



In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Art
Neda Movahed

Will present her scientific paper

Living in Harmony: Exploring Multi-Dimensional Well-Being and Gender with Underrepresented Health and Education Communities

Abstract

One of the primary goals of sustainability is to maximize human well-being for present and future generations while remaining safely within ecological boundaries. To decide what is important to sustain however, we require a more complete understanding of well-being and alternative ways of characterizing it. Conventional metrics for well-being have relied primarily on macro-level data on economic outputs and material dependency with natural resources, overlooking heterogeneity at smaller scales and the more abstract qualities important for our health. I conceive of health in the age of the anthropocene as an interdependent phenomenon, where human health is dependent on planetary health and planetary health is reliant on human health, an idea echoed in fields such as conservation medicine and ecopsychology. I operationalize this concept of health and analyze community well-being across multiple dimensions. Taking a community-based participatory approach to the research, we co-create alternative indicators focusing on psychological, social, and spiritual aspects of health. I work with two local communities that represent minorities within their respective fields of education and medicine: the Desert Marigold School (DMS) and the Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine (SCNM). Focus group discussions combined philosophical foundations of anthroposophy and naturopathy with academic discourses on sustainability. This resulted in evaluative frameworks that may enable us to assess multi-dimensional well-being as an interdependent phenomenon. Gender analysis reveals a shared understanding about a balancing act between masculine and feminine energy occurring on the micro scale of individuals and the macro scale of society.

Thursday, March 24, 2016
9:00-11:30 am
Wrigley Hall 481

Faculty, students, and the general public are invited.

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Shauna BurnSilver, Chair
Dr. Maria Cruz-Torres, Member
Dr. Tyler DesRoches, Member