



LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear SBS community,

As the weather turns cooler and the devastating 2017 hurricane season comes to a close, please spare your thoughts for our fellow citizens in Puerto Rico. As of today, millions of victims of Hurricane Maria remain without safe drinking water or power.

Even as the suffering of people in PR seem to be fading from news headlines, there is still plenty we can do. MPH student Andy Quiñones-Rivera (Health Policy)



compiled for us a list of actions that our community can take to support the people of Puerto Rico. Please join them, and the department, in contributing in whichever ways you can. Visit: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/social-and-behavioral-sciences/2017/10/17/puerto-rico-relief/>

I trust that SBS students have weathered the mid-terms. The next SBS Student-Faculty luncheon hosted by Laura Kubzansky, will be held on Friday, November 17 from 1:00-2:00pm in Kresge 110. Spring/Winter enrollment opens on Dec 7. We are pleased to announce 2 new courses in the Spring:

- (1) *Introduction to Dissemination and Implementation Science* taught by Shoba Ramanadhan and Bekka Lee in Spring 2.
- (2) *Public Health in Action* taught by Mary Jean Brown also in Spring 2

Get your 'flu shots today!

Ichiro

Photo credit: MJ Baumman under CC license [by-nc 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/)

Inside this issue

- Research Spotlight.....2-3
- Poster Session.....4
- Awards & Announcements.....5
- Recent Pubs.....6
- Arrivals5
- Happiness Center Update.....7
- Events.....7-8

Featured Events

STRIPED documentary film screening, Mon, Nov 6, 7pm in FXB G12

SBS Student-Faculty Lunch, Fri, Nov 17, 1pm in Kresge 110

Social Landmark Research Meeting, Mon, Dec 4, 3pm in Landmark 403Q

Center for Health & Happiness seminar, Tues, Dec 12, 1:00pm in Kresge 502

Research Spotlight



Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald

Congratulations on your recent promotion! Can you tell us about your career path from Clinical Psychologist to Research Associate?

Thank you! The functioning of the mind and its interplay with physical health has always been something fascinating to me. Consequently, my doctoral thesis in clinical psychology was an in-depth investigation of how individuals cope with cancer, basically examining the interrelationships between symptoms of anxiety, depression, insomnia, fatigue, and pain over the disease care trajectory. For several years, I also worked as a clinician with individuals suffering from cancer and chronic pain helping to alleviate their psychological distress and finding more meaning in life despite their health challenges. Conducting research and clinical work concurrently is very

stimulating as both areas nourish each other! In fact, this is what brought me to public health: many patients I have seen wondered to what extent “stress” was involved in the development or progression of their disease. The cancer literature at that time was somewhat limited, and results were inconsistent, sometimes because of methodological pitfalls. Thus, I joined HSPH in May 2014, to acquire training from world-leading experts in social epidemiology and further investigate this question. As a postdoctoral fellow and now a research associate, I aim to disentangle whether psychological distress (e.g., anxiety, depression, insomnia) is related to future risk of cancer and reduced survival in cancer patients, and if this association could be explained by the adoption of an unhealthier lifestyle (e.g., physical inactivity, unfavorable diet, smoking). This research is of considerable importance because it identifies modifiable determinants of cancer, which is one leading causes of death worldwide.

What are the next objectives in your research, and who will you be collaborating with from the Lee Kum Sheung Center for Health and Happiness?

At the Center for Health and Happiness, I participate in novel research that considers psychological well-being (e.g., optimism, emotional vitality, life satisfaction) as an asset against risk of cardiometabolic disease, and if it may favor a healthier lifestyle. I also co-lead a working group on the measurement of psychological well-being with Tyler VanderWeele. One of our goals is to unravel the role of psychological well-being on chronic disease incidence and mortality, beyond statistical adjustment for confounding variables including negative factors (e.g., anxiety, depression) and self-rated health, and to explore if distinct dimensions of well-being have a different impact on health outcomes.

Research Spotlight (cont.)

My future research will integrate my expertise in both negative and positive health determinants. Specifically, I am interested in understanding whether emotion regulation (how individuals adaptively or maladaptively manage emotional experiences) is a critical higher order process that influences biological and behavioral pathways involved in chronic diseases and longevity. These ideas unfold from work conducted with my HPSH colleagues Paola Gilsanz, Murray Mittleman, and Laura Kubzansky in which we proposed a theoretical framework using emotion regulation to understand existing, sometimes conflicting results on the psychological determinants of hypertension in adults (2015; Current Hypertension Reports). More recently (2017; Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences), Farah Qureshi, Allison Appleton, Laura Kubzansky, and I extended this theoretical model by positing that emotion regulation is a psychological process that potentially impacts multiple chronic diseases, and their shared potential pathways (e.g., lifestyle, chronic inflammation), across the life course.

What are the potential implications of learning more about emotion regulation both from a clinical health psychology perspective and from a public health perspective?

From a clinical health psychology standpoint, emotion regulation is a capital process because it is transdiagnostic, which means that difficulties in regulating emotions are shared by multiple psychiatric diagnoses and may drive various psychological symptoms. Prior work, including my own research, also hypothesizes that emotion regulation as an overarching determinant would affect a wide array of biobehavioral pathways and chronic diseases including mortality. Consequently, a better understanding of the interplay between emotion regulation and physical health may not only help prevent deleterious behavioral and biological processes, incident chronic diseases and

reduced longevity, but also improve the mental health of disease-free individuals and medical patients, a critical outcome on its own.

From a public health standpoint, identifying such an upstream determinant is of major relevance because both psychological distress and chronic diseases are generating tremendous costs in the U.S., using around 86% of the nation's health care expenditures. Additionally, worse mental and physical health are related to elevated disabilities (e.g., lower work productivity). Bearing in mind these direct and indirect expenses, enhancing emotion regulation abilities has the potential to yield substantial cost reduction and enhanced capacity at the population level. Notably, 1 out of 2 Americans suffered from a chronic disease in 2012, and nearly 20% reported mental illness in 2015. Viewing emotion regulation as an overarching determinant may facilitate knowledge transfer and in turn, cost reduction. For instance, experienced clinicians (e.g., psychologists) may train health care providers (e.g., general practitioners, clinical nurse specialists) in delivering key emotion regulation strategies to their patients. In fact, adopting a transdiagnosis approach will help to narrow the number of therapeutic strategies needed. In this way, I hope this research will identify pivotal interventions that will have a greater impact on mental and physical health at the population level.

Thank you, Claudia!

Read more about Claudia's work here: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/claudia-trudelfitzgerald/> and follow her on Twitter [@claudiatfitz](https://twitter.com/claudiatfitz)

Interview by Whitney Waddell

To nominate a student, postdoc or faculty member for our next Spotlight feature, please email sbs@hsph.harvard.edu.

MPH-HSB 65 Poster Session



On October 10, 2017, second-year MPH-HSB 65 students presented posters on their summer practicum experiences. The poster session was a wonderful experience to learn about other SBS students' practicum projects. Students presented on a diversity of projects ranging from health reform, interventions in adolescent settings, refugee and immigrant health, community interventions, marketing, to qualitative studies. It started off by having attendees split into small groups to discuss subject areas of interest. The poster session then transitioned into multiple presentations, which were spread out throughout the room. Presentations were short and to the point, yet full of passion. Presenters shared their

findings, insights, experiences, and even offered advice to many of us who are planning our practicum projects for next year.

As a first-year student, listening to other SBS students' presentations gave me many ideas for my own practicum project and was a great opportunity to get to know other SBS students who I had not yet met. I was surprised by the diversity and innovation in the practicum project fields. Although I loved all of the presentations I attended, my favorite one was Julia Caproni's, "*It Has Something to do with Your Hair or Your Skirt's too Short: A Population-Informed Policy Initiative to Address Black Girls Overrepresentation in Boston's School Discipline and Juvenile Justice Systems,*" which discussed racial disparities in school discipline practices, a topic I am very much interested in, coming from a juvenile-justice research and advocacy background. Overall, the poster session was a great way to learn about the wonderful work students did during the summer, network and obtain advice on my own practicum project for next year.

-Estivaliz Castro, MPH '19

MCH Open House 2017

On September 17, the Maternal Child Health Concentration welcomed the newest cohort of MCH professionals at a lunch at the house of Dr. Marie McCormick.



Awards & Announcements

- **Alen Agaronov, SD '20** was awarded a 2017 Annual Meeting Student Scholarship by the American Public Health Association. He will be presenting his poster (paper in progress), *"Catching Social Reality in Flight": The Art and Science of Participatory Action Research* at the upcoming APHA meeting (Atlanta, GA, Nov 4-9, 2017). Alen is also presenting at the 2017 American Anthropological Association (Nov 29-Dec 3). His paper (in progress), *Cultural Nutritional Epidemiology: A Practice of Research Caregiving in the Age of Orthorexia*, received the 2017 Society for Medical Anthropology Student Travel Award. Alen is the only awardee (of five) to come from outside of anthropology.
- SBS faculty, research scientists, and alumni will be well-represented this year in the Spirit of 1848 program at APHA (Atlanta, GA, Nov 4-9, 2017). The Spirit of 1848 theme is: "Planetary Emergencies: Global Climate Change & Toxic Politics – and Fighting for Health Equity & a Sustainable Future" (see: <http://spiritof1848.org/apha%202017.html>) SBS participants include: **Nancy Krieger, Bekka Lee**, and former students **Vanessa Simonds, Zinzi Bailey**, and **Hannabah Blue**.
- **Steven Hafner, SD '18** presented at the 2017 American Indian/Alaska Native National Behavioral Health Conference in Tulsa, OK and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society Annual Conference in Denver, CO.
- **Kelly Kohler**, SBS postdoc fellow working with Vish Viswanath recently received grant funding through NCI to develop an mHealth intervention for women and community health workers in Argentina to improve communication about HPV self-testing results and increase triage adherence for women with abnormal results.
- **Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald** received the Outstanding Oral Presentation Award at the Science for Scientists Pre-Congress Event for her research on psychological well-being and cancer risk, and the "Early-Career Best Individual Presentation Award" at the 5th World Congress on Positive Psychology for her work on psychological well-being and adoption of a healthy lifestyle, both awarded by the International Positive Psychology Association.
- **Laura Zatz, SD '20** will present an oral session on Nov 8th at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in Atlanta entitled "Graphic Warning Labels Curb Purchasing of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages."

Congratulations to Felton Earls



Felton Earls, Emeritus Professor of Human Behavior and Development has been selected for the 2017 Sarah Gund Prize for research and mentorship in child mental health from the Child Mind Institute.

Dr. Earls will be honored at Child Mind Institute's Child Advocacy Award Dinner on November 20, 2017 in New York City.

Recent Publications

- **Ash T**, Agaronov A, Young T, Aftosmes-Tobio A, Davison KK. Family-Based Childhood Obesity Prevention Interventions: A Systematic Review and Quantitative Content Analysis. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*. 2017 Aug 24; 14(1): 113. doi: 10.1186/s12966-017-0571-2. Open-source link: <https://ijbnpa.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12966-017-0571-2>
- **Ash T**, Taveras EM. Associations of short sleep duration with childhood obesity and weight gain: summary of a presentation to the National Academy of Science's Roundtable on Obesity Solutions. *Sleep Health*. 2017 Oct; 3(5): 389-392. doi: 10.1016/j.sleh.2017.07.008.
- **Feldman, J**, Gruskin, S, Coull, B, Krieger, N. Quantifying underreporting of law-enforcement-related deaths in United States vital statistics and news-media-based data sources: A capture–recapture analysis. *PLoS Medicine* 2017; 14(10): e1002399. <http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002399>
- **Feldman, JM**, Gruskin, S, Coull, B, Krieger, N. Killed by police: Validating media-based counts, demographic data and vital statistics cause-of-death codes (Massachusetts, 2004-2016). *American Journal of Public Health* 2017; 107(10), pp. 1624–1626. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2017.303940
- **Krieger N**. Are hate crimes a public health issue? *thebmjopinion* (invited submission), August 24, 2017. <http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2017/08/24/nancy-krieger-are-hate-crimes-a-public-health-issue/>
- **Krieger N**, Jahn JL, Waterman PD, Chen JT. Breast cancer estrogen receptor by biological generation: US black & white women, born 1915-1979. *Am J Epidemiol* 2017; advance access on-line: 20 September 2017. kwx312; <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwx312>

Arrivals

- **Christian Bommer** was recently welcomed as a Visiting Graduate Student working with Subu Subramanian.
- **Kelb Bousquet Santos** joined us as a Visiting Scientist. She will be working with Laura Kubzansky.
- **Alexandre Chiavegatto Filho** and **Ryutaro Nakagawa** also joined us as Visiting Scientists. They will be working with Ichiro Kawachi.
- **Hayami Koga, MPH '16** returns to us as a Visiting Graduate Student. She will be continuing her work with Laura Kubzansky.
- **Chun-Tung Kuo** is a newly appointed Research Fellow working with Ichiro Kawachi.
- **Suhang Song** and **Cristina Franco Gontijo** also joined us as Visiting Graduate Students and are also working with Ichiro Kawachi.



Loretta Alamo, Assistant Director of Operations and Administration is a proud grandmother! Her grandson, Cole Andrew was born on October 15. He weighed 7 pounds, 3 ounces.



SBS Research Associate, **Erica Kenney** welcomed her son, Sam into the world the weekend of Oct 7. He was a very healthy, 10 pounds, 14 ounces! Congratulations Erica!

Center for Health & Happiness Update



The Center for Health and Happiness was pleased to welcome members of the Lee Family and the Lee Kum Kee Delegation to Boston on October 16th. During their visit, LKK had the opportunity to attend a talk by Professor Tyler VanderWeele as part of the Center's Seminar Series. During his seminar entitled "On the Promotion of Human Flourishing", Professor VanderWeele discussed the concept, measurement and pathways to human flourishing, as well as implications for research and practice.

Events

The next Center for Health and Happiness/Mental Health Student Alliance Journal Club meeting will be held **Wed, Nov 1, 1:00-2:00pm in Kresge 708**.

Open to all masters, doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates and research scientists. The mission of the journal club is to examine interdisciplinary research covering a range of epidemiologic, biologic, behavioral and social topics related to positive health and well-being.



STRIPED presents a documentary film screening,
Straight/Curve: Redefining Body Image

Mon, Nov 6, viewing from 7:00-8:45pm, live webcast Q&A panel from 8:45pm—10:00pm in FXB G12

Body Image in Early Childhood: Helping Preschoolers Develop Body Confidence as a Public Health Intervention

Speaker: **Dr. Laura Hart**, STRIPED visiting scholar from LaTrobe University in Melbourne

Nov, 8, 1:00-1:50pm in Kresge 200



Events (cont.)



The next **SBS Student-Faculty Lunch** will be hosted by **Dr. Laura Kubzansky**. Look out for an invitation to be sent out in early November!

Friday, Nov 17

1:00-2:00pm

Kresge 110



The next Social Landmark event will be an academic research meeting with Dr. Lisa Berkman. Four fellows will present works in progress.

Monday, Dec 4

3:00PM-5:00pm

Landmark, 403Q



The Center for Health and Happiness Seminar Series will feature a talk from **Professor Laura Carstensen**, Fairleigh S. Dickinson Jr. Professor in Public Policy, Professor of Psychology, Director, Stanford Center on Longevity.

Tuesday, Dec 12

1:00-2:00pm

Kresge 502



Erika Sabbath, SD '12 will present "Who seeks out preventive health care? The influence of workplace policies and practices"

Wed, Dec 13

12:00-1:00pm

Dana Building, Room D1130, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

Questions, suggestions, ideas? Email us: sbs@hsph.harvard.edu

Editors: Alfredo Perez-Hidalgo, Rubim Rwakabuba, Whitney Waddell

Layout and Design: Rubim Rwakabuba, Whitney Waddell

Contributing Writers: Claudia Trudel-Fitzgerald, Estivaliz Castro, and Whitney Waddell

Contact Us: Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences - 617-432-1135 - sbs@hsph.harvard.edu