



History and Reflections: Ten Years of the Global Journal

Friends and Editors of the Global Journal

History

The Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice started with three things:

1. a recognition of value in the boots-on-the-ground practice of community psychology,
2. the discovery of a gap not just in the literature cannon, but in access to important literature for practice, and
3. passionate people with the drive and commitment to rectify the first two things.

Scott and Wolfe's text *Community Psychology: Foundations for Practice* (2015) described the GJCPP's origin story this way:

The small practice-oriented group then decided it was time to pull SCRA [the Society for Community Research and Action] together around "practice," so with the help of SCRA president Carolyn Swift (a community psychology practitioner), the Practice Group as they called themselves planned and conducted the first ever Summit on Community Psychology Practice at the Pasadena Biennial [conference] in 2007. The Summit was a huge success with over 100 people coming a day early to the Biennial.

Those attending were energized; they focused their energy on three directions—publication, training, and practice. These three remain the foci to this day many years later. Over the next years this led to significant outcomes in each of the three areas

Publications: These last two decades also finally saw the production of publications by community psychology practitioners that were clearly focused on the practice of community psychology. The most significant triumph was the creation of the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice (www.gjcpp.org; Vince Francisco, editor), an international web-based journal appearing with about four issues a year beginning in 2010. Circulation has grown rapidly to between 1,200 and 1,600 readers per issue in over 100 countries around the world, which makes the GJCPP in its first years competitive with other community psychology journals for readership.

The history of this journal is one that mirrors the grit and determination of community psychology practitioners themselves. It is a substantial challenge to publish and run a journal with the resources and backing

of an established publishing company, and the founders of the Global Journal had only themselves and some generous initial funders. Through persistence and long hours they created what readers see today: global content, intriguing ideas, unique practice orientation, and open access. These priorities from the last 10 years continue to drive the publication; they are the headlights that show the road ahead.

Reflections on 10 Years of the GJCPP

Understanding history requires reflection on that history; current experience often clarifies the past in meaningful ways. Several generous friends, editors, and contributors to the Global Journal were gracious enough to share their thoughts about where the Journal started and where it is today.

We can see that the GJCPP began with a process that reflects the core processes of the field of Community Psychology Practice- a small group of folks who cared passionately about an issue (CP Practice) organized, started to meet regularly and recruited other to join. This led to the CP Practice Group's CP Practice Summit in 2007. The small Publications Work Group that formed in Pasadena ultimately led to the creation of the GJCPP, as the Training Work Group ultimately led to the creation of the CP Practice competencies.

The core group that created the GJCPP included Vince Francisco (founding editor), Victoria Scott, Greg Meissen. Bill Neigher, and myself. As someone who was there at the start and continues on the Board today, I can say that the GJCPP has gone beyond our dreams.

I love that the journal has a wide range of formats:

- traditional research and theory papers;
- great qualitative papers describing a wide range of interventions – often focusing on significant community systems change;
- tools for use in working with communities (Tearless Logic Model, Sustainability tools, coalition building simulations etc) that are some of the most frequently downloaded pieces
- videos to accompany and illustrate the content of articles
- special issues - such as publishing the proceedings of International CP conferences
- editorials

I am especially pleased that we continue to have publications from authors from around the globe on a regular basis (though we always want more).

The GJCPP has become one of the most prominent and well-read sources of information about cutting edge CP Practice.

We could not have done it without the creative support of CP practitioners from across the globe who work in a variety of settings – community, government, academia, etc. ; and the financial support of Atlantic Health, SCRA, Wichita State U, and readers like you, and the guidance of our editors- Vince Francisco, Scott Wituk, and Nicole Freund.

Thank you all

~Tom Wolff

Thomas L. Friedman explains the thesis of his foundational book on globalization: “connecting all the knowledge centers on the planet together into a single global network” (2006, p8). Maybe we added a small voice.

Well, for many of us on the early journey of GJCPP it was the “global” in our title that was really inspirational. Thousands of journals worldwide, but with the challenges of access, cost, literacy, language and political barriers, and an awareness of community psychology barely registering in the U.S., why do this?

Credit the leaders for the vision to “start small, think big, and scale fast.” We could provide a “borderless” media outlet to communicate our field to an international audience, without much cost, include new voices as authors, and think hard about the cultural variables that would make the effort fair and impactful. Pretty cool.

I was involved early on as an organizational funder [Atlantic Health System, NJ,] and later as an assistant editor and proud contributor. And from the SCRA Executive Committee Briefing Book from the 2011 Midwinter Meeting, here’s what the Practice Council listed as its first accomplishment:

SCRA PRACTICE COUNCIL ACTIVITY AND INITIATIVES 2010-2011

Activities Implemented: #1 Launching of the online Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice

Happy first decade GJCPP; the best is yet to come!

~Bill Neigher

I am deeply grateful to the GJCPP for publishing my article People who are homeless are “people” first: Opportunity for community psychologists to lead through language reframing. Not only did I receive great reviews from the readers, but I consistently use it in classroom discussions on diversity, equity and inclusion. Moreover, the article substantiates an ongoing language reframing campaign I initiated that influences my students, colleagues in academia, and practice.

~Geraldine Palmer

The GJCPP has been a major feature of my career. From the SCRA Biennial in Pasadena when we first discussed the concept in real terms, to a number of planning sessions we had on the Practice Council calls, to the working group meetings that enabled its creation, to all the other meetings where we continued to develop the vision with colleagues from many countries, and monthly working meetings where we crafted each issue, everyone who was a part of this effort contributed to ensuring its success. Even our biggest critics, at the time, had the best of intentions in pointing out potential fatal flaws in our approach. Some of them became our most significant contributors. The Global Journal became the best outlet for community psychology practice, and later became one of many such outlets.

It helped to define CP practice, as well as create an outlet for the creative and scholarly contributions of practitioners that otherwise would never have told the stories of their projects. The GJCPP is poised now to continue in a leadership role, with the best leadership team we've had. I can hardly wait to see all the upcoming issues and see where CP practice will take us.

~Vincent T. Francisco

We are in many ways similar to archeologists as we try to understand the customs, norms and values of individuals within contexts during different historical eras. Our adventures of digging for insights are filled with unexpected discoveries, but this exciting process is often left out of our formal products, whether they be publications or policy briefs. Our work also overlaps with anthropologists, as we search for understanding meaning by listening to people's lived experiences in their own voices. Yet our journey into the communities of others, and their reactions to our presence, is often eliminated by those who control vehicles of dissemination as they prefer the bare facts of hypothesis verification. We also feel kinship with the field of sociology, as the layers of meaning involving social justice can only be truly grasped by examining wider and more comprehensive system perspectives. And yet it is so much easier to examine individual-focused entities, stripped of their ecological validity, and such stories are far easier to communicate and find receptive scholarly audiences. Some might think of us as soothsayers,

detectives, explorers, or alchemists as we try to understand collaborations with communities, and we have sought vehicles that value opportunities to take risks and are open to our unorthodox storytelling. Within the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice, we have found this oasis of intellectual freedom to tell the truth of what we witness.

~ Leonard A. Jason

Practice. Practice. Practice. Anyone who has tried to improve will quickly recognize the importance that mentors, teachers, and coaches place on practicing. Practice is where we learn first-hand how our theories or ideas are implemented. Practice is where we improve our skills by adapting to the ever changing environment. Practice is often where we deepen our commitment to a cause or goal. Practice also provides an opportunity for learning. That learning is certainly useful for those directly involved, but can ripple when shared with others who have similar interests. The GJCPP is one of the outlets where Community Psychologists and others can share, learn, celebrate, confront, and maybe even laugh about their practice. As an online, free to access journal it allows us to join (although from afar) the experiences of our colleagues by sharing articles, descriptions, photos, videos, and real-time conversations. What started as a small ripple of learning 10 years ago has grown to over 1,000 subscribers from across the globe. Congrats to all those practicing.

~ Scott Wituk

I truly appreciated the opportunity to think deeply and critically about the space my research team and I created, and to write about our process for the Journal. Writing the piece gave us the opportunity to reflect, and to have a funny, reflective, sticky, unsettling, and important conversation. It also opened up a space for other graduate students and faculty to talk with me about their research spaces as a setting, as well as what it means to be deliberative about the spaces we create, especially if we take the project of community psychology seriously. I look forward to continued conversations!

~Regina Langhout

We invite other reflections in the comments here, on Facebook or Twitter, and/or in emails to the editor (editor@gjcpc.org). Over the course of this year we will continue to share these reflections and consider the implications for how to make the Journal better. A fundamental gift in the history of GJCPC is the readers and contributors who have critiqued, helped, and given their time and wisdom to its development; more of this is invited and encouraged.

The Next Ten Years

The above reflections clearly highlight that the mission of the Global Journal continues to be

the foundation for what the publication is and what it continues to strive for:

The Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice is devoted to providing high quality and practical information on community practice. [. . .] The Journal is committed to engaging and expanding the practice community and its broader social impact by offering a new opportunity for community practitioners of a variety of backgrounds and professional affiliations for collaborative development, to increase skills and to exchange information, ideas and resources.

Over the next 10 years, the Global Journal will continue to focus on what it does best: publish high-quality articles, tools, and non-traditional content that prioritize community psychology practice. Within that focus, the evolution of GJCPC will see improvements in engagement opportunities for readers and authors, advances in technology and different ways of communicating valuable research/information, growing global content and partnerships, and making it easier than ever to share content with others. Please engage with the Journal through article submissions, special issue proposals, new tools and videos, editorials, non-English editing and reviewing, social media expertise, and ideas big and small. Our history belongs to community psychologists and activists, and so does our future.