial crisis has brought a rising awareness on social responsibility, and, for the first time in history, with Barack Obama a former community organizer is president elect of one of the most powerful countries in the world. Of course, all these signs of hope are ambivalent given the amount of violence and poverty in the world; and cannot be sure

This ECPA-newsletter is containing reports on one event which has keeping many of us busy until summer 2008: the World Conference on Community Psychology in June in Lisbon, Portugal, which has been organized impressively by our founding-members, Maria Joao Moniz and José Ornelas (past-president of ECPA 2005-2007). This conference has been an event to be memorized, because it showed to European psychologists that Community Psychology is a discipline whose time has come. As a consequence, Community Psychology for the first time will be visible and present at the 11th European Congress for Psychology in Oslo in July 2009 (www.ecp2009.no).

Community Psychology in Europe is very active in many ways. National Community Psychology meetings have been held in Britain, Germany and Italy. In Berlin around 60 community psychologists discussed conditions of "The good life" and combined community psychology with art. In Firenze the Palazzio Vecchio drawn more than 300 community psychologists from all over Italy; members of the municipality and officials of the University of Firenze emphasized the important role community psychology in Italy for community planning and social development. In this newsletter, Donata Francescato, one of the founders of community psychology in Europe, is elaborating on the core competencies for doing community psychology in a rapidly changing world.

ECPA has been busy, immediately after the global event in Lisbon, to plan for the next European Conference on Community Psychology 2009. We are especially happy that Thomas Saias and the French Association for Community Psychology are organizing the 7th European Conference on Community Psychology in October 29/30 in Paris (www.eccp-paris2009.com). We are sure that this will be a special event because we hope that many of our French colleagues will be joining in the community of community psychologists in Europe, and we will be able to discover a new world of discourse in community psychology. The official Call for Papers will be sent out in January 2009.

Also underway are preparations for a debate on a world-wide collaboration in community psychology , which has been started in Lisbon 2008 already. Eduardo Almeida from Mexico is initiating an international roundtable at the 12th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action (SCRA) at Montclair University, NJ, USA (http://chss.montclair.edu/scra/). ECPA will be part of the conference and participate actively in these important debates on worldwide collaboration.

Eduardo Almeida, in addition, is already preparing for the 3rd International Conference on Community Psychology, which will take place in June 2010 in Puebla, Mexico (www.3iccp2010.org). ECPA will be one of the major sponsors of this conference, where we will be able to learn a great deal from our colleagues from Latin America.

Think globally and act locally will be an important motto for ECPA´s activities in the future:

ECPA has been active in raising a voice against torture connected with the debate among US-psychologists to condemn torture (please see the letters from president-elect David Fryer and member-at-large Serdar Demircioglu).

Because president-elect David Fryer, who will take over presidency of ECPA in 2009, will continue his professional career as professor for critical community psychology in Australia, a global perspective will be built in ECPA´s organizational structure. We would like to ask the members on their opinion in the **Inside ECPA** (see extra paper) section.

Inside ECPA will also provide members with all information on ECPA with reports in ECPA´s activities and financial resources, and many other information ECPA which may be useful. We do hope that these and many other resources will be available on-line soon when we will relaunch ECPA´s homepage (in spring).

Finally, we would like to urge you to participate actively in ECPA. ECPA not only needs more members, but also more information about community psychology projects (research and practical), events, activities and, last but not least, your opinion on topics related to community psychology. Therefore, please send papers, letters or links which we will be happy to share in this newsletter and on ECPA´s website coming soon.

We would like to thank all of you who supported ECPA and worked actively for ECPA. Collaboration with all of you has been a wonderful experience in the last year and we hope to continue the mutual work in the next year.

A Happy New Year!

Wolfgang Stark (President, ECPA)

Please visit the
11th European Congress of Psychology
Oslo, Norway on July 7-10 2009

Including two invited symposia on community psychology
and many more…

Conference website: www.ecp2009.no

Jose Ornelas & Maria Vargas-Moniz

The II International Conference on Community Psychology was held in Lisboa, Portugal form the 2nd to the 6th of June 2008, and it was an initiative dedicated to all the colleagues, professionals and students who invest a great deal of their lives to community intervention. The II ICCP 2008 follows the first world-wide effort for Community Psychology that was the I Conference that was held in Puerto Rico in 2005.

The Lisboa event was for us a major challenge

Photo of the Opening Session with Idália Moniz the Secretary of State for Rehabilitation (at the centre), with the ECPA president Wolfgang Stark (on the right), the chair of the Scientific Committee Christopher Sonn, Victoria University, Australia (on the left), Maria Vargas-Moniz (Conference Executive Coordinator), and José Ornelas Conference Chair.

both nationally, and internationally. The partnership created with ISPA (Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada), the Portuguese Society for Community Psychology, and a non-governmental organization AEIPS (Association for the Study and Psychosocial Integration) was crucial to the organization of an event of this scale.

At the national level we have developed a strategy to disseminate and influence the consolidation of Community Psychology contributions towards specific fields that we have considered to be politically relevant, where this influence could be more effective, and bring about renovation and social change. So, for the seven pre-confe-

rence institutes held on the 2nd and 3rd of June, there was a selection of specific thematic areas and trainers probing for concrete influences and impacts. The themes selected were Community Coalitions (*Tom Wolf*), Ending Domestic Violence (*Nicole Allen*), Youth Community Participation (*Sheperd Zeldin*), LGBT and Community Psychology (*Gary Harper*), Recovery and Mental Health (*Bret Kloos*), Collaborative Research (*MaryBeth Shinn*) and Program Evaluation (*Irma Serrano Garcia & David Jiminez*).

The pre-conference institutes required one year of preparation, and were opened to the community as a whole, to other scientific areas and social movements involved in community organization or community support systems. This initiative was also demanding for the trainers, because each of the Institutes required the development of a detailed program that had to be translated and adapted to Portuguese.

Every trainer was of Excellency, both in commitment and professionalism in delivering training, and coping with different languages. In all the institutes we have had a total of 300 participants besides those who also participated in the Conference.

The effort entailed for the Conference held from the 4th to the 6th of June was also supported by the involvement of organizations such as the ECPA, SCRA, the Community Psychology Group of the Sociedad Ibero-Americana de Psicología, the Community Psychology College of the Australian Psychological Society, the German Community Psychology Association, the Community Psy-

International Forum in a room resembling a Parliament, were everyone could contribute, be heard, and express appreciation or concern.

chology Associations from the Italy, the United Kingdom, Japan, France, New Zealand, and other national and regional groups demonstrating the potential of Community Psychology in the search to establish global platforms for dialogue and joint effort.

For the conference we have had around 550 participants that brought 600 presentations, and

Photo of a general panorama of the Conference environment

represented 36 countries from all the continents, with larger delegations coming from Australia/ New Zealand, Japan, Mexico, United States of America, Italy, Brazil, Canada or Germany. But also participants from countries where only through a very consistent diplomatic effort we were able to be honored with their presence, like Turkey, Russia, Indonesia, Cuba or Ghana. Within

the several formats we have had 60 Symposia, 264 presentations structured in panels, 24 round-table discussions, 24 workshops e 20 innovative sessions, and 133 poster presentations, meaning 12 simultaneous rooms.

The main aim of this conference was to contribute for the consolidation of an International movement inspired in the principles of community psychology.

The initiative of our colleagues from the San Juan

From left to right Wolfgang Stark, Donata Francescato, and Tom Wolff

University of Porto Rico where the First International Conference was held opened new opportunities for this international gathering that the II Conference probed to consolidate. Now, we believe that the conditions to build a global movement for Community Psychology are created and are irreversible.

With these two initiatives we were able, in different languages, different cultures, with different theoretical points of view, to share our divergences and identify our common ground in order to become stronger to have more influence, and to be more efficient in developing programs in the following domains: Academic curricula, building new contexts and alternative practices, Influence social change, influence innovation in public policies, and developing promising international research and social interventions.

To congregate the knowledge accumulated during these past decades we have had to face another challenge that is to create a global community psychology platform. During the three days of the Conference we have held what we have named the Community Psychology International *Forum*, aimed to discuss the paths of building our common ground. The specific aims designed for the Forum were to facilitate communication and learning about international

efforts in the field of community psychology, to exchange information and build capacity for theory, research and practice, promote networking and international cooperation within the most relevant domains of intervention (*e.g.* poverty, violence, natural hazards) and areas of social change and betterment.

The idea of a global coalition for development may be influenced by the research and practice of community psychology, systematizing experiences and pilot interventions in community contexts. This movement should be integrated in a global appeal to participation and knowledge exchange.

We are sure that our colleagues from Puebla Mexico that will host the III International Conference on Community Psychology will proceed with this spirit of openness, inclusiveness, and appreciation of diversity.

On behalf of the organizers of the II ICCP Lisboa 08, we thank the Scientific and the Committees, to all the speakers and participants for sharing and contributing for this event.

José H. Ornelas
Associate Professor ISPA, Lisboa, Portugal
Chair of the II ICCP Lisboa 08

Maria Vargas-Moniz
Assistant Researcher ISPA, Lisboa, Portugal
Conference Executive Coordinator

Comments by David Fryer

Whilst there have been a number of conferences with international attendance organised in Australia/New Zealand (the Trans-Tasman biennials), in the US (SCRA Biennials) and in Europe (European Community Psychology Association - previously called the European Network of Community Psychology), this conference could claim to have more international *Organising and Scientific* Committees than most. The Organising Committee was composed of members from: Australia (2 members); Canada; Chile; Japan: Portugal (2 members including the Chair); Puerto Rico; South Africa; Spain; UK; and the USA (2 members) and the Scientific Committee was composed of members from: Australia (Chair); Brazil; Chile; Columbia; Germany; Italy; New Zealand; Puerto Rico; South Africa; Spain; USA and Venezuela. The *practical arrangements* for the conference were handled by an all Portuguese Executive Committee of 16 members ably co-ordinated by Maria Vargas-Moniz.

The Lisbon Conference Programme itself included over 350 presentations and over 130 posters whose abstracts referred to contributors from at least 30 countries including: Australia; Brazil; Canada; Chile; Columbia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Indonesia; Iran; Israel; Italy; Japan; Mexico; Mozambique; New Zealand; Norway; Palestine; Poland; Portugal; Puerto; Mexico; Slovakia; South Africa; Spain; Sweden; Turkey; UK; USA and Venezuela. An interesting dynamic within the conference was the contrast between the dominant discourse that community psychology is becoming 'established' and 'international' and that this is a 'good thing' and a counter or subjugated discourse that community psychology is becoming de-radicalised, ideologically problematic, intellectually colonised and that this is a bad thing. Those emphasising the latter drew attention to: six of the seven pre-conference 'Institutes' being run by United Statesians (and the seventh by a Puerto Rican, Puerto Rico being of course an unincorporated, organized territory of the US); the only Keynote Address being given by a United Statesian; three out of the eight 'Thematic Keynotes' being given by United Statesians (others were from: Australia; Germany; Italy; UK; and Venezuela) and a fifth of presentations being by United Statesians despite the USA being one of more than 30 countries represented at the conference.

International Community Psychology - a political success story?

Remarks by Wolfgang Stark

More than 6oo participants and more than 500 presentations (plenary sessions, roundtables, symposia, workshops, innovative sessions and poster sessions) in the wonderful premises of the Gulbenkian Foundation in Lisboa proved that the 2nd International Conference on Community Psychology 2008 was a big event for international community psychology; facilitated by a logistical to performance by the organizers from Portugal (thanks to the coordinators Maria Vargas Moniz and José Ornelas). The conference´s heading of "Building Participative, Empowering and Diverse Communities: Visioning Community Psychology in a Worldwide Perspective" fostered the potential and the necessity of community psychology to be transdisciplinary and political by nature. The appearance of a large group of scientist and practitioners from Latin America (Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Columbia, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Uruguay and Venezuela) and their experiences and debates brought to Europe strengthened this perspective, which will be important for community psychology´s global future.

Although many of the debates in community psychology worldwide seem to be critical against societal developments and close to social movements, most papers given at conferences and publications in journals remain to be close to main-stream-psychology. At the Lisbon conference one could feel a still gentle, but growing move toward a "politicization" of the discipline. The initial key-note by José Ornelas (Portugal) linked community psychology with important democratization movements in Portugal and other countries. Jim Kelly´s brilliant key-note on his story of community psychology praised and clarified the transdisciplinary background of community psychology. Critical social theory has laid the ground for many of the papers from Latin America – preeminently shown by Mariza Monteiro, Venezuela and Irma Serrano-Garcia, Puerto Rico -, but also for symposia on "critical community psychology" (David Fryer, Scotland). Although one could realize the predominance of US-papers and "main-stream" methodologies, voices from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe seem to gain power and add new spices and ingredients to an international community psychology kitchen.

Of course, practical community psychology topics (health promotion and prevention, community empowerment, youth violence and drug problems, poverty and health) dominated the presentations; there also have been new themes: how community psychology approaches are affecting local politics, or, how to use new media for community building; disciplinary approaches have been linked with debates on global problems.

The daily scheduled "International Forum on Community Psychology" displayed strong debates about the international role and structure of community psychology. ECPA has been keen to slow down a process of prematurely forming a global association of community psychologists. We are convinced that we first should start a process of mutual learning from the different perspectives on community psychology in the US (SCRA), Latin America, Europe, Australia, Asia and Africa. Nevertheless the question of "how much and in which way community psychology wants to matter to the world" will be an ongoing debate and should be part of our discourse until the next International Conference 2010 in Puebla, Mexico.

Of course, in many of the sessions, results and discourse has been offered on the important and traditional topics of community psychology: health promotion, community empowerment, prevention, families and health, poverty reduction, youth violence, drug problems. But also new topics and debates could be found: the impact of community psychology on regional social policy has been analyzed both by Italian and Colombian colleagues; the use of new media for community building and psychology has been a widely discussed topic. Many of the papers will be presented on the website www.2iccp.com.

Like always in conferences, there have been too many papers and too few opportunities for discussion (which we will try to improve in the Paris conference 2009). Therefore, as we all know, the best way to use a big conference like this is to adopt the image of the "flaneur": wander around and be inspired…

DEVELOPING CORE COMPETENCIES TO GIVE AWAY IN COMMUNITY PRACTICE

Donata Francescato[1]

TO GIVE PSYCHOLOGY AWAY TAKES A LOT OF THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TRAINING

To become a community psychologist _today_ is not an easy task, but the journey is extremely rewarding if one first masters two meta-skills, which are indispensable to survive and thrive in our field.

The first meta-skill requires, a mind-expanding first step: developing a socio-political awareness of the interaction between personal, relational and collective well-being in an historical period in which global culture, dominated by commercial mass media, promotes moral disengagement and individualistic values and behaviors. Even Julian Rappaport recognizes courageously, that in spite of his being a college student in the social-change prone sixties, he did not tie his interests in the civil rights movement to his own education until he saw "the connections between social, political, economic and psychological well-being. But this is a connection that took me a long time to make" (Rappaport, 2005, p 41).

To be socio-politically aware one has to become conscious of the strong ties between politics and one's personal life, a relationship that today many young people do not perceive, considering politics as irrelevant to their life (Caciagli & Corbetta, 2002). Mass media continually tell individual success stories, and pursuing individual wealth and visibility are presented as major goals. Moreover, as Nelson and Prilleltenskjy (2005) underline how our society values liberty over equality and solidarity. In the last decades we have seen a decline in traditional forms of active political participation, especially among young people, both in Italy and in Europe. There has also been a decrease in interest towards politics and in trust in political institutions and politicians, as well as an alarming increase in the number of citizens who state they are disgusted with politics (Arcidiacono, 2004; Di Maria, 2002; Caprara, 2003; Mebane et al. 2004). This decline in political interest and participation is particularly worrisome for CP, which unites clinical psychology's traditional concern with the welfare of the individual with an interest in the legislative and political processes that create the conditions in which individuals live.

Most psychology majors in Italy, who take an introductory CP course, have an opportunity to become more socio-politically aware, since all Italian community psychology textbooks (Amerio 200, 2004, Arcidiacono et al. 1996, De Piccoli, & Lavanco 2003, Francescato et al. 2002, 2004, Gelli 2002, Lavanco 2001, Lavanco & Novara 2002, Mannarini 2004, Prezza & Santinello 2002, Zani & Polmonari 1996) consider the link between the concern for individual well-being and the political struggles, which promote collective welfare, as a core theoretical foundations of CP. They stress the tie between individual empowerment and collective struggles, showing how these have been crucial in the past to achieve civic, human and social rights for oppressed groups, and underline that to join political collective struggles is even more important today when they are much less in fashion. The social world is not given, ontologically placed before the subject, but is a product of human action - something such as culture, norms, rules, inequalities of power and opportunities that mankind has built - that gives each concrete human being different power and access to valuable resources. When there is an individual problem, it is not only the individual that may have to change but also the social setting. When there is a social problem, changing laws and economical conditions may be important but non sufficient. Individuals need to change as well. A tiny minority of politically militant community students in our university (about 3%) sometimes do not share this view. They prefer to think dominant elites are totally to blame. So in our courses we try to show that responsibility for solving problems is plural; it rests both on individuals and on social systems.

Most community psychology courses do a good job in underlying that collective struggles require active citizenship, political involvement, and social capital that are all based on participation at different local, national, and international levels.

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Most CP courses, therefore, focus on the **need to favor contemporaneously individual, group, organizational, local community and macro-social empowerment to create the conditions that favor the liberation of oppressed groups and the promotion of well-being for most citizens.** A first level of empowerment is reached, at each of these five levels," through the elaboration of new narratives, which makes choices that were "unthinkable", become "imaginable". However, narratives are not enough. Changes can become "feasible" by creating socio-economical conditions that foster individual and collective empowerment. Socio economic conditions change historically. To illustrate these interactions, several Italian textbooks have historical sections in which they document how the development of a discipline such as community psychology, is always partially dependent on the socio-political conditions of a particular country in a given historical period. Several countries (USA, Italy, Australia for instance) gave birth to community psychology in a period of strong social change, in the sixties and seventies. In those years, new social movements were born, innovative legislations passed, and this sociopolitical climate favorable to progressive change gave impetus the development of the discipline. In various countries (Great Britain, USA, Italy) when governments shifted in more conservative directions, the changed Zeitgeist offered fewer opportunities for community psychologists' ideas, values and projects.

Most Italian CP courses, however, fail to take into consideration that two thirds of their students are women, belonging to a population that the European Union considers deprived of equal opportunities. In Italy females also have to overcome sexist socialization processes. Women's cultural heritage pulls them toward the "caring professions", motivates them to "help people" However, the same cultural heritage pushes them toward the "privatization" of social problems. In spite of the changes promoted by feminism, Italian women are still less likely than men to be politically interested, informed or be activists in political parties and movements (Caciagli & Corbetta 2002). This attitudinal deficit contributes substantially to the gender gap in political activity. This deficit is largely due to processes of childhood and adult socialization that might lead men and women to draw different conclusions about the relevance of politics to their life. University training is an adult socialization process that can change attitudes: we can and should provide in our university and professional training more opportunities for young women to understand the relevance of politics to their professional careers and their personal lives.

In fact, many young women are very interested in intrapsychic and interpersonal relations and most psychology academic training programs help them to look more inwards. In Italy while our current psychology university majors offer dozens of subjects related to clinical topics, very few require students to take subjects such as contemporary history, women's studies, sociology, political psychology, political science, which could offer female students different perspectives. Community psychology textbooks and courses in Italy, do not face enough the problems of women and ethnic minorities.

Being a community psychologist increases the opportunities to become a member of politically active minorities that can offer passion, belonging and meaning. Pursuing collective goals can be more fun and more fulfilling than merely reaching individual targets, I know from direct experiences in the USA and Italy as a member for the feminist movement of the 60 and 70s. But it requires the capacity to thrive on minority status, which is the second major meta-skill needed to become an empowering community psychologist. In fact, although CP has been growing in the last decades both in the academic and in the professional field, this branch of psychology has still a minority status among psychological disciplines in all countries where it exists (Reich et al. 2007).

CP master and doctoral students in Italy get plenty of experience in minority status in their universities, but sometimes they have disempowering experiences. They not only have to move beyond the worldview of traditional applied psychology, which emphasizes individualistic explanations of behavior an individual strategies of change such as psychotherapy, but also have to deal with the high status given in many psychology departments to neuroscientists and to the biomedical framework, which explores the genetic foundations of psychological processes, psychology, health psychology which deal with social issues. Only some students, get to attend empowering trainings labs, both online and face to face, such as the ones we offer in Rome which aim to help students become aware how their values and goals have been shaped by dominant

family and cultural narratives and how different branches of psychology are mainly the product of their times and the values and interests of their practitioners.

THEORETICALLY DRIVEN CORE COMPETENCIES FOR COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

Elsewhere, Francescato and Tomai (2001), Francescato Tomai Ghirelli (2002) and Francescato et al. 2007, I have described how European community psychologists have tried to develop some theoretical principles that should guide community psychology interventions.

CP interventions should have the following characteristics

- *Encourage pluralistic interpretations of social problems that integrate objective and subjective knowledge, and broaden the viewpoints from which a given situation can be considered.* Pluralistic interpretations should promote interventions and combine tools coming from different disciplines, and activate forms of participation that acknowledge the importance of "local knowledge" (that is, knowledge owned by people involved in social problems).
- *Examine the historical roots of social problems and the unequal distribution of power and access to resources in the social context.* CP should stimulate shared reflections on how dominant narratives legitimate this unequal distribution of resources
- *Give voice to minority narratives, which break the silent consensus with which social actors legitimate the conventional interpretations of power inequalities.* CP should promote the production of new metaphors or new narratives that help "imagine" new scripts and roles for individuals and social groups and create the symbolic base that legitimate change .
- *Create ties among people who share a problem*. The goal of CP is to increase their social capital, since changing narratives is only the first step for overcoming the economical, legal, cultural and social barriers.
- *Identify the points of strengths to obtain a change.* CP should identify the problems that can be resolved at the level of the target group and the problem that require different levels of interventions (political, legal, economic at the local, state, national, international level)
- *Spreading psychological knowledge and competencies* CP should put into practice the principle of *giving psychology away,"* that interventions should be performed in ways that allow participants to master as much as possible the "tool" and the CP facilitator should be so successful as to make him-herself obsolete, (that is to plan one's death!).

COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY CORE COMPETENCIES TAUGHT AT THE UNDERGRADUATE AND MASTER LEVEL IN SOME UNIVERSITIES AND IN MOST NON ACADEMICALLY BASED MASTER PROGRAMS

In Italy there about 30 community courses offered in university undergraduate Bachelor type (three-year) and Lauree Magistrali (a further two-year program) that give a title similar to a USA Master. We also have some two-year Master programs promoted by professional private associations, some of which have been in existence since 1982, and have trained hundreds of community psychologists. We only have one doctoral program in community psychology sponsored jointly by the university of Lecce, Rome, Palermo and Torino. All doctoral students are trained mostly for academic careers: group skills and action research, program evaluations, quantitative and qualitative analysis is core competences promoted.

In most undergraduate and Master level programs students learn action research, planning and evaluation, facilitating small groups and some form of community analysis and networking. Some program focus more on prevention planning, health and emergency psychology skills. Core competences are generally taught in "labs", for instance at the University of Cesena, which is been named the top psychology faculty of Italy, CP students can attend a lab for facilitating focus groups, one on planning and evaluation and one on empowerment training.

There is still no formal agreement across universities about what should be taught. CP professors in Italy are mostly self-taught and possess widely different skills coming from clinical, organizational, social psychology and other backgrounds. Training issues have been debated extensively, even presently since universities in Italy are in 2007 redefining their degree programs after a

reform that took place in 2001. The Division of Community Psychology in the 70s and 80s, and SIPCO (Italian Society of Community Psychologists) have discussed training issues in many meetings and have proposed a list of core interventions skills, that distinguish community psychologists from other kinds of psychologists. The Italian Psychological Order (the legal professional association) lists community profiling, multidimensional organizational analysis, consultation, action research, networking, planning and evaluation of projects as professional competencies of community psychologists with suggested payment fees for each type of intervention. Since planning and evaluation, and action research are widely known around the CP world, I will describe the less well known core competencies which have been more developed in Europe as they are currently taught at my university.

META COMPETENCIES DEVELOPED PRIMARELY IN EUROPE

These meta competencies, involve mastering specific methodologies, which include the opportunity for community psychologists to play various roles and use several different skills, as described in the sections below. They enable community psychologists to promote "amelioration" and "transformation" kinds of changes at the local community, organizational, small groups and individual level, and promoting both socio-political empowerment and sense of community and social capital at all these levels, using the theoretical guidelines outlined previously. These wide core competencies are acquired in "labs" in which trainees under guided supervision in face to face or online small groups have the opportunity to learn by doing and by critically reflecting on their personal and collective experiences. At my university, for instance, psychology students can choose to take part in a "Action Research lab", in which they practice community profiling and network building, working in teams of three or four, by actually carrying out the intervention in a local community of their choice. They can also attend a "Multidimensional Organizational Analysis Lab" where they learn this core competence by actually using this methodology in a community organization of their choice ranging from business firms to NGOs or non-profit organizations.. Students are also encouraged to take "Small groups labs" in which they learn how

to facilitate small group functioning and how to promote new self-help groups. Finally they can take part in an "Empowering training lab", in which they learn how to empower other persons through working on their own socio-political empowerment.

Promoting new self-help groups and Empowering existing small groups

In CP group skills are crucial since most of our interventions, from action research, to program planning and evaluation, to consultation, to empowering organizations and communities are very often done in small groups and networking among groups to promote bridging social capital requires an understanding of small group processes. This skill is therefore emphasized in almost all CP courses in Italy.

Our empowering group training tries to help students, (who are invited to take a two month long group lab, either face to face or online) to learn: a) to evaluate weak and strong points of group functioning, b) which functions help group processes and task and which hinder group developments, c) advantages and disadvantages of various methods of group decision making, problem solving and conflict resolution. These skills are supposed to be shared in existing community groups to empower them to function better to meet their goals. Students also learn how to promote new self-help groups assisting them in their first three or four meetings and then offering consultation when needed.

Community profiling and network building

Community profiling and network building, initially developed in Italy by Martini & Sequi (1988) further redefined in Austria (Ehymayer et al. 2000), then modified by Francescato et al. (2002) is a methodology which facilitates consideration of a local community from different views points and therefore encourages *pluralistic interpretations of local problems that integrate objective and subjective knowledge.* It employs tools coming from different disciplines, and activates forms of participation that acknowledge the importance of "local knowledge". Community profiling is a structured participatory action research, that can be used to find out what particular problems and strengths characterize a local community, in the eyes of different groups of residents and what are their most desired changes. It provides a general framework that

can promote an empowerment process with local residents. Eight profiles, five where "hard" data are generally available and gathered, these include territorial, demographic, economic, service, and institutional profiles The last three profiles are called "soft" because they are primarily based on perceptions: anthropological, psychological, and visions of the future of the community. According to Martini and Sequi to promote community well-being one ha to favor resident involvement, participation, dialogue among the different stakeholders and social accountability: "the reading of a community through profiling is a fundamental moment in the process of change. It favors consciousness raising on the part of community residents as they become aware of their assets, needs, potentialities, limits, values and desires. Not only data are important. But it is the meaning that diverse social actors, through a process of "collective negotiation" give to these data that is the determining factor in promoting change"(Martini & Sequi, 1995, p.57).

Community profiling has been used to enhance sense of community, social capital and participation in decision making in local programs sponsored by the European Union to promote better health (Healthy Cities), protect the environment (Agenda 21) or help local municipal officials and service agencies assess the needs and wishes of community residents (Prezza & Santinello, 2002; De Piccoli & Lavanco, 2003; Mannarini 2004).

First, a core group of citizens is formed made up of at least one local expert for each profile, the community psychologists involved and representatives of the service agency or political body sponsoring the research. This core group, through a brainstorming technique, does a preliminary analysis on perceived strong and weak points of their community. They also furnish access to key people who are interviewed and can furnish expert interpretations on "controversial data" for instance pollution levels and number of legal immigrants. These experts, evaluations are then compared with the perceptions of weak and strong points of the community held by different focus groups, whose members are chosen to represent both dominant and marginalized groups. Sometimes we also build specific questionnaires based on the problems, assets and desires for changes emerged through the interviews and the focus groups and distribute them to a representative sample of the population (Mannarini 2004).

For the anthropological, psychological and future profile we use a variety of more subjective small group techniques, from community narratives to movie scripts to explore the affective components of community belonging (i.e. shared values, feelings about living in certain neighborhoods, fears and hopes for the future), so crucial in motivating or discouraging people to participate in empowerment projects. We ask different target groups, which during the examination of the first five profiles have been shown to be important for that specific community, to develop a plot for a movie script about their community. They have to pick a genre of movie (e.g. historical, science fiction, comedy, detective story, etc.) and come up with a title, a plot, main characters and dramatization, if they wish, of particular relevant scenes. Most groups choose to dramatize their "movie" in front of the other groups, which are then encouraged to say what emotions they felt watching the performance. It seems that emotional sharing in a protected environment promotes bonding and bridging social capital by building a climate of trust in which even conflicts can be openly expressed and accepted.

During a final meeting, in which all the people who participated in the research are urged to attend. the interactions among main strengths and weak points emerging in all eight profiles are discussed as well as priorities for feasible changes. Goals and activities are also formulated and responsibilities for implementation are allocated.

Many important competencies are required to carry out a profiling analysis, ranging from group facilitating and interviewing skills, to networking, action research skills, public speaking, qualitative and quantitative data analysis, conflict resolution skills, project management skills, and communicating to different audiences. We have found that participating in a profiling project sharpens students' skills and increases self-efficacy, beliefs and sense of empowerment and social capital. Some students even find placement opportunities or paid jobs in the process.

Multidimensional Organizational Analysis

Trained in the USA as a community psychologist, I learnt many important competencies as mental health consultation, program evaluation, community development; however, at the organizational level I was left with a huge lack of both theoretical and practical knowledge. When I re-

turned to Italy I became even more convinced of the need to acquire more skills in this domain. I was very happy to see that Nelson and Prilleltensky (2005) devoted a chapter to this topic, since most CP textbooks, including several Italian ones, tend to neglect this aspect. Organizations are crucial for our well-being since most of us live a large portion of our lives in them. An empowering organization can increases personal wellbeing, augmenting workers and service recipients' knowledge of the various aspects of organizational functioning, and involvement in decision-making. It may also promote relational wellbeing improving communication among different stakeholders promoting bonding and bridging social capital and giving voice to marginalized and less powerful groups. It can, furthermore, foster collective well-being when members of the organization become aware of political, economic and social forces impinging on their organization.

Also, frequently, one has to promote organizational as well as personal or group changes in order to implement durable modification. Therefore, several European community psychologists have attempted to develop strategies to promote organizational empowerment. (E.g. Stark, 2000; Francescato, Tomai & Ghirelli, 2002).

One of these tools, developed by Francescato and Ghirelli (1988) is called multidimensional organizational analysis (MOA) and involves people on all hierarchical levels in a specific organization. For instance in a school, students, parents, teachers, janitors, and office staff, together will analyze their organization across four dimensions (structural-strategic, functional, psycho-environmental and cultural). These four dimensions follow a continuum that varies from dealing with "hard" objective variables (market share, increase or decrease in number of students, legal forms, age and educational level of staff, etc.) to "soft" subjective perceptions (unconscious representations of work settings, attitudes toward power, intergroup conflicts, level of satisfaction, etc.).

The core representative group starts a MOA by narrating the strategic history of their organizations, when it was born, what goals and visions it had, and how strategic goals have changed in time. Then they do a "positioning exercise" in which they choose criteria with which to evaluate their organization 's performance in the recent past. Sometimes, we divide the core groups into smaller homogenous subgroups (students, teachers, parents, etc.) to see what each different

groups select as criteria for evaluation, then the groups come together and confront their visions. Taking into consideration legal , economic and other structural limits, the core groups define strategic objectives for the immediate future and for the next five years, and also the weak and strong points of this dimension. Then the functional dimension is examined, what tasks have to be done to meet the goals, and what are the weak and strong points. We use different methodologies taken from sociology, and organizational disciplines to examine activities flows and detect where problems and assets may lie.

Then the group examines the cultural or psychodynamic dimension using a variety of tools drawn from cultural psychology, cultural anthropology and social analysis. This dimension explores group and individual emotional variables which are often not consciously discussed, basically using group drawing, recurrent jokes, favorite anecdotes, things hung on walls, etc. to explore affective and power relations. To capture problem solving styles we use again the movie script technique, members of the organization are divided into two or more groups, according to some criteria that have emerged as crucial examining the first two dimensions (in a hospital they may be professionals and administrators, and nurse aides; in a service, old timers and newcomers; and in another organization men and women, migrants and local workers etc.). The members of each subgroup make up their script and recite some significant scenes to the other groups. Then all participants discuss, in lively and often amusing ways, if the emotions, the problem solving styles adopted in the movie script, remind them of the emotional climate of their own organization and why. Sometimes just the title of the movies is very illuminating. If one group chooses "Titanic" or "Star wars" as a title, one can often can guess what emotional assets or liabilities are perceived in their organization.

Finally the psycho-environmental dimension is explored, which basically measures the fit between what individuals' expectations and organizational pressures. Generally we use tools taken from organizational psychology to measure perceived leadership styles, communication and conflict resolution patterns, etc. Then taking into account all weak and strong points emerging in all four dimensions, the group looks for crucial interaction among dimensions; for instance, how a task ill defined in the functional dimension ali-

ments interpersonal conflicts, or how financial problems in the economic dimension increase levels of anxiety in the psychodynamic dimension etc.

After weaknesses and strengths have been identified by the various organizational actors, they formulate different narratives and preferred visions of the future, and in some cases each person gets to say what preferred function she may want to exercise in the future and whether she has the necessary skills to perform it or how she may learn them.

At the end of the analysis, participants formulate plans for desired changes that can be achieved through the resources available within the organization and outline the problems or solutions that cannot be tackled without intervention at some different level. Focusing on feasible change favors empowerment and increases the capacity of organizations to foster creative change. The strongly participatory nature of this methodology makes it unsuitable for highly hierarchical organizations, unless top managers allow workers at all levels to participate. However, it is a very appropriate tool for all organizations where members elect their leaders such as unions, volunteer organization, professional groups and cooperatives. Evaluation of the efficacy of this tool has been carried out on more than 140 organizations ranging from unions to schools, and from party organizations to hospitals (Morganti, 1999; Francescato et al. 2006).

Students mastering MOA learn several key competences: group interviewing and facilitating, creative techniques such as brainstorming and problem solving, qualitative data analysis, as well as personal and social competencies (such as the ability to mobilize self and others, to understand other viewpoints, and to promote collaboration and cooperation and constructive ways to handle conflicts).

Affective education and
empowering orientation training

This intervention strategy integrates concepts and tools from the affective education movement (Lang, Katz & Menezes, 1998) and CP. From affective education, Italian CP borrowed the idea that the learning process can best take place in a context of positive interpersonal relations. We have applied the circle time technique, which favors emotional sharing, to different kinds of groups: from elementary classrooms to high schools, to

teams of workers, to self-help organizations, and to volunteer and political groups (Francescato, Tomai, & Ghirelli, 2002).

In our university, students meet in small groups for about ten times, for three-hour long workshops, facilitated by a community psychologist. Students first participate in awareness raising activities, by exploring how their needs and wishes are influenced by mass media, taking about their favorite songs, movies, internet sites and what values they convey. They also talk about their political socialization in the family, peer groups, school and through mass media .The students explore assets and liabilities their past may have provided them with according to the position they occupied in our hierarchical society. Then they are invited to imagine themselves working as a community psychologist in a setting of their choice.

They have to reflect in pairs if their possess the skills needed to do their desired job of if they need more knowledge and competencies. Then they are asked to use the group schema provided in the groups labs and in their community courses to detect strong and weak points in the small groups of which they are members (family, class, work or volunteer groups) and to reflect on how these groups impact on their personal, relational and collective well being, and what role they personally could play in these small groups to transform them in empowering groups for all members. Then student go through the same reflective process using MOA schema for an organization they all share, generally they choose our psychology faculty and we get very revealing movie scripts indeed! Finally using the profiles they explore what they know and do not know about the community where they might want to work. They also discuss how the organization or community where they may work may be affected by broad cultural economic and political trends. In the final two meetings they try to assess the congruence between their desires and competences and what the outside world seems to offer and requires. They also identify priorities for personal change and for collective changes. In this last case they are invited to identify other people, groups, institutions with they have to network to achieve the collective changes desired.

All these four meta competencies can be increased also through (CSCL) Computer Supported Collaborative Learning, as I have verified in several pilot studies available in English (Fran-

cescato et al. 2006,. 2007 Mebane et al. in press. . Solimeno et al. in press) In fact I recommend strongly that to train community psychologists we take into account the wonderful opportunities provided by virtual communities: Teaching community psychology online to promote social capital and socio-political empowerment in educational and professional settings is possible. On Italy we have an undergraduate degree in psychology, taught entirely at distance, and community psychology is one of the courses included in the three- year bachelor degree program offered by a consortium of four psychology faculties of major Italian universities. The distance community course include among CP core competencies: community profiling, networking, self-help group promotion, small groups facilitation, multidimensional organizational analysis, action research, planning and evaluation of prevention programs, affective education and empowerment training. I strongly feel that all CP students should have the opportunity to learn these core competencies, because I have seen in my 30 year experience in training that the advantages of having a set of competencies to guide training greatly outweigh the disadvantages.

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Community Psychology: common values, diverse practices

**The French Association of Community Psychology
and the
European Community Psychology Association
are welcoming the**

**7th European congress of community psychology
in Paris, the 29th and 30th October 2009.**

Community Psychology still is an unknown branch of psychology in Europe. It develops and grows from the experiences of people that have common goals: fighting social inequalities, promoting social insertion and community participation, to reach community development and individual mental health.

Community Psychology practices are diverse and ask for a debate of their bases and common values. This may help to develop a common ground of the discipline, of the success factors of community development action, of prevention policies and health promotion initiatives.

This congress will aim the networking between scholars, practitioners and local elected.

The organizing committee encourages the participants to submit presentations that could be useful for the development of concrete community interventions.

We wish to see you in Paris,
for what will be the first event of community psychology in France.

Best regards
Thomas Saias, AFPC president
Wolfgang Stark, ECPA president

**For more information, please see the webpage of the conference
www.eccp-paris2009.com**

Although things maybe will change with the next US government, this statement against torture is an important document of the basic values of community psychology in Europe.
ECPA and all other psychological association and institutions of civil society will have to go on to fight against violence and torture on this planet!

Appeal to our Colleagues in Turkey from American Psychologists: Stand With Us Against Psychologist Involvement in Torture and Detainee Abuse

We understand that a representative of the American Psychological Association has recently issued a statement in Turkey on the APA's policies regarding the United States' government's systematic policy of torture and other detainee abuse. We would like to alert our colleagues in Turkey to the true role of the APA in this sordid chapter of American history. The APA position that psychologists help keep interrogations "safe, legal, and ethical" defies the evidence. There is not one documented case of a psychologist working to stop abuse ordered or condoned by his or her chain of command. Rather, there is an extensive record of psychologists playing central roles in the development, implementation, standardization, and dissemination of the abusive techniques adopted by the Bush administration.

- Psychologists developed and implemented the CIA's "enhanced interrogations"program.

- Psychologists helped develop the Guantanamo program of psychological abuse, utilizing isolation, sleep deprivation and related tactics to break down detainees. These techniques were adapted from those used by communist nations to brainwash POWs and others into giving false confessions.

- At Guantanamo, BSCT [Behavioral Science Consultation Team] psychologists recommended using detainee weaknesses and isolation to break down detainees. Last month a BSCT psychologist used her right against self-incrimination to refuse to give testimony to the Military Commission in a war crimes trial regarding her illegal, unethical, recommendations for subjecting a detainee to prolonged isolation and other efforts to break him down. These recommendations were in no sense an aberration but were entirely consistent with the Standard Operating Procedures in effect.

Although the APA has passed numerous anti-torture resolutions, the APA has never taken any position critical of the policies of the US government's systematic program of abuse and torture. The Statement made in Turkey states: "The American Psychological Association has adopted a position that has been called a "rebuke" of the Bush administration policy on the use of abusive interrogation techniques" The reason the statement says the APA's position "has been called a 'rebuke' of the Bush administration" is because there are no statements by APA or its leaders rebuking the Bush administration for its torture policies. Rather, APA spokespersons pretend, against all evidence, that abuses involving psychologists are but the actions of a few individual psychologists acting on their own. This is as false and as disingenuous as the claims of the Bush administration that the horrors at Abu Ghraib were entirely due to abuses by the military police.

When APA formed a task force in 2005 to formulate ethics policy on this issue, they appointed to the task force a majority of military and intelligence psychologists. Four of these members were in chains of command accused of detainee abuse. The APA still defends that process and the resultant policy.

These are not the actions of a professional organization concerned about ethical conduct of its members, but, rather, the actions of an organization using public relations spin to defend an indefensible policy.

As a further example of APA public relations spin, the statement made in Turkey implies disiningenuousness in the position of the American Psychiatric Association because the former President of that association stated that the psychiatrists' position was not enforceable. This ignores the fact, well known to the APA, that the American Psychiatric Association does not conduct ethics enforcement of its

members on any matter; enforcement is left to state medical boards. Similarly, an official with the American Medical Association has accused this same APA official in a letter of distorting the AMA's policies.

APA policy does not withstand scrutiny by those closely familiar with it. Many APA members have resigned or withheld dues in protest. Among these are the former Executive Director [and founder] of the APA Practice Directorate and a former Chair of the APA Ethics Committee. This Ethic Committee Chair stated in his resignation letter:

"These changes take APA so far away from its ethical foundation, historic traditions, and basic values, and from my own personal and professional view of our responsibilities, that I cannot support them with my membership. "

Many organizations have carefully examined APA policies and found them wanting. In a public letter, the Nordic Psychological Associations objected to the APA's interrogations policy. The former President of the American Psychiatric Association Steven Sharfstein denounced the APA's interrogations policies. The American Civil Liberties Union has denounced the APA's policies, as has Physicians for Human Rights. We call upon our colleagues in Turkey to stand on the side of ethical psychology and human rights and to denounce the disingenuous and dishonest policies of the APA.

History will not look kindly upon non-governmental organizations like the APA who, in these dark times, abetted the US policies of torture and abuse. Please help change the APA's policies before it is too late and the profession of psychology is irremediably marked with its complicity in torture. We ask psychologists in Turkey and organizations to send open letters of protest to the press and to APA President Alan Kazdin and CEO Norman Anderson. Address these letters to:

Alan Kazdin, PhD, President
Norman Anderson, PhD, CEO and Vice President
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
United States of America

Please also send copies of the letters to us for distribution to APA members.

We thank our colleagues in Turkey for your solidarity with our struggle for human rights and an ethical psychology.

Stephen Soldz, ssoldz@bgsp.edu; Brad Olson, b-olson@northwestern.edu; Jean Maria Arrigo, jmarrigo@cox.net; Bryant Welch, Welchfirm@aol.com; Steven Reisner, sreisner@psychoanalysis.net for the Coalition for an Ethical Psychology

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Steven Sharfstein [former President, American Psychiatric Association]: Presidential Address: Advocacy as Leadership, http://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/163/10/1711

Ken Pope: [former Chair, APA Ethics Committee]: Why I Resigned from the American Psychological Association, http://kspope.com/apa/index.php

ECPA´s letter of support by president-elect David Fryer:

Dear Serdar,

I understand that a senior spokesperson on ethics for the American Psychological Association, Stephen Behnke, is in Turkey and will be running a workshop on ethics and that you and colleagues are protesting at this visit.

I am writing to you in your role as a highly valued Turkish member of the Executive of the European Community Psychology Association, of which I am currently President Elect, to offer you my personal support in protesting this visit to Europe from someone representing an organisation which is certainly not in a position to run a workshop on ethics.

As you will recall those present at the final plenary session of the International Seminar ("*Integrating new migrants in the New Europe: A Challenge for Community Psychology*") held in Seville, Spain 19-21 September 2007 unanimously voted to send a message of support from the meeting to Australian colleagues and all those condemning the involvement of psychologists in the practice of torture. I thank Turkish colleagues for doing so.

As colleagues representing the Coalition for an Ethical Psychology have made clear, the policies of the APA in relation to the involvement of psychologists in torture are disingenuous and dishonest and the American Psychological Association has not yet taken any position unambiguously critical of the policies of the US government's systematic program of abuse and torture.

I wish you and colleagues in Turkey well in taking this important principled stand against the appalling involvement of psychologists in the practice of torture.

Yours sincerely,

David Fryer B.A. M.A. Ph.D. C.Psychol. F.B.Ps.S. F.S.C.R.A.
President Elect: European Community Psychology Association

The Society for Community Research and Action-SCRA (Division 27 of the American Psychological Association) invites you to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Society for Community Research and Action, hosted by Montclair State University, in collaboration with Rutgers University,

at the Montclair State University Conference Center in Montclair, New Jersey
from June 18 - 21, 2009

THEME:
Realizing Our New Vision:
Values and Principles for Practice, Research, and Policy

Conference Website: http://chss.montclair.edu/scra/

THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY

Community agendas for contemporary social problems

June 3 – 5, 2010
Universidad Iberoamericana Puebla
Puebla, Pue. MEXICO
www.3iccp2010.org

COMMUNITY AGENDAS FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL PROBLEMS

The Third International Conference on Community Psychology will focus on the study of the contributions diverse community agendas can offer to engage the pressing social problems of the world at the beginning of the XXI Century: a) Economic polarization and impoverization, inequity, mental and physical deterioration, environmental threats. b) Challenges related to virtual communities and the social disparities in the information age. c) Interculturality and its difficulties regarding discrimination, renewed racisms, and migration, d) Politicization of violence and phenomena of insecurity, corruption, impunity and fundamentalisms. We welcome proposals that will offer community agendas in the following areas:

- Critical thinking on Community Psychology in diverse regions of the world.
- Regional and global theoretical trends for the understanding of social and community challenges.
- Higher education and non formal training experiences for social activists.
- Community Psychology practices or interventions in confronting social crises and emergencies.
- Research or evaluation of projects on community agendas related to pressing social problems.
- Public policies and Community Psychology: collaboration and conflicts.
- Ethical challenges regarding community goals and values.

Important dates

Call for Proposals	November, 2008
First call. Deadline for submissions	Friday May 29, 2009
First call proposals accepted	Friday August 28, 2009
Second call. Deadline for submissions	Friday September 18, 2009
Second call proposals accepted	Friday December 11, 2009
Deadline to be included in the scientific program	Friday March 26, 2010

For further information consult: www.3iccp2010.org
or contact the Executive Committee:exec.commitee@3iccp2010.org

We look forward to welcome you at the 3iccp2010!

Eduardo Almeida, Ph. D.
Chair
Universidad Iberoamericana Puebla
72430 Puebla, Pue. MEXICO