

PS 428
Community Based Research Seminar
Political Science Graduate Seminar
Spring 2003
Prof. Barbara Ferman
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Office Hours: Thurs 1-2:30 & by apptment
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Course Description:

Community based research (CBR) is a practice that has been growing steadily at institutions of higher education both in the US and abroad. As an attempt to leverage the research expertise of universities in the service of community identified needs, CBR rests on a very simple premise--communities have need for high quality research but limited resources with which to conduct or purchase those services while universities house significant amounts of research expertise. Community- based research thus provides a mechanism through which resources and needs can be matched.

This course will engage students in actual CBR projects. These projects have been identified by community-based organizations with which the UCCP (University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia) has been working for varying amounts of time. Each project has been thoughtfully developed by the organization to address a particular program or policy need that they have encountered. As such, the research is intended to be action-oriented. Students will work closely with these organizations as they carry out the research. Individual projects are described at the end of the syllabus.

Field-based research activities will be supported by weekly seminar meetings. These meetings will combine instruction in research methods (qualitative) with substantive examinations of community development and youth development issues. All of the CBR projects fall into one of those two substantive areas with several spanning both areas. The discussions of research methods will include issues of research design and data collection, analysis and presentation as well as some of the issues endemic to community-based research. During these weekly seminar meetings, students will also share their experiences from the field thus providing an opportunity for students to learn from and help other students. Representatives from the community organizations will also be asked to participate in the seminar at appropriate times.

Goals:

The goals of the course are:

- To provide instruction in qualitative research methods
- To provide hands on research experience
- To develop a working knowledge of the policy issues facing low income communities and some of the efforts to address those issues (although the focus of the course is urban, many of these issues exist in low income suburban and rural communities as well).
- To acquire a working knowledge of Philadelphia's communities and larger policy issues.
- To gain an understanding of the fields of community development and youth development.
- To have a good time working and learning together!

Requirements:

- Attendance—This is *Non Negotiable*. The seminar meets once a week and you are expected to be there and to be there *On Time*
- Participation—students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and their field based experiences for the week (the latter, when appropriate)
- Journal—students will be asked to keep a journal of their field based experiences. The subject of entries is quite flexible—it can be something you learned about the community or organization or research topic that week; it could be a problem you encountered in your work; it could be an insight that you had about some aspect of the project or the course. The journal entries should be reflective of some aspect of your experience for that week.
- Research paper—the major assignment for the class is your research paper. The description of this is at the end of the syllabus. The paper will be submitted in three stages—the research design, the literature review and the final paper that encompasses the first two assignments.

Grades: (please note that these are approximations)

Participation—15%

Research Design—10%

Literature Review—25%

Final Paper—40%

Journal—10%

Assignment Dates:

Research Design Feb 13

Literature Review March 6

Final Paper May 1

Journal May 1

Readings:

Books: The following books are available for purchase at Zavelle's Book Store which is located at 1520 Broad Street (763-1514) (any problems, ask for Angelo—he is great)

Robert Chaskin, et al. *Building Community Capacity*. 2001. Walter de Gruyter
Janet Johnson & Richard Joslyn, *Political Science Research Methods*. 1986.
Congressional Quarterly Press.

Lisbeth Schorr, *Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America*. 1997. Anchor Books

Articles: A series of articles will be distributed as part of the required reading.

Supplemental Readings and Sources: Many sections of the syllabus contain a list of supplemental readings and sources. These are *not* required. They are meant as a resource if you want/need additional information on that particular part of the course. On most of the topics, there is a wealth of reading materials. What I have included are ones that can provide a good background on the particular topic. The list is in no way exhaustive. (If you find good sources not on this syllabus, please share them with the rest of us.)

Course Outline and Readings

- I. **Introduction: Course Overview week one (Jan 23)**

- II. **Roles of Knowledge, Types of Research two weeks (Jan 30-Feb 6)**
 - a. **Topics:** We will review various approaches to research and the acquisition and uses of knowledge including: traditional, collaborative, and participatory:
 - b. **Readings:** Randy Stoecker “Are Academics Irrelevant?” Roles for Scholars in Participatory Research.” 1997. American Sociological Association presentation.
Kerry Strand, “Community Based Research as Pedagogy.” 2000. *Michigan Journal of Community and Service Learning*.
Nyden & Wiewel, “Collaborative Research: Harnessing the Tensions Between Researcher and Practitioner.” 1992. *American Sociologist*
“No Ivory Tower: Rise of the Street Level Think Tank” *Christian Science Monitor*; 7/24/98
“Community Based Research in the US” Executive Summary, the Loka Institute, 1998.
Kretzman and McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out*, p1-11
 - c. **Supplementary readings/sources:** John Gaventa, Power and Powerlessness; Collaborative, Participatory, and Empowerment Evaluation (American Evaluation Association)
<http://www.stanford.edu/~davidf/empowermentevaluation.html>;

- III. **The Research Process: Goals, Approaches, Methods, & Issues 2 or 3 Weeks (Feb 13-20 or 27)**
 - a. **Topics:** We will explore why people do research (motivations), what types of research people conduct (theoretical, empirical, applied), how people do research (methods), and some of the larger ethical, political, practical and methodological issues involved in research projects.
 - b. **Readings:** Joseph Maxwell, “A Model for Qualitative Research Design;” King, Keohane & Verba “The *Science* in Social Science;” Andranovich & Riposa, “Preparing for Applied Urban Research;” Johnson and Joslyn chs 3 & 5; 6-10 & 14
 - c. **Supplementary readings and sources:** Joseph Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*; Gregory Andranovich and Gerry Riposa, *Doing Urban Research*; Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*

IV. **Community Development 2 weeks (Feb 27-Mar 6)**

- a. **Topics:** We will examine the components of community building, and the strengths, weaknesses and limits of community based problem solving. More specifically, we will focus on organizational and leadership development, institutional infrastructures, social and organizational network development, and local agenda setting as they occur within the community context.
- b. **Readings:** Chaskin, Brown, Venkatesh and Vidal. *Building Community Capacity*
- c. **Supplemental Readings and Sources:** Robert Halperin. *Rebuilding the Inner City: A History of Neighborhood Initiatives to Address Poverty in the U.S.*. Columbia U Press, 1995. Ronald Ferguson & William Dickens, eds. *Urban Problems and Community Development*. Brookings Institution, 1999. Peter Medoff & Holly Sklar. *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood*. South End Press, 1994. Thomas Boston & Catherine Ross, eds. *The Inner City: Urban Poverty and Economic Development in the Next Century*, Transaction Books, 1999. John Kromer, *Neighborhood Recovery: Reinvestment Policy for the New Hometown*, Rutgers U Press, 2000 (about Philadelphia)
The On-Line Conference on Community Organizing and Development. (<http://comm-org.utoledo.edu/papers.htm>.) Public/Private Ventures, 2000 Market Street, Philadelphia, 215-557-4400 (extensive studies on community development and youth issues) (www.ppv.org).

SPRING BREAK*** March 10-March 16**

V. **Community Youth Development 2 weeks (Mar 20-Apr 3 [No class on Mar 27])**

- a. **Topics:** Community youth development (CYD) is a relatively new approach (10 years old) to addressing youth issues. We will examine the underlying theory and goals of CYD, how it differs from traditional approaches to youth issues and some of the obstacles to implementation faced by this novel method.
- b. **Readings:** Hughes and Curnan, "Community Youth Development: A Framework for Action," *Community Youth Development Journal*, V1, #, Winter 2000:7-11
Tolman, Pittman, Yohalem, Thomases, and Trammel, *Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities*. The Forum for Youth Investment, April 2002
Irby, Ferber and Pittman, *Youth Action: Youth Contributing to Communities, Communities Contributing to Youth*, The Forum for Youth Investment, Sept 2001.
Rebuilding Communities, Renewing Democracy: Weaving Youth and Civic Development. A Report of the Proceeding of the Wingspread Conference: Emerging Best Practices: Weaving the Work of Youth and Civic

Development. Racine, WI, March 1-3, 1996.

Michele Cahill, "Youth Development and Community Development: Promises and Challenges of Convergence," Fund for the City of New York, April 1997.

Armistead & Wexler, "Community Development and Youth Development: The Potential for Convergence," Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), April 1997.

Barker and Reid, "The Community as Change Agent: Empowering Children and Families," prepared for the Anne E. Casey Foundation (n.d.)

- c. **Supplemental Readings and Sources:** Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research (<http://www.aed.org/>); Center for Youth as Resources (<http://www.cyar.org/>); The Aspen Institute (<http://www.aspenroundtable.org/>); National Youth Development Information Center. (<http://www.nydic.org/nydic/>); Fund for the City of New York (click on Youth Development Institute) (<http://www.fcny.org/>); Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth (http://www.ccfy.org/civic/yce_resources.htm). Public/Private Ventures, 2000 Market Street, Philadelphia, 215-557-4400 (extensive studies on community development and youth issues) (www.ppv.org).

VI. Bringing it all Together 2 Weeks (Apr 10-17)

- a. **Topics:** This section will integrate many of the themes, issues, and questions raised in the above readings by examining a variety of past and current efforts to holistically address poverty and its many ramifications.
- b. **Readings:** Lisbeth Schorr, *Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America* Anchor Books, 1997.
- c. **Supplemental Readings and Sources:** The Aspen Institute (<http://www.aspenroundtable.org/>);

VII. The University Role in Community Building 1 week (Apr 24)

- a. **Topics:** We will explore various ways in which the university can play a role in community building efforts as well as the problems faced and limits experienced in such endeavors.
- b. **Readings:** Staudt and Brenner. "Higher Education Engages with Community: New Policies and Inevitable Political Complexities." (The On-Line Conference on Community Organizing and Development. <http://comm-org.utoledo.edu/papers.htm>.)
David Bartelt, "The University and Community Development: A Common Cause," *Metropolitan Universities*, Winter 1995:15-28
Sally Harrison, "Between Tower and Street," *Journal of Urban Design* V3, #1, 1998:5-38
Howell Baum, "Fantasies and Realities in University-Community Partnerships," *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 2000, 20:234-246
David Cox, "Developing a Framework for Understanding University-

Community Partnerships,” *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* Vol 5, #1, 2000:9-26

Wiewel, Gaffikin and Morrissey, “Community-University Partnerships for Affordable Housing,” *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* Vol 5, #1, 2000:27-45

- c. **Supplemental Readings and Sources.** *Cityscape: A Journal of Policy Development and Research* Vol 5, #1, 2000, entire issue is devoted to university community partnerships. This is available in PDF file at HUD’s web site: <http://www.hud.gov/HUD>; while on this website, also check out their Office of University Partnerships. *Metropolitan Universities*, Winter 1995 Entire issue is on university-community partnerships. The On-Line Conference on Community Organizing and Development. <http://comm-org.utoledo.edu/papers.htm>.)

VIII. Presentations 2 weeks (May 1 and make up class)

Project Title: *Linking Youth Development with Community Youth Development: Promises and Pitfalls*

Background: The field of community youth development rests on many assumptions. Among the most critical are that youth be seen as active members of their community, that their concerns be fully integrated into community planning and development activities, that communities be constructed in ways that provide adequate supports and opportunities for positive youth development, and that issues of youth development be treated in a holistic manner. As a relatively new field, the field faces many challenges. Compounding the normal obstacles that new initiatives and approaches face is the attitude change required by this new framework. Youth have rarely been seen as productive parts of the community and even more rarely asked for their input in any serious fashion. Thus, implementing such a strategy requires a wholesale change in orientation, expectations and attitudes by adults as well as by youth. And, since youth and adults “do business” differently, it will also require an understanding of and tolerance for these differences. Both adults and youth need to develop the patience and trust to allow those differences to operate in constructive and complementary ways.

A small pilot project undertaken by the Women’s Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) in conjunction with a *Youth VOICES* class at the American Street Youth Opportunity Center provides a somewhat unique opportunity to explore how youth can be incorporated into community development projects. WCRP wanted to engage youth in their community economic development activities and thus, last fall (2002) approached the American Street Youth Opportunity Center, a federally funded initiative administered by the Philadelphia Youth Network. A *Youth VOICES* class, taught by Temple students through the University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia (UCCP), was enlisted to work on the project. The collaboration between the organizations involved a housing survey designed and administered by youth for use by WCRP. The youth also analyzed the data and presented their findings at a community meeting.

Organizational Contacts

Women’s Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)-David Koppisch,
dkoppisch@wcrpphila.com or advocacy@wcrpphila.com
Youth VOICES, UCCP -- Catie Cavanaugh, catiec@temple.edu

The Research Objective: Develop a better understanding of the opportunities for and limits to community youth development projects

Research Design: Exploratory case study

Literature Review: Youth development and community youth development; best practices, other case studies

Data Collection Methods: semi structured interviews with program participants and youth development specialists. This project will explore how this collaboration worked out. Some of the key research questions to be explored are:

- What were the expectations of the participants involved (youth and adults)?
- Were there expectations met?
- What types of supports did the participants need?
- Were these supports provided and if yes, how?
- What was missing?
- What worked? What did not work?
- How did the youth perceive themselves in the process?
- How were they perceived by the adults?
- How did the adults perceive themselves?
- How were they perceived by the youth?
- What did the youth get out of this experience?
- What did the organization get from this experience?

Products:

Report detailing the collaboration with special emphasis on what worked, what did not, and recommendations for strengthening such organizational collaborations and better integrating youth into community development and community building activities.

Project Title: *Neighborhood Indicators for Project Home*

Background: Various organizations, foundations and governmental entities have been working on developing ways to measure changes in social, economic and physical conditions of neighborhoods. The objective of such measures is to enable communities and local governments to better plan for community improvements and to track those improvements over time. As with any statistical measure, the types of data that are collected, the ways in which they are analyzed and interpreted, and how they are used, are all subject to a variety of perspectives and pressures. Moreover, understanding *why* conditions change further complicates the process.

Project Home is interested in developing a series of neighborhood indicators based on significant community input. The information collected will be used to inform the city as it proceeds with its major neighborhood project, *The Neighborhood Transformation Initiative*.

Organizational Contacts:

Project Home—Carolyn Placke—carolynplacke@projecthome.org

Research Objectives:

- Create economic and social indicators to promote a more realistic view of the neighborhood
- Begin to collect base line data on select indicators.
- Develop a new paradigm for looking at neighborhoods and issues of neighborhood vitality & desirability. (long term objective) This particular project can be the first in such an effort.

Data Collection Methods:

- ◆ literature review on indicators
- ◆ interviews with social scientists (geog, sociologists, anthropologists, psci, economists) and planners, architects, landscape architects
- ◆ community input via community meetings, focus groups & interviews with key stakeholders (to be arranged by PH)

Products:

- ◆ Report on: what the literature says, what the policies say, what the community says
- ◆ Set of indicators
- ◆ Baseline data on a few key indicators (selected by PH)

Geographic boundaries: 21-29 and Susquehana to Ridge
5th Councilmanic district (Clark)

Sources: Development Leadership Network— www.developmentleadership.net

The Urban Institute—National Neighborhood Indicators Project

PNDC—doing some indicators work (Neil Mayer)

Project Title: *Youth Needs Assessment Research Project*

Background: The University Collaborative of Philadelphia (UCCP) is working in partnership with the Point Breeze Community Development Coalition (PBCDC), supporting their objectives of developing a comprehensive and integrated system of youth services. As part of this process, the UCCP and the PBCDC have been meeting on a regular basis to discuss the needs of youth in the community and the organizational capacity to address these needs. These discussions have focused on three broad areas of concern for both youth and adults in the Point Breeze community: violence and safety; family; and education and opportunities. We now need to gain a deeper understanding of specific youth concerns in each of the three areas, as well as obtain input on what Point Breeze youth believe would be some ways to address these problems.

Organizational Contacts: Ximena Varela, UCCP, xvarela@temple.edu

Research Objectives: An adequate diagnosis of youth needs and concerns in the Point Breeze community constitutes a critical step toward developing an adequate network of youth services.

The objectives of the Youth Needs Assessment Research Project are:

- To gain a deeper understanding of youth and family issues in Point Breeze.
- Identify and understand the needs and priorities of youth in Point Breeze.
- Assess the potential (to collaborate in resolving youth problems) among existing Youth Councils* (*many organizations in the Point Breeze community have existing youth councils)

Research questions:

The broad research questions could be framed as follows:

- What are the needs of Point Breeze youth as they relate to issues of violence and safety, the family, and education and opportunities beyond school
- What existing community-based services are youth currently utilizing?
- Are there barriers to the use of such services and programs? (e.g. lack of awareness of their existence? Negative stereotypes? Family opposition? Peer pressure? Inadequate services?)
- What recommendations do the youth have for addressing the problems they identify in the community?
- Do they believe that they or their youth councils have the capacity to deal with any of these problems?

Literature Review:

Youth development and community youth development

Data Collection Methods:

- **FOCUS GROUPS:** At least one with youth council leaders, and one with non-youth council members. The purpose of these groups would be to formulate some working hypothesis, identify major concerns, and assess best methods of conducting fieldwork (form, language, etc.).

- SURVEY METHODS: Survey design and distribution (may involve youth in one or all stages of preparation and distribution).

Products:

A report detailing the needs identified by youth and their recommendations for ways of addressing those needs.

Project Title: *Frankford Avenue Commercial Corridor Study*

Background: Commercial corridors were, at one point, a major source of economic and social activity for residents of industrial neighborhoods. As the overall economy changed from industrial to service-based and as the automobile became the preferred mode of transportation for many households, neighborhood commercial strips began to deteriorate. Throughout Philadelphia and other older cities, local groups struggle with ways to revitalize those commercial corridors. The Frankford Group CDC is interested in developing an economic development plan for the area with a particular focus on the Frankford Avenue commercial corridor. The geographic area of concern is: the area between Erie Avenue and Brill Street along Frankford Avenue, including the 4700 block of Oxford Avenue. The overall project will entail the collection of background information on the area, an identification of existing businesses and of the demand for goods and services, and an exploration of larger trends and best practices in the area of commercial corridor revitalization.

Organizational Contacts:

Steve Culbertson, Frankford CDC, 215-744-2990, sculberts@aol.com

TL Hill, UCCP/Fox School of Business, 215-204-3079, tl.hill@temple.edu

Research Objectives:

- Develop an inventory of existing businesses along the corridor
- Identify needs, concerns, plans, expectations and experiences of these businesses
- Identify community demand for goods and services and buying practices of residents

Research Design: Exploratory Case Study

Literature Review: Commercial corridor revitalization; neighborhood business development, community economic development, minority business.

Research Methods (*note—maybe do only some of these*)

- Business census: Drive-by count, from *Allegheny* north, *plus* shopping centers outside of the immediate area using hand held computer (will be supplied by UCCP)
- Business Survey: Survey business owners along Frankford Avenue in order to understand the business opportunities and challenges faced by local businesses. Include questions about the opportunities they as entrepreneurs see, as well as the challenges.
- Demand Analysis: Surveys (supported by focus groups) of samples of residents (door-to-door), customers, parents (table in school yards of Frankford Friends, Frankford High School, Marshall and Stearne elementary schools) and employees (specifically Frankford Hospital) to understand better their buying behavior and potential, including how much they spend inside and outside of the neighborhood, and what kinds of business and services they want or don't want nearby. Also,

interviews with executives responsible for purchasing goods and services for larger local nonprofits.

Final Product: Report that provides a picture of the commercial corridor (existing businesses and their experiences in the corridor), an assessment of community demand for goods and services, and recommendations for strengthening the Frankford Commercial Corridor.