

Anna Ortega-Williams

Silberman School of Social Work
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Education

- 2011-2017 **Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work, Ph.D** *Summa Cum Laude*
Fordham University, Graduate School of Social Service
Dissertation Title: *Is Organizing a Pathway for Wellbeing and Post-Traumatic Growth for Black Youth in New York City? Exploring Recovery from Historical Trauma and Systemic Violence.*
Chair: Dr. G. Lawrence Farmer
Co-chair: Dr. Laura J. Wernick
Outside Committee Member: Dr. Shawn A. Ginwright, San Francisco State University
- 1999-2001 **Master of Social Work, Magna Cum Laude**
Stony Brook University, State University of New York
Focus: Generalist social work practice, policy, and complementary healing modalities
Master's Thesis: Women's Incarceration and Social Work Practice
- 1995-1999 **Bachelor of Science, Cum Laude**
Hunter College, City University of New York
Major: Psychology, Minors: Sociology & Black and Puerto Rican Studies

Academic Appointments

- 2018 **Assistant Professor**
Silberman School of Social Work, Hunter College City University of New York (CUNY)

Research Interests

- Historical trauma, post-traumatic growth, community organizing and Black youth wellbeing; recovery from systemic violence
- Race-based traumatic stress and mental health
- Peer-led mental health recovery and collective wellbeing approaches among youth
- Anti-oppressive and anti-racist social work practice
- Group work
- Youth development, intervention research, and program evaluation
- Community-based participatory research, participatory program evaluation and participatory action research

Research Experience

- 2014-Present *Co-Principal Investigator* with Dr. Laura J. Wernick
Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, New York, NY
Participatory Action Research project exploring community organizing, mental health, and well-being among youth of color in Brooklyn. University funded project: \$3500.

Responsibilities include:

- Co-designing research methodology
- Drafting IRB application

- Securing groups for participatory action research study
- Facilitating meeting coordination
- Conducting transcription review and correction
- Coding data (by hand and learned Atlas Ti)
- Manuscript drafting

2013 *Co-Investigator* with Drs. Smeltz, Gonzalez, Fuentes, Kwan and Cowan. City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center, New York, NY

Responsibilities included:

- Reviewing archival information
- Cross referencing neighborhood-level health statistics
- Manuscript drafting

2011-2014 *Research Assistant* for Dr. MaryAnn Forgey
Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, New York, NY
Empirical research comparing the learning outcomes between online and face-to-face social work practice students

Responsibilities included:

- Conducted grant research
- Drafted IRB application
- Developed and administered a survey using previously validated scales
- Performed quantitative data entry (SPSS)
- Coded qualitative data (by hand)
- Conducted a literature review
- Performed data analysis (including data cleaning, variable transformation, and power analysis)
- Co-drafted a manuscript
- Prepared and co-led a PowerPoint presentation at an international interdisciplinary conference on preliminary findings

Funded Research Grants

- 2017 Dissertation Grant, Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, \$3,000
- 2017 Fahs-Beck Fund for Research and Experimentation, Dissertation Fellowship, \$5,000

Publications

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles

Ortega-Williams, A., Wernick, L.J., DeBower, J., & Brathwaite, B. (2018). Finding relief in action: The intersection of youth-led community organizing and mental health in Brooklyn, NYC. *Journal of Youth & Society*, 1-21. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X18758542>

Forgey, M.A. & **Ortega-Williams, A.** (2016). Moving beyond the question of if to how social work practice can be taught effectively online. *Advances in Social Work*, 17(1), 59-77.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18060/20877>

Smeltz, M. T., Gonzalez, S. K., Fuentes, L., Kwan, A., **Ortega-Williams, A.**, & Cowan, L. P. (2013). Lessons from Hurricane Sandy: A community response in Brooklyn, NY. *Journal of Urban Health*, 90(5), 799-809.

Other Publications

Fox, M., **Ortega-Williams, A.**, & McBride, C. (2018). Community research ethics in Red Hook. URBAN Research Network Working Paper <https://urbanresearchnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/community-protocols-urban.pdf>.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Ortega-Williams, A. & Wernick, L.J. Exploring the intersection between transformative organizing and historical trauma theory to promote mental health among Black youth.

Presentations

Peer Reviewed Presentations

- Ortega-Williams, A.** (2018, April). *Collective Healing, Collective Liberation* (panel). Channeling Resilience for Young Men of Color: Third Annual Paving the Way to Healing and Recovery: Conversations with Young Men of Color Who Survive Violence Conference. New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A.** (2016, June). *Youth of Color: Transforming Historical Trauma*. Healing the Hurt: Restoring Hope After Trauma. 3rd Annual Conference. Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Mental Health Association-NYC. New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A.** & Wernick, L. J. (2015, October). *#Blacklivesmatter: Exploring Transformative Organizing, Historical Trauma and Mental Health Among Black Youth*. Council on Social Work Education: Annual Program Meeting. Denver, CO.
- Ortega-Williams, A.** & Fox, M. (2015, July). *Youth Participant as Youth Researcher: YPAR as a Vehicle for Evaluation and Empowerment*. Partnership for After-School Education Annual Conference, New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A.** (2015, April). *Resilience, Resistance, and Recovery: Transforming Trauma and Transforming the World*. Paving the Way to Healing and Recovery: Conversations with Young Men of Color Who Survive Violence Conference. New York, NY.
- Forgey, M. & **Ortega-Williams, A.** (2014, March). *Can Social Work Practice be Taught Effectively Online? A comparison of the learning outcomes between an online and face to face generalist social work practice class*. The International Technology, Education, and Development Conference (INTED), Valencia, Spain.
- Ortega, A.** (2010, June). *Family Institutes of Bold Hope, Multifamily Group Therapy*. International Association for Social Work with Groups, 32nd Annual Symposium on Social Work with Groups. Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- Ortega, A.**, Wolfe, B. & Silverman, B (2009, September). *Radical Social Workers/Clients as Revolutionaries*. RISE Conference: Social Work in an Era of Change. Silver School of Social Work, New York University.
- Ortega, A.** (2007, October). *Family Institutes of Bold Hope: Multifamily Group Therapy*. Improvisation for Lasting Change: Social Work Outside of the Box. School of Social Work, State University of Maine, Orono, ME.

Invited Presentations

Ortega-Williams, A. (2018, June). *Black Youth and Trauma: Recovery Reimagined*. Healing the Hurt: Reconciling our Past, Forging our Future. 5th Annual Conference. Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and Vibrant Emotional Health. New York, NY

- Ortega-Williams, A.** (2018, June). Panelist: *At the Crossroads of Change: The Intersection of Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, and Racial Disparities*. Department of Juvenile Justice and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A., Ham, J.** (2017, January). *Sparkling Healing: Shifting Race-Based and Historical Trauma in Youth Development*. Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) and the Mental Health Association of New York, New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A., Rivera, J., & Todd, C.** (2014, November). *Innovative Service Delivery Approaches*. Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, New York, NY.
- Ortega-Williams, A.** (2013, January). *Cultural Responsiveness and Inclusiveness. Pathways to Excellence Program on Diversity*. Nonprofit Coordinating Committee of New York - Nonprofit Excellence Award, New York, NY.
- Ortega, A.** (2010, October). Keynote Speaker: *Rooted in Radical Values and Collective Action. RISE: Social Work in an Era of Change*, New York, NY.
- Ortega, A.** (2008, August). Conference co-organizer: *Improvisation for Lasting Change: A Camp for the Art and Craft of Social Work Practice and Teaching*, School of Social Work, State University of Maine, Orono, ME.

Teaching Interests

- Social work practice: Individuals, families, groups and communities
- Trauma-informed practice and youth development
- Human rights and social justice; anti-oppressive social work practice
- Participatory program evaluation with youth in community based organizations
- Evidence-informed practice and practice-informed research

Teaching Experience

Instructor

- 2017- Present **Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College**
 SW 330.00-01 Human Behavior in the Social Environment
- Instructing Bachelor's level social work students in examining the multidimensional influences that shape human development and behavior.
 - Designed activities utilizing an innovative blend of 21st Century social media platforms, popular news outlets, scholarly journals, and lived experience to deepen analysis of the social work person-in-environment framework.
- 2015-2016 **Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service**
 SWGS 6605 Community Organization
- Instructed Master's level social work students in macro-level interventions.
 - Developed student awareness and ability to assess, plan, implement and evaluate community organizing projects and campaigns, including their ability to mobilize sustainable leadership within communities,
 - Engaged students in critical thinking regarding philosophies and models of organizing.
- 2009-2016 **Red Hook Initiative Social Work Internship Field Instructor**
- Provided weekly clinical and macro-practice supervision for social work interns

Lecturer

2017

Adelphi University Graduate School of Social Work

SWK 728 Social Work with Children and Adolescents

- Presented on multi-family group work and practice-informed research

Teaching Assistant

2012-2013

Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, New York, NY

SWGS 6321 Generalist Social Work Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups

- Created a rubric for discussion board participation, with guidance from professor, to assess level of integration of reading materials, self-reflection on practice skill development, and critical thinking
- Graded online student participation on discussion board
- Assisted with content uploading onto Blackboard
- Coordinated and performed standardized client interviews with students

Honors

2017

Mid-Career Leader, National Association of Social Workers - NYC Chapter

2015

Member, Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society: 3.9 GPA

2013-2016

Minority Fellow, Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) Minority Fellows Program, \$70,000

2013

Scholarship, Fordham University Graduate School of Social Service, \$10,000

Professional Work Experience

2012-2018

Red Hook Initiative, Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY

Director of Training and Evaluation

2011-2012

Red Hook Initiative, Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY

Director of Health Programs

2008-2012

Visiting Nurse Service, New York, NY

Per Diem Social Worker for HIV Mobile Services Unit

2004-2011

Red Hook Initiative, Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY

Social Worker

2002-2005

Good Shepherd Services, Red Hook, Brooklyn, NY

Social Worker

2000-2001

Pederson-Krag Continuing Day Treatment Center, St. James, NY

Social Work Intern and Treatment Coordinator

1999-2000

Children and Family Mental Health Services, Amityville, NY

Social Work Intern

1998-1999

Covenant House, New York, NY

Crisis Hotline Operator

Work Skill Summary

- *Direct Practice:* Provided short and long-term counseling for individuals, couples, and families in several settings: a community center, school, continuing day treatment center, clubhouse, a hotline, and in individuals' homes. Provided referrals, case management, and advocacy for clients as needed. Designed and implemented a multi-family social work group model for children and families. Conducted a school-based social and emotional health programs for adolescents, ages 12-14. Designed and facilitated trainings for parents, teachers and school staff in group work,

communication techniques, and stress reduction. Provided workshops emphasizing emotional health for adolescents. Developed strategies with staff to increase communication and cooperation. Facilitated therapeutic activity groups for the persistently and chronically mentally ill. Assisted homebound clients with HIV and AIDS related health challenges with goal setting to increase independence. Assessed suicide risk of hotline callers to link them to local therapeutic support.

- *Supervision:* Provided weekly individual and group supervision for program managers, social workers, program facilitators, and interdisciplinary teams. Led program innovation, design, and implementation strategies. Guided clinical assessment and therapeutic interventions. Guided graduate level social work interns in field practicum to integrate areas of concentration: group work, clinical practice, and community organizing. Provided clinical oversight for social work services. Provided training for social workers in trauma-informed treatment assessment and interventions.
- *Program Evaluation:* Designed logic models and web-based surveys connected to problem and program theories. Conducted research to align program models with evidence based practices. Implemented surveys and focus groups to collect quantitative and qualitative data. Conducted data analysis to produce inferences and advise future programming efforts. Generated evaluation reports to document program effectiveness. Provided support to colleagues in related program evaluations. Led an agency advisory team of researchers and evaluators to increase evidence-informed practice throughout the organization. Supported program strategy revision with senior management to align organizational programming, professional development and evaluation. Partnered with the Public Science Project of the City University of New York, Graduate Center to create a youth evaluation team who presented findings at the Department of Education and the American Education Research Association (AERA) in Chicago (2015). Designed a community-based participatory research project (CBPAR) to investigate the mold crisis in Red Hook public housing. Co-produced a white paper on the issue, which garnered media coverage and responses from the New York City Housing Authority.
- *Curriculum Development and Program Design:* Co-developed two community organizing online modules focused on developing macro-practice skills for generalist social work students. Created a ten-month social and emotional health curriculum to train Peer Counselors, which was purchased later for program replication. Provided technical assistance to effectively implement the curriculum. Drafted a training manual for a multi-family group work model, aligned with theoretical underpinnings and best practices. Designed and implemented two 8-week trainings for staff in program design and social group work planning and facilitation. Provided consultation on youth development curriculum for staff. Designed curricula with interdisciplinary teams, including youth participants.
- *Training and Capacity Building:* Coordinated quarterly training institutes for five program areas as well as operations and development teams. Designed and implemented professional development opportunities for staff and administration. Designed trainings on agency policies such as child safety, crisis prevention and response, and restorative justice to ensure uniform implementation. Conducted program observations to support frontline staff and managers with performance management. Provided individual coaching to staff on topics ranging from curriculum design, group facilitation, supervision, talent management, peer education, Mental Health First Aid, Motivational Interviewing, task management, and project management.

- *Grant Writing*: Supported with drafting grants for multi-family group work, which received mental health funding from two separate foundations. Agency was awarded three multi-year grants totaling \$150,000. Secured funding through discretionary funds from local principals for programs totaling over \$5,000, including per session costs for Department of Education staff, food expenses, and supplies. Submitted all quarterly and year-end reports to foundations.

Specialized Trainings, Certificates, and Licensure

2017	Motivational Interviewing Trainer	NYC Center for Economic Opportunity
2016	Mental Health First Aid Trainer Certification	National Council on Behavioral Health
2016	Talent Management Training	Community Resource Exchange
2015	Trauma Informed Supervision	National Council on Behavioral Health
2015	Trauma Informed Practice Perspectives	Mental Health Association of New York City
2013	Teaching Excellence Seminar	Fordham University
2013	Motivational Interviewing	Red Hook Initiative
2012	Facilitative Leadership Seminar	Community Resource Exchange
2009	Seminar in Field Instruction	City University of New York, Hunter College
2009	Program Evaluation	City University of New York, Graduate Center
2007	Youth Expedition Leader	Youth Opportunities Program
2005	Child Victims of Domestic Violence	Good Shepherd Services, Certificate
2004	Group Work	Good Shepherd Services, Certificate
2004	Play Therapy	Good Shepherd Services, Certificate
2004	State of New York Licensure	State of New York, Department of Education
2003	Strengths-Based Family Therapy	Good Shepherd Services, Certificate

Professional Organizational Memberships

2013-present	Member, Council on Social Work Education
2010	Member, Association of Black Social Workers
2009-2011	NYC Chapter Board Member, International Association for Social Work with Groups
2008-present	Co-founder and Member, Radical Social Work Group

Community Service

2009-present	Member, Common Justice, Impacted Parties Advisory Group, Brooklyn, NY
2008-2009	Founder, 100 Letters to My Father Project, City University of New York, Medgar Evers
2007-2009	Founder, Bold Hope Community Coalition, Brooklyn, NY
2003-2005	Board Member, Casa Atabex Ach House of Womyn's Power, Bronx, NY
1997	Volunteer, Covenant House, New York, NY
1998	Intern, The Urban Assembly: Bronx Center Project, Bronx, NY
1994	Volunteer, Hebrew Home for the Aged, Riverdale, NY

Languages

Proficient spoken and written English and Spanish