

CHICAGO/SSA/CENTENNIAL

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

Off the Couch and Out of the Clinic:  
Innovations in Research on the  
Therapeutic Relationship in  
Community-Based Settings

January 15, 2009

PROGRAM



# Off the Couch and Out of the Clinic: Innovations in Research on the Therapeutic Relationship in Community-Based Settings

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 2009 | NEW ORLEANS MARRIOTT

Across the helping disciplines, the importance of examining common factors (in particular, the therapeutic alliance) cannot be denied. Yet, when studying helping relationships, can methods and perspectives drawn from psychotherapy adequately address issues that can arise in social work with clients who may enter treatment involuntarily, face myriad stressors, receive services that are not necessarily office-based, or interact with multiple systems concurrently?

Given its historic attention to the social context of helping, the field of social work is uniquely poised to forge new understandings of the therapeutic relationship and to join with allied disciplines in developing novel ways to reduce barriers to service engagement. By featuring an array of conceptual frameworks and methodological innovations, this half-day symposium will both reflect on the current status of research on the therapeutic alliance and showcase emergent contemporary perspectives on the helping relationship across a range of community-based settings with children and adults.

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**1:00–1:15 pm**

### **Welcoming Remarks**

**Leslie Alexander, PhD**

*Professor at the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research  
Bryn Mawr College  
Adjunct Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry  
University of Pennsylvania*

**Beth Angell, PhD**

*Associate Professor  
Rutgers University, The State University of New Jersey School of Social Work  
and University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**Jeanne C. Marsh, PhD**

*Dean and George Herbert Jones Distinguished Service Professor  
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**1:15–2:15 pm**

### **Keynote Address**

“Relationships that Help: Linking Research to Practice”

**SPEAKER:**

**Adam O. Horvath, EdD**

*Professor Emeritus of Education and Counseling Psychology  
Simon Fraser University*

FIRST SESSION

2:25–3:50 pm

**Panel 1A: Research on the Therapeutic Relationship in Adult Services**

1. “Client-Provider Relationship as a Service Delivery Mechanism Predicting Outcome: A Treatment Process Model”

**AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Jeanne C. Marsh, PhD**

*Dean and George Herbert Jones Distinguished Service Professor  
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**CO-AUTHORS:**

**Hee-Choon Shin, PhD, University of Chicago**

**Dingcai Cao, PhD, University of Chicago**

**Christina Andrews, MSW, University of Chicago  
School of Social Service Administration**

2. “Voices of Case Managers: What Do Their Clients Find Helpful, Unhelpful, and Want in the Client-Case Manager Relationship?”

**AUTHORS AND PRESENTERS:**

**Phyllis Solomon, PhD**

*Professor of Social Work and Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry  
University of Pennsylvania*

**Leslie Alexander, PhD**

*Professor at the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research,  
Bryn Mawr College; Adjunct Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry,  
University of Pennsylvania*

**CO-AUTHOR:**

**Sarah Bressi Nath, PhD**

*Assistant Professor, Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of  
Social Work and Social Research*

**DISCUSSANT:**

**Colleen A. Mahoney, PhD**

*Assistant Professor  
University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Social Work*

## **Panel 1B: Research on the Therapeutic Relationship in Child and Family Services**

1. “Engagement and Retention Strategies: Non-Traditional Alliances in Community Collaborative Research”

### **AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Mary M. McKay, PhD**

*Professor of Psychiatry and Community Medicine  
Mount Sinai School of Medicine*

### **CO-AUTHORS:**

**Lydia M. Franco, MSW**, *Mount Sinai School of Medicine,  
Department of Psychiatry*

**Geetha Gopalan, MSW**, *Columbia University School of Social Work*  
**Kosta Kalogerogiannis, LMSW**, *Mount Sinai School of Medicine*

2. “Out of the Clinic and into the Medicine Cabinet: Social Work-in-Psychopharmacological Environment”

### **AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Jerry Floersch, PhD**

*Associate Professor of Social Work  
Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences*

### **DISCUSSANT:**

**Sharon Berlin, PhD**

*Helen Ross Professor Emerita  
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**3:50–4:05 pm**

**Break**

SECOND SESSION

4:05–5:30 pm

**Panel 2A: Research on the Therapeutic Relationship in Adult Services**

1. “Therapeutic Coercion: Oxymoron or Effective Treatment?”

**AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Sue E. Estroff, PhD**

*Professor of Social Medicine and  
Adjunct Professor of Anthropology and Psychiatry  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*

2. “Understanding the Role of Consumer-Provider Relationships within Assertive Community Treatment”

**AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Victoria Stanhope, PhD**

*Assistant Professor  
New York University Silver School of Social Work*

**CO-AUTHOR:**

**Jason C. Matejkowski, MSW, University of Pennsylvania**  
*School of Social Policy & Practice*

**DISCUSSANT:**

**Megan Nordquest Schwallie, MA**

*Doctoral Student  
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**Panel 2B: Research on the Therapeutic Relationship in  
Child and Family Services**

1. “Engagement and Alliance in School-Based Therapy for  
Depressed Adolescents”

**AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Steven R. Shirk, PhD**

*Professor of Psychology, University of Denver; Director,  
Clinic for Child and Family Psychology*

2. “What Therapists Don’t Know About the Therapeutic Alliance”

**AUTHOR AND PRESENTER:**

**Len Bickman, PhD**

*Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry and Public Policy, Vanderbilt University;  
Associate Dean for Research, Peabody College, Vanderbilt University;  
Director, Center for Evaluation and Program Improvement*

**DISCUSSANT:**

**Ashley Curry, MSW**

*Doctoral Student  
University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration*

**5:30–6:30 pm**

**Reception**

## Biographies

**Leslie Alexander, PhD** [organizer] is Professor at the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research at Bryn Mawr College and Adjunct Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry at University of Pennsylvania Medical School. Professor Alexander has performed empirical research on the therapeutic alliance between adults with severe mental illness and their case managers, caregivers, and case workers. She has also researched this alliance in child welfare in-home services and in children with chronic physical disorders and their parent/guardian and health care professionals. Over the past ten years, she has received research funding from the National Institute of Mental Health, the William Penn Foundation, the Smith-Richardson Foundation, the State of Pennsylvania, and the National Institute of Nursing Research. She has served in the past as a Consulting Editor for a number of journals, including *Social Work*, *Journal of Social Work Education*, and *Child and Adolescent Social Work*, and is currently a member of the Editorial Board of *Research on Social Work Practice*.

**Beth Angell, PhD** [organizer] is currently Associate Professor of Social Work at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration (on leave 2008-2009). Her research focuses upon aspects of service delivery in treatment for people with serious mental illness, particularly on the unique nature of client-provider relationships in this service delivery context and the way that those relationships are influenced by contextual factors such as mandated or involuntary treatment. Her current research extends these foci to service delivery for persons with dual involvement in the criminal justice and mental health systems. She received a National Institute of Mental Health National Research Service Award Predoctoral Fellowship, a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania, and a National Alliance for

Research on Schizophrenia and Depression Young Investigator Award. Subsequent research has been funded by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the Chicago Community Trust.

**Sharon Berlin, PhD** [discussant] is the Helen Ross Professor Emerita at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration (SSA). During her twenty-two year tenure at SSA, she focused her scholarship on developing an expanded model of cognitive therapy that details the ways in which current environmental circumstances interact with memory based schemas to create personal meaning. In her 2002 book, *Clinical Social Work Practice: A Cognitive-Integrative Perspective*, she explains this model and illustrates its application in social work practice. Her earlier empirical work on the effects of cognitive therapy with women who are depressed formed the foundation for this book. In 1993, Professor Emerita Berlin co-authored with SSA Dean Jeanne C. Marsh the clinical research text, *Informing Practice Decisions*. Her most current scholarly interests focus on the role of acceptance in social work clinical practice and the intersection of social work and human rights.

**Len Bickman, PhD** [presenter] is Professor of Psychology, Psychiatry, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University, where he directs The Center for Evaluation and Program Improvement (CEPI) and serves as Associate Dean for Research at Peabody College. He is coeditor of the Applied Social Research Methods Series and the Handbook of Applied Research Methods and is editor of the journal, *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*. He has published more than 15 books and monographs, and more than 190 articles and chapters. Professor Bickman has received several awards recognizing the contributions of

his research, including the Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service while he was a Senior Policy Advisor at the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. He is a past president of the American Evaluation Association and the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues.

**Ashley Curry, MSW** [discussant] is a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. She is a licensed clinical social worker with over 10 years of practice experience within the fields of child welfare, mental health, and substance abuse. Her research interests include youths' experiences of professional relationships in child welfare, the organizational context of social work practice, and qualitative research methods. Her dissertation explores relationship development between young adults "aging out" of the foster care system and their professionals in an independent living program.

**Sue E. Estroff, PhD** [presenter] is Professor in the Department of Social Medicine, School of Medicine, and Adjunct Professor in the Departments of Anthropology and Psychiatry at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 1984, she received the Margaret Mead award from the American Anthropological Association and Society for Applied Anthropology. Her research interests include individuals with chronic illness and disabilities, cultural approaches to psychosis, sociocultural factors that influence the course of psychiatric disorders, disability income policy and practice, illness narratives, moral reasoning and the production of knowledge in qualitative scholarship, reconsidering the association of violence with persons with psychiatric disorders, and complexities of consent in maternal fetal surgery. She recently collaborated with the North Carolina Commonsense Foundation to produce a special report, *The Unhealthy State of Our Mental Health* and also has served as a

consultant to the Carter Center's Mental Health Stigma program, The Hogg Foundation Scientific Advisory Board, and is a member of the Mental Health Services in Specialty Mental Health Settings Review Committee at the National Institute of Mental Health.

**Jerry Floersch, PhD** [presenter] is Associate Professor in the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University. Professor Floersch received his PhD from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration in 1998 and earned his MSW from the University of Kansas. He is the author of *Meds, Money, and Manners: The Case Management of Severe Mental Illness*, published by Columbia University Press (2002), where, through utilizing ethnographic and socio-historical methods, he examines the rise of community support services, case managers and case management and the limits of management models in providing effective services. He has published qualitative studies on aging, culture and manic-depression, African drumming, psychiatric rehabilitation, and youth experience of psychiatric medication. He recently received the National Institute of Mental Health Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award (2004-2009), for training in and development of qualitative methods to study the meanings adolescents and young adults make of their psychotropic medication treatment.

**Adam O. Horvath, EdD** [keynote speaker] is an internationally recognized author and researcher in the field of therapeutic relationships. His research focuses on discovering how certain aspects of the relationship between client and helper, particularly the working alliance, provides the foundational base for changes in diverse forms of helping services. Professor Horvath has developed the most used instrument to measure the quality of the alliance (*Working Alliance Inventory*) which has been translated into over fifteen languages and is used by

researchers world wide. His program of research centers on detailed understanding of processes that are generic to all helping services and focuses on topics such as client and therapist characteristics and activities that build and maintain the alliance, conversational patterns associated with client growth, challenges in the development of collaborative relationships with couples, and with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Professor Horvath received his MSW education at McGill University and his EdD at the University of British Columbia. He is past President of the Society for Psychotherapy Research (North American Chapter), Professor Emeritus at Simon Fraser University in Canada, and is currently involved in funded research projects located in universities across North America, South America, and Europe.

**Colleen A. Mahoney, PhD** [discussant] earned her PhD from the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration in 2007 and is now an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Social Work. Her research and teaching interests include serious mental illness, co-occurring disorders, mental health service delivery, and intensive community-based services with a particular focus on the interpersonal context of service delivery. Her research has examined ways in which providers' clinical reasoning patterns are predictive of the client-provider relationship, and she is currently conducting an exploratory study of communication processes as they relate to medication management and other clinical tasks in Assertive Community Treatment.

**Jeanne C. Marsh, PhD** [organizer and presenter] is Dean and George Herbert Jones Distinguished Service Professor in the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. Her fields of special interest include services for women and families, the intersection of multiple service systems, the relation of service delivery to

treatment outcome, and knowledge utilization in practice and program decision making. Professor Marsh has published broadly on issues of substance abuse, social service provision for women and children, and evaluation of social work interventions. She is currently Principal Investigator on a study funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse which explores gender differences in the impact of substance abuse treatment services where she is examining the impact of specific service elements, including the need-service matching and the client-provider relationship, on treatment effectiveness. She has received a number of awards and honors, including the National Association of Social Work Award for Excellence in Social Work Research, served as editor-in-chief of *Social Work*, the journal of the National Association of Social Workers, and as a board member for the Society for Social Work and Research.

**Mary M. McKay, PhD** [presenter] is Professor of Psychiatry and Community Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. She has held professorships at Columbia University and University of Illinois at Chicago. She has received substantial federal funding for her research focused on meeting the mental health and prevention needs of inner-city youth and families, focusing particularly on service innovations and interventions that enhance service use and outcomes for urban families of color. Professor McKay's research has been based upon the premise that in order to develop and sustain culturally and contextually relevant interventions, it is critical to seek guidance from consumers and service providers. She has recently completed a Newly Independent Career Scientist Award that has focused on identifying the factors that facilitate or impede urban service use in order to inform approaches that more readily address the barriers experienced by inner-city families as they seek care for their children.

**Megan Nordquest Schwallie, MA** [discussant] is a graduate student in the MA/PhD combined program at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration. Previously, she earned her Masters in Medical Anthropology from Case Western Reserve University and a Masters of Arts in the Social Sciences from the University of Chicago. Her interests include community mental health services, the use of ethnographic and other qualitative methods in social research, and children and adolescents' experiences of health and illness, including their perceptions of programs of care and treatment.

**Stephen R. Shirk, PhD** [presenter] is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Clinic for Child and Family Psychology at the University of Denver and past president of the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology, Division 53 of the American Psychological Association. He currently serves as a consulting editor for the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, and the *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*. Professor Shirk has been a member of the Child and Family Interventions Review Panel at the National Institute of Mental Health. Along with his collaborators, Professor Shirk recently completed a National Institute of Mental Health funded project examining the role of the therapeutic alliance in the treatment of depressed adolescents in school-based clinics. A major focus of this recent work has been on therapist strategies that promote treatment engagement and alliance.

**Phyllis Solomon, PhD** [presenter] is Professor of Social Work and Professor of Social Work in Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice, where she is affiliated with the Center for Mental Health Policy and Services Research. She has been studying community mental health services for adults

with severe mental illness and their families since 1974, when she was deinstitutionalized from a state psychiatric hospital where she conducted research on behavioral interventions for long-term patients. Her research has primarily focused on family interventions, criminal justice and mental illness, consumer delivered services, HIV prevention services, and factors related to the receipt of services. She is the recipient of a number of awards including the Knece/Wittman Outstanding Lifetime Achievement Award in Mental Health Policy and Practice from NASW Foundation, Outstanding Non-Psychiatrist Community Achievement Award from American Association of Community Psychiatrists, and the Armin Loeb for her research in psychiatric rehabilitation from U.S. Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association.

**Victoria Stanhope, PhD** [presenter] is Assistant Professor at the New York University Silver School of Social Work. She received her PhD in Social Welfare from the University of Pennsylvania and her MSW from the University of Pittsburgh. Professor Stanhope is a mental health services researcher and focuses on the role of consumer-provider relationships during service provision and their impact on clinical outcomes within community-based mental health. Her research has been funded by the National Institute of Mental Health and she has published on the therapeutic alliance, service engagement, recovery, cultural competence, and evidence based practice. Professor Stanhope has practiced as a social worker in community-based mental health, and prior to her social work career she worked for eight years in Washington, DC as a policy advocate in the areas of mental health, health care, and diversity.

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