

**NMHU RIMI Fellowship for
Research and Grant Writing Activities
Application**

**Submitted by
Dr. Erika Derkas
Behavioral Sciences, Sociology
454-3432
ederkas@nmhu.edu
Hewett Hall Room 214**

Department of Health and Human Services
Public Health Services

Grant Progress Report

Review Group	Type	Activity	Grant Number
Total Project Period			
From:		Through:	
Requested Budget Period			
From:		Through:	

1. TITLE OF PROJECT Needs Assessment: Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young Women in Rural New Mexi			
2a. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OR PROGRAM DIRECTOR (Name and address, street, city, state, zip code) Erika Derkas PO Box 3431 Las Vegas, NM 87701		3. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION (Name and address, street, city, state, zip code)	
2b. E-MAIL ADDRESS ederkas@nmhu.edu		4. ENTITY IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
2c. DEPARTMENT, SERVICE, LABORATORY, OR EQUIVALENT Behavioral Sciences		5. TITLE AND ADDRESS OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL	
2d. MAJOR SUBDIVISION		E-MAIL:	
6. HUMAN SUBJECTS		7. VERTEBRATE ANIMALS	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
6a. Research Exempt <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes		7a. If "Yes," IACUC approval Date	
6b. Human Subjects Assurance No.		7b. Animal Welfare Assurance No.	
If Exempt ("Yes" in 6a): Exemption No.		6c. NIH-Defined Phase III Clinical Trial <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
If Not Exempt ("No" in 6a): IRB approval date Spring 2008		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full IRB or <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited Review	
8. COSTS REQUESTED FOR NEXT BUDGET PERIOD		9. INVENTIONS AND PATENTS	
8a. DIRECT \$		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes If "Yes," <input type="checkbox"/> Previously Reported <input type="checkbox"/> Not Previously Reported	
8b. TOTAL \$			
10. PERFORMANCE SITE(S) (Organizations and addresses)		11a. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR OR PROGRAM DIRECTOR (Item 2a)	
		TEL 505-454-3432 FAX 4543331	
		11b. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIAL NAME (Item 5)	
		TEL FAX	
		11c. NAME AND TITLE OF OFFICIAL SIGNING FOR APPLICANT ORGANIZATION (Item 14)	
		NAME Dr. Tom Ward	
		TITLE Professor, Sociology, Chair of Behavioral Sciences	
		TEL 454-3196 FAX 454-3331	
		E-MAIL tsward@nmhu.edu	

12. Corrections to Page 1 Face Page

13. APPLICANT ORGANIZATION CERTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE: I certify that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and accept the obligation to comply with Public Health Services terms and conditions if a grant is awarded as a result of this application. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.		SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL NAMED IN 11c. (In ink. "Per" signature not acceptable.)	DATE
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the key personnel and other significant contributors in the order listed on Form Page 2.
Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FOUR PAGES.**

NAME Erika Derkas	POSITION TITLE Assistant Professor, Sociology		
eRA COMMONS USER NAME Derkas			
EDUCATION/TRAINING <i>(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, and include postdoctoral training.)</i>			
INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE <i>(if applicable)</i>	YEAR(s)	FIELD OF STUDY
University of New Mexico	PhD	2006	sociology
University of New Mexico	MA	1998	sociology

Please refer to the application instructions in order to complete sections A, B, and C of the Biographical Sketch.

A. Positions and Honors.
Positions and Employment

Fall 2001-2003-Visiting Scholar, Sociology, Loyola Marymount University
 Fall 2000- spring 2001 Instructor, Sociology, University of New Mexico
 Fall 2003-present Assistant Professor, Sociology, New Mexico Highlands University

Other Experience and Professional Memberships

1995-2001 Research Associate, Institute for Social Research, University of New Mexico.
 1996-2001 Graduate Assistant, University of New Mexico, Department of Sociology.
 1995-1998 Research Assistant, University of New Mexico, Southwest Hispanic Research Institute.
 Sister Song Member
 Committee on Women, Population and the Environment
 Pacific Sociological Association
 National Women's Studies Association
 National Women's Alliance
 Society for the Study of Social Problems

- American College of Sports Medicine

Honors

Fall-Spring 2004-05 Professor of the Year, New Mexico Highlands University
1998-present Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society,
2004 Nominee for the Lindsmith Award from the SSSP Law and Society Division
1992-Present Pi Gamma Mu International Honor Society in Social Science,
1992 Nominee for Al Ebusan Award for Student Activism
1991-1992 Certificate of Merit for Co-Curricular Activities, Humboldt State University,

B. Selected peer-reviewed publications (in chronological order).

1. Ross, Loretta and **Derkas Erika**, Co-Editors of *"Let's Talk About Sex*

Anthology" SisterSong Conference Proceedings South End Press- in progress collaboration work with Loretta Ross, SisterSong Director

2. **Derkas, Erika**, 2007. "The Empower Foundation of Thailand: The Anatomy of Global Organizing for Sex Workers Rights in Dealing with Violence". under review *Third Space*
3. **Derkas, Erika**, 2007. "CRACK: The Undermining of Female Reproductive Autonomy ".under review *Gender and Society Journal*
4. **Derkas, Erika**, 2007 "Privatized Institutionalization: Establishing Prenatal Drug Exposure as a Social Problem" under review *Sociological Perspectives*.
5. **Derkas, Erika**, 2003. "Criminalizing Women's Bodies: The Politics of Reproductive Rights". *Law and Society Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems Newsletter*.
6. Kurlander, Tamar and **Derkas, Erika**. "Women Confronting Violent Men", *The Humboldt State Matrix*, 1992.

Technical Reports

Boyle, Richard and **Derkas, Erika**. *Long Term Follow-up of Child Development Programs in Albuquerque*, University of New Mexico, Institute for Social Research 2001.

Guerin, Paul and **Derkas, Erika**. *Bernalillo County Criminal Justice System Report and Flow Chart*, University of New Mexico, Institute for Social Research, 1999.

Guerin, Paul, Derkas, Erika, and Morrison-Brown, Shannon. *Mental Health Survey*, University of New Mexico, Institute for Social Research, 1999.

Guerin, Paul; McNamara, Laura; Olsen, Andy; Pitts, Wayne; and Derkas, Erika. *Adult Community Corrections Evaluation*, Institute for Social Research, University of New Mexico, 1996.

C. Research Support

Ongoing Research Support

"To work with the Disproportionate Minority Contact Panel to establish a Technical Assistance and resource Center on Minority Issues." Grant proposal submitted to the State of New Mexico, children, Youth and Families Department, October 2007 (collaboration work with Dr. Alarid, Dr. Ward, Dr. Tagayuna and Dr. Williamson)

"A Research Study to Evaluate the Efficacy of a Dual-Credit Program in Rural Northeastern New Mexico High Schools" Grant proposal submitted to The College Board Greenhouse Program, March 9, 2007 re-submitted under Title V Grant (collaboration work with Dr. Edward Martinez, Natural Sciences)

"Ethnic Identity and Place: Oral Histories from the Gallinas Canyon. in progress

"The Non- profit organization CRACK, Control and Regulation of Populations".

"Assessment of Football Athletes in Higher Education: A Case Study of Highlands University." Follow-up study in progress

"Graffiti on the Run: No Stopping Saigon", ethnographic work in progress.

Goals for Fellowship

If awarded the RIMI fellowship I will be granted the opportunity to design a research project proposal that is intended to be submitted to the National Institute of Health. I am currently a faculty member of sociology in the Behavioral Sciences Department. We have one of the largest student cohorts in Arts and Sciences but have had only two professors (myself and one other) tenured or on the tenure track since being hired in 2003. I have taught a 4-4 load (sometimes with an overload) since my second year with Highlands. The RIMI will provide the crucial support needed for me to complete a grant proposal of this magnitude.

As my bio-sketch indicates my area of research is reproductive justice and health thus the support offered by the RIMI will not only enhance my career aspirations in the way of publications but also will add to my ability to contribute to the important issues that I teach in my courses. I currently teach two courses specifically dealing with gender issues that are cross listed with psychology. I teach gender and society and Women and Globalization. In each of these courses reproductive health and wellbeing are central topics covered during the semester. My research will expand my knowledge of the pressing issues that young women of Hispanic heritage face and thus enhance my teaching abilities and future research aspirations.

Research Proposal Overview

Over one quarter of the world's population is between the age of 10-24 years old (Rani and Lule 2004). Over the last ten years sexual and reproductive health programs that target the youth have gained increased attention partially because of the awareness generated about this important demographic regarding youth. A decade of research and program development focused on young people has to some extent enhanced what we know about young people's sexual and reproductive situation and needs in significant ways, yet gaps remain. For instance, traditionally, the discourse on sexual and reproductive health of young people has focused on teen pregnancy and the population studied has been disproportionately white and between the ages of 10-14 and 15-19. Previous research addressing sexual and reproductive health of young girls for the most part has not considered the diversity of experiences that are related to social status, race and ethnicity, residence, and gender. For instance, the New Mexico rate of women receiving late or no prenatal care is much higher than the national rate, with American Indian women least likely to receive timely prenatal care; • The teen birth rate in New Mexico is more than 60% higher than the national rate; Hispanic teens continue to have the highest rates and show the least decrease over time both in New Mexico and the nation (Aguilar, Booker, Dossey, Foster, Gallaher, Honey, Howarth, Howell, Kennedy, Landen, Quintana, Romero, Smith, and Whorton 2007:3) . Over the next 20 years, experts estimate that the number of Latino teens will grow by 60 percent while the total teen population will grow by eight percent. By the year 2020, one in five teens will be Latino (Ventura et al 2001).

In order to better address the needs of young women, it is essential to understand the transition from adolescence to adulthood more fully and thus attend to social, economic and cultural aspects of that transition. Although cohorts of young people are healthier, more urbanized and better educated than earlier generations, they face significant risks related to sexual and reproductive health, and many lack the knowledge and power to make informed sexual and reproductive choices (Grunbaum 2001 &02).

I propose to conduct a research project that attends to three specific issues related to young women's lives that need attention: (a) an overlooked sub-population of rural ethnic minority adolescent girls; (b) an overlooked experience of teenage motherhood; (c) an analysis of local programmatic interventions that work (or do not) in enhancing young women's health and development.

The proposed study is twofold. First I intend to assess the needs, attitudes, expectations, and experiences that young rural Hispanic women have regarding their sexual and reproductive health. Second, is to evaluate existing programs and assess whether they meet their intended goals; then compare the programmatic structure and strategies with the needs identified by the young women during phase one. Recommendations will be made to improve programs and offer insight for designing and implementing programs based on interviews with young women of the rural areas in Northern New Mexico.

There are many compelling reasons for conducting research in this area. Entering into puberty marks a boundary to physical maturity which brings gender defined changes into play for adolescent women. Generally speaking the changes enhance opportunities for boys and narrow avenues for girls (Sultana 2005). This is further complicated by the fact that traditionally, it has been assumed that young women have similar experiences for which universal programmatic models can be applied. However, many researchers have overlooked the fact that young people are not a homogeneous group. In addition to the challenges all youth

encounter during the transition to adulthood, sexual and reproductive health, the ways in which young women experience vulnerabilities, and the extent to which interventions designed to ameliorate them are successful vary enormously by such factors as age, poverty levels, rural-urban residence, culture, marital status, class, schooling, work status, and family structure. More specifically young Hispanic women are an underrepresented group in the research despite the fact that Latinos comprise the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the United States (Advocates for Youth 2007). Some of the factors identified may place Latinas at further risk, while others may assist in protecting their health. The complex interaction of these factors can also affect Latina teens' life choices, resiliency, and development (Advocates for Youth 2005). Perhaps more importantly is that behaviors formed and choices made by this large population have lasting implications for individual and public health outcomes and will determine the health of this generation as adults as well as the health and futures of the cultural group to which they belong. Programs thus far that address young people's sexual and reproductive health needs have had varied success. Moreover, and further confounding the situation, is the lack of evidence-based precedent about effective interventions.

This study will use a representative sample to gather data from various Northern New Mexico counties to assess the needs, attitudes and perceptions of young females regarding sexual and reproductive health. The sample respondents will be administered surveys and in depth face to face focus groups will be conducted. In the second phase of the research an evaluation of the programs in existence for this region will be conducted. The programmatic implications of observed findings will be discussed and recommendations made to improve programs and overall health. Evaluation has two components: one is to assess the effectiveness of the programs in meeting their intended goals. Second, using the data collected in the focus groups, comparisons will be made to determine the efficacy of the existing program in meeting the stated needs and attitudes of the youth. These findings will be provided to the existing programs.

References

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2. Frost JJ *et al.* 2001. "Teenage Sexual and Reproductive Behavior in Development Countries: Country Report for the United States." [*Occasional Report*, no. 8]. New York: Alan Guttmacher Institute,.
3. Doswell WM, Braxter B. 2002. "Risk-taking behaviors in early adolescent minority women: implications for research and practice". *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing*; 31:454-61.
4. Gonzales Castro F *et al.* 2000. "Healthy adjustment in Mexican American and other Hispanic adolescents." In: Montemayor R *et al.*, ed. *Adolescent Diversity in Ethnic, Economic, and Cultural Contexts*. [*Advances in Adolescent Development*; v. 10] Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
5. Grunbaum JA *et al.* 2001& 2002. "Youth risk behavior surveillance, United States",. *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report, CDC Surveillance Summaries*; 51(SS-4):1-62.
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10. Rani, M. and E. Lule. 2004. "Exploring the Socioeconomic Dimension of Adolescent Reproductive Health: A Multicountry Analysis. International Family Planning Perspectives. Vol 30, no. 3 September.
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20. Villarruel AM. 1998. "Cultural influences on the sexual attitudes, beliefs and norms of young Latina adolescents." *Journal of Society Pediatric Nurses*; 3:69-81.
21. Weeks MR *et al.* 1995. "AIDS prevention for African American and Latina women: building culturally and gender-appropriate intervention." *AIDS Education Preview*; 7:251-63.
22. _____. 2002. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. Trends in sexual risk behaviors among high school students, United States, 1991-2001. *Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report*; 51:856-59.
23. _____. 2001. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report*; 13(2):144.
24. _____. 2002. Census Bureau. *Statistical Abstract of the United States*. Washington, DC: The Bureau,.
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26. _____. 1999. National Coalition of Hispanic Health & Human Services Organizations. *The State of Hispanic Girls*. Washington, DC: Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations (COSSMHO) Press.
27. _____. 1998. Office of Research on Women's Health. *Women of Color Health Data Book: Adolescents to Seniors*. Bethesda, MD: National Institutes of Health.
28. _____. National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. *Teen Sexual Activity, Pregnancy, and Childbearing among Latinos in the United States*. Washington, DC: The Campaign, 2001.
29. _____. "Latina Adolescent Health." Thursday, November 01, 2007 . Advocates for Youth. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/>

The Benefit to NMHU Students

Given that Highlands is a Hispanic serving institution one of the main goals of the Behavioral Sciences department, particularly the Sociology discipline, is to engage our student population with the issues that confront them as community members. As a student-centered, publicly supported, regionally based, comprehensive university offering programs in liberal arts, sciences and professional disciplines the University brings together students from distinctive cultural, socioeconomic, linguistic, geographic, religious, and educational backgrounds. Many of our students are local residents and thus have a unique insight in understanding the specific dynamics that impact reproductive and sexual health of young people from the surrounding areas.

The experiences of our exceptional students as minorities, role models, budding research scientists, and as involved community members have provided our professors in sociology with unique knowledge, motivation, and enthusiasm to better expand our knowledge of the particulars of northern New Mexico. The reciprocal relationships that professors of sociology have with their students have helped them develop a teaching philosophy that is comprised of several objectives enabling students to be successful at learning not only in the classroom setting, but also learning how to critically think and apply what they learned to real world situations. For the reason stated including students on the proposed research will benefit the project's overall goals.

The proposal submitted to NHI will include at least two graduate assistant positions and two undergraduate positions. Given the scope of the study it is anticipated that this will be a undertaking that will cover at least two years. Therefore, there is potential for hiring more students since they can be rotated during the study period. The experience of conducting research on a sociological issue of key importance will enhance their ability to be productive community members and prepare them for masters level and PhD level programs.

The Benefit to the NMHU Community

NMHU provides an unrivaled quality education in a welcoming, multicultural-oriented setting. In particular, New Mexico Highlands University has a long standing tradition of interdisciplinary and community collaborative work in contributing to the development of social services, training of professionals and community development. It is anticipated that there will be much room for collaboration in this project including academics from psychology, criminal justice and possible education and/or social work. The collaboration from varied disciplines will only strengthen the proposed research project and contribute to its competitiveness.

The first phase of the proposed research is to understand the needs and attitudes of this particular population of young women. Once these are determined the researcher intends to develop strategies in collaboration with key stakeholders in the community, to address the disproportionate health disparities that may be documented during the first stage of the project. It is anticipated that this first phase of the research will be used to secure future funding for programmatic development. The research will be useful for community leaders and key stakeholders in addressing improvements in the health of our young women.

Possible Funding Sources

National Institute of Health

Center for Disease Control

The Compton Foundation

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Commonwealth Fund

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN
Erika Derkas, Assistant Professor of Sociology AND The Department of
Behavioral Sciences**

The Department of Behavioral Sciences and Erika Derkas agree that the Department shall provide to Dr. Derkas if approved by the RIMI Fellowship review committee a 25% FTE award.



Erika Derkas

TITLE: Assistant Professor

DATE: November 15, 2007

Agreed to by



Tom S. Ward

TITLE: Department Chair, Behavioral Sciences

DATE: