



Center for the Development of Peace and Well-being

University of California
1231 Tolman Hall #1690
Berkeley, CA 94720-1690
Phone: 510.643.8965
Fax: 510.642.7969**2004-05****Center for the Development of Peace & Well-being****Graduate Fellows – Project Descriptions****Erin Brock, Health & Medical Sciences, Joint Medical Program**
The Social World of Adolescent Burundian Refugees

Considering the importance of place in creating a person's psychological well-being as well as recognizing in children the ability to cope with experiences of trauma, this research project will explore in adolescent refugees the intersection of the refugee camp environment and their processing of displacement experiences. Burundian youth living in refugee camps in Tanzania will utilize video and photography to look at their sense of identity and place in the camp. The research will examine how growing up in a camp may influence adolescents' outlooks toward the future and their perspectives about reintegrating into a new, peaceful Burundian society.

Elizabeth Horberg & Christopher Oveis, Psychology
The Role of Compassion in Improving Inter-Group Relations

While philosophers such as David Hume and Adam Smith have long recognized the virtues of compassion, few scientists have empirically tested the role of this moral emotion in increasing harmony across groups. This joint research project will explore three avenues by which compassion may improve inter-group relations, with attention to the behavioral, cognitive and physiological variables implicated in the process. First, the researchers will examine the underlying appraisal tendencies associated with state compassion, with the prediction that inducing compassion will decrease perception of group boundaries. A second line of research will explore the relationship between trait compassion and cooperation in a resource dilemma game. It is expected that high trait compassion individuals (determined by responses to a well-validated scale) will cooperate more with cross-race partners, and emit facial and behavioral cues signaling cooperative intent. Finally, a study of same- and cross-group friends will reveal the manifestations of compassion in social interaction and everyday life. Friends will complete questionnaires about each other's attitudes, activities, pro-social and community-related behaviors. They will also disclose personal experiences of great difficulty or suffering to each other. Behavioral, facial and physiological responses to the disclosure will be assessed, with the expectation that individuals high in trait compassion will have higher physiological reactance to stories of suffering and will engage in more soothing efforts such as reassuring touches, and sympathetic vocalizations. It is hoped that this research will serve to increase understanding of an emotion that promotes getting along across differences, and illuminate the processes that give rise to these effects.

Michelle Johnson, School of Social Welfare
***Assessing the Community Context for Child Health and Well-being:
Mexican-origin Families in the San Francisco Bay Area***

The historical record demonstrates that the life chances of succeeding generations of Europeans that migrated to the United States generally improved over those of their parents. However, countless studies on contemporary immigration point to adverse health, social, and economic outcomes for minority populations. Yet some immigrants, specifically women born in Mexico, demonstrate paradoxical trends for indicators that are typically considered powerful markers of social and economic well being: rates of low birthweight and infant mortality among Mexican-born women generally fall below that of the general U.S. population. Given limited economic resources, diminished access to health insurance, and reduced prenatal care provisions, these findings raise questions about the protective factors that support child health and the mechanisms by which transnational migration functions in Mexican families. This project, using mixed methods, seeks to identify the social ecological processes through which child health and well being are mediated to inform relevant policies and practices.

Jennie Kamen, School of Public Health
Promoting Healthy Latino Infants and Families

Factors that influence a child's well-being are often present well before his or her birth. A mother's health, living situation, attitudes, and behaviors before and during pregnancy lay the foundation upon which her child's life experience will unfold. The goals of this project are 1) to analyze how family structure and maternal physical and emotional well-being contribute to birth outcomes in Latinas and 2) to develop a follow-up survey that will be used for the collection of additional data on interactions between childhood development and the home environment. This work will utilize data from the Study of Hispanic Acculturation, Reproduction, and the Environment (SHARE), which was obtained from a cohort of Mexican immigrant and Mexican-American pregnant women receiving prenatal care at several clinics in Stockton, California during 1999-2001. Analysis and additional research activities will inform the development of a set of questions for use in further data collection, which will provide the longitudinal data necessary to investigate how birth outcomes, changing familial circumstances, and parental relationships influence childhood development and well-being. Because the study participants are all of Mexican origin, with varying degrees of acculturation into American culture, this research will focus on exploring the unique challenges these families face that impact harmony within the family unit.

Margaret Ormiston, Haas School of Business
The Role of Group Mood in Demographically Diverse Groups

Organizational researchers have spent years examining the consequences of diversity in groups and despite reported benefits such as enhanced creativity, have found that diversity leads to mostly detrimental outcomes. In an attempt to help managers diminish the problems associated with diversity, researchers have recently considered factors that may facilitate group functioning such as self-verification and organizational culture. This researcher suggests that the collective mood that develops within demographically diverse groups may explain the outcomes that these groups experience. For example, affect research finds that negative affect leads individuals to be

uncooperative, contentious and unable to integrate disparate viewpoints; all behaviors that are associated with diverse teams. Therefore, this project proposes that a negative group mood may act as a filter that influences group members' social behavior and cognitive processes and thus can help explain why diverse groups often experience negative outcomes. Furthermore, demographically diverse groups may benefit from a positive group mood. A positive group mood may allow group members within demographically diverse groups to be more cooperative and able to integrate disparate ideas which may result in higher levels of social integration and group performance.

Elizabeth Page-Gould, Psychology
Friendship & Adjustment to College

This research seeks to examine how cross-race friendship can increase feelings of acceptance among minorities in traditionally homogeneous institutions, and decrease prejudice among both majority and minority individuals. To study the beneficial effects of cross-race friendship, the research project will induce a friendship between same- and cross-race pairs, ideally finding that participants in cross-race friendship pairs exhibit less prejudice toward each other's ethnic group. In addition, the hypothesis is that minority participants paired with a cross-race friend will show improved performance in courses with Caucasian professors as a result of increased trust and feelings of acceptance at UC Berkeley. This research employs an experimental approach to the study of cross-race friendships not previously taken. In addition, the project combines self-report, behavioral, implicit, and physiological measures to converge on a more complete understanding of the beneficial effects of cross-race friendship.

C.J. Pascoe, Sociology
Adolescence, Masculinity and Sexuality

This research project explores complex relationships between gender and sexuality as embedded in the schooling process in adolescence. Drawing upon extensive ethnographic research and open-ended interviews at a working class high school in northern California, the research intends to document how masculinity is produced through the regulation of sexual identities at multiple levels - the structural, the discursive and the interactional. The hypothesis is that adolescent masculinity involves the continual public repudiation of homosexuality as embodied in the trope of the "fag." The data gathered to date suggests that the threat of being called a "fag" is so powerful that the organization of the school itself actively repudiates the specter of the "fag" and works to produce a dominant heterosexual masculinity. Unlike most sociological studies of masculinity, this project looks not only at how masculinity is constructed, challenged and resisted among teenage boys themselves, but also among girls and at the level of the school as an institution. Looking at masculinity as practices animated at the level of the institution illuminates the particular and shifting ways in which sexual and gendered identities are formed, resisted and assigned in adolescence.

Silvia Pasquetti, Sociology
***Building Peace and Strengthening Civil Society across Ethnic Boundaries:
Israelis and Palestinians Challenging Racialized Violence and De-humanization***

This project aims to look at issues of trust and peace building across and against racialized and violently constructed identities and spaces. In particular, the research will investigate the main obstacles that the participants in cross-ethnic activities have to overcome and the transformations they undergo in their personal and communal life. The focus is on some current experiences of joint

Palestinian/Israeli groups that reject the idea of separation of communities on the basis of racialized and fixed identities. These groups identify the practice of fixing - be it the fixing of human beings, spaces, identities, cultures, or interests - as the main root of racialized dispossession, displacement, violence, repression, discrimination, and stigma. Therefore, they promote joint protests and direct actions of civil disobedience. They also implement joint projects of trust building and reciprocal understanding across and against essentialized identities and segregated and hermetically closed spaces. The researcher's primary assumption is that racialized separation cannot lead to peaceful coexistence and that the participation in these joint grass-root initiatives has far-reaching positive consequences for the overcoming of personal prejudices and fears and for the strengthening of Israeli and Palestinian civil societies.

Nilofar Sami, Psychology
Resilience in Refugee Families

This research project involves two stages. First, the project is investigating resilience processes in girls with ADHD, through the project of Professor Stephen Hinshaw. This investigation includes the compensatory process through which protective resources (e.g., mid-high SES, positive parenting, average-above average IQ, positive teacher expectation, and structured extracurricular activities) may lead to competent outcomes despite the presence of a chronic risk (ADHD diagnostic status). The focus is on outcomes that are internal (e.g., positive self-perception) and external (e.g., positive academic achievement, positive peer/adult relationships, or good conduct). This work will serve as a springboard for stage two of investigating resilience processes in the children of refugee families. Given the number of new refugees that enter America each year and given that much of the research on refugee populations primarily focuses on psychopathology (e.g., posttraumatic stress disorder, depression), the prospective study of outcomes related to the competence and success of refugee populations, particularly refugee children, is of critical importance. The researcher will utilize a multi-method and multi-informant approach to conduct a comparative study of risk and protective factors in children from the Asian, Bosnian, and Afghan refugee populations living in the San Francisco Bay Area. The ultimate goal is to better understand how knowledge of protective factors and mechanisms leading to competent outcomes can be used to construct social policies and provide comprehensive, community-based intervention programs in order to enhance the adjustment of children and adolescents from refugee backgrounds. Hence, a key part of the work will focus on dissemination of findings to Bay Area, and ultimately national, organizations related to refugee status and well being.