

Brianna Suslovic

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D.**
2026 (expected) **The Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice**
University of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Academic Advisor: Matthew Epperson, M.S.W., Ph.D.
- M.S.W.**
2018 **Smith College, Northampton, MA**
Clinical Social Work
- A.B.**
2016 **Harvard College, Cambridge, MA**
Social Anthropology and Studies of Women, Gender & Sexuality
magna cum laude, high honors, Phi Beta Kappa
Undergraduate Honors Thesis: “In the Middle of the Movement:” Advocating for Sexual and Reproductive Health-Rights in the Nonprofit Industrial Complex
Language immersion in Madrid, Spain via Boston University Madrid (Jan. 2015 – May 2015)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2022 – Present **Qualitative Participatory Action Researcher, Spring Up**
Supervisors: Stas Schmiedt & Lea Roth
Denver, CO-based independent consultancy (remote)
Responsibilities: engage consultancy’s clients (primarily nonprofits and community groups) in participatory action research based on models of transformative justice, generative conflict, and harm accountability; collect and analyze qualitative data through client interviews and facilitated group spaces; present research findings to clients.
- 2021 – Present **Graduate Research Assistant, Smart Decarceration Project**
Principal Investigator: Matthew Epperson, M.S.W., Ph.D.
The Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice at the University of Chicago
Responsibilities: collect and analyze (using Dedoose) qualitative program evaluation data from a Cook County-based fitness diversion program for court-involved individuals with mental illness; direct a methods-focused analysis of research in criminal-legal and community mental health contexts; revise a qualitative findings-focused paper on adaptive responses of mental health court participants.
- 2021 – Present **Graduate Lab Member, Health Equity and Innovation for Social Transformation Lab**
Principal Investigator: Alida Bouris, Ph.D.
The Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice at the University of Chicago
Responsibilities: participate in weekly lab meetings and work sessions; provide feedback to fellow lab members on their projects; collect and analyze qualitative data on the role of criminal-legal system contact on the mental health of young Black gay and bisexual men.
- 2020 – Present **Qualitative Researcher, Moral Reconciliation Therapy and Police-Social Work Relations**
Principal Investigators: Ben Anderson-Nathe, Ph.D. & Sam Harrell, ABD
Portland State University (remote)

Responsibilities: participate in a group-coauthored critical discourse analysis of Moral Reconciliation Therapy treatment handbooks; co-write analysis of Moral Reconciliation Therapy's suitability for Council on Social Work Education-compliant Master's level social work field placements; revise scoping review of the evidence base for Moral Reconciliation Therapy; conduct archival research on the Police-Social Service Project pilot study in 1970s Chicago.

2017 – 2018

Research Clinician, Psychodynamic Research Clinic

Clinic Director: Adam Conklin, Ph.D.

Cambridge Health Alliance/Harvard Medical School

Responsibilities: participate in weekly clinic-wide trainings and group consultation on psychodynamic treatment modalities and theoretical orientations; record and process-record treatment of a research participant; review quantitative data collected from psychological measures to determine efficacy of treatment.

REVIEWER EXPERIENCE

- Student reviewer (supervised by Dr. Matthew Epperson) for *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*
- Reviewer for the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority's "Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3)" grants

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Advocates For Youth (Washington, D.C.; remote)

Staff Emotional Support and Wellness Counselor, 2020 – Present

- Providing individual workplace wellness consultations to staff members about work-life balance, resiliency, interpersonal effectiveness, executive functioning, and vicarious trauma/burnout prevention.
- Facilitating monthly or bi-monthly groups for addressing ADHD symptoms and working with young people.

The Fortune Society (Queens, NY)

Better Living Center Clinical Social Worker, 2020 – 2021

- Provided evaluations, treatment plans, and psychotherapy for a caseload of 40-50 regular clients with past or current criminal-legal system involvement within an Office of Mental Health Article 31-licensed clinic.
- Offered a weekly psychotherapy group for LGBTQ+ clients of The Fortune Society with past or current criminal-legal system involvement.
- Engaged internal and external service providers for client referrals to supportive housing, government benefits, and ongoing care coordination.

Brooklyn Defender Services (Brooklyn, NY)

Social Worker, Mental Health Unit & Adult Criminal Defense Practice, 2018 – 2020

- Psychosocially evaluated public defense attorneys' clients with suspected or confirmed diagnoses of serious mental illness, intellectual disability, dementia, substance use disorders, and traumatic brain injury.
- Collaborated with attorneys and clinical staff of Brooklyn Mental Health Court to develop treatment-based alternatives to incarceration for clients facing criminal charges, using oral and written advocacy strategies.
- Authored mitigation memoranda for prosecutors and judges to review in plea negotiations and sentencing.
- Offered and coordinated referrals to government benefits, healthcare, psychiatric care, alternative-to-incarceration programs, and supportive housing placements.
- Represented Brooklyn Defender Services on the NYC Criminal Defense Social Work Policy Coalition as well as the NYC COVID-19 Test & Trace Corps Community Advisory Board.

Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work (Northampton, MA; remote)

Editorial Assistant, 2017 – 2020

- Reviewed all submitted manuscripts to the academic journal for preliminary screening purposes, before passing them on to editorial leadership and reviewers.
- Corresponded regularly with editors, editorial board members, consulting editors, reviewers, authors, and the publisher to compile quarterly issues of the journal.
- Trained two new editorial assistants in all aspects of the journal structure, workflow, policies and procedures.

Cambridge Health Alliance Adult Outpatient Psychiatry Dept. & Psychodynamic Research Clinic (Somerville, MA)

Clinical Social Work Intern, 2017 – 2018

- Provided psychodynamic psychotherapy in a community mental health setting for a caseload of 14 regular psychotherapy patients.
- Conducted psychosocial intake evaluations for new patients in collaboration with an interdisciplinary team and primary care provider staff.

Brigham & Women's Faulkner Hospital Inpatient Psychiatry Dept. (Jamaica Plain, MA)

Clinical Social Work Intern, 2016 – 2017

- Provided psychotherapeutic interventions to patients admitted to an inpatient psychiatry unit after psychiatric crises including suicide attempts, psychotic episodes, manic episodes, and depressive episodes.
- Completed initial psychosocial assessments of newly-admitted patients on the unit, then presented assessments during daily team rounds.
- Engaged patients and family members in discharge planning interventions to ensure continuity of care.
- Facilitated a weekly safety planning group for patients on the inpatient unit who were preparing for discharge.

PUBLICATIONS

Suslovic, B. (2020). Mitigating racial loneliness as transformative psychoanalytic work. *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, 25(3), 480–489. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41282-020-00175-4>

Suslovic, B. (2018). Feminist Social Work and Abortion Support Work: A Young Practitioner's Reflections. *Affilia*, 33(4), 429–434. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109918806990>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND POSTERS

Suslovic, B. (2022). "Incarcerated Subjectivities, Attachments to Punishment: An Interrogation of Carceral Social Work's Cruel Optimism." Paper presented to the Chicago Center for Contemporary Theory Graduate Student Conference, Attachment Issues: Psychopolitics and the Everyday.

Suslovic, B. (2022). Criminalization, Medicalization, and Curative Violence: A Critical Examination of Mental 'Health' in Criminal-Legal Diversion Contexts." Paper presented to the UChicago Graduate Disability Studies Workshop.

Suslovic, B. (2022). "1970's Chicagoland At Risk." Paper presented at the DePaul Graduate Philosophy Conference.

Suslovic, B., Guz, S., & Hill, A. (2022). "The Possibilities of an Abolitionist Social Work Profession." Panel discussion at the DePaul Graduate Philosophy Conference.

Suslovic, B., Dadlani, M., & Desierto, G. (2021). "Reckoning with Anti-Blackness and Failures in Mentalization." Paper presented at the Spring Meeting of the American Psychological Association's Division 39.

- Suslovic, B. (2020). "Racial Loneliness, Recognition, and White Supremacy in Treatment and Supervision." Paper presented in a virtual discussion with the American Psychological Association Division 39 Section 9 membership.
- Suslovic, B., Dadlani, M., Bredesen, T., & Au, J. (2019). "Where Does Mutuality Lie? Navigating Clinician Self-Disclosure Across Difference and Sameness in Race, Gender, and Sexuality." Roundtable presentation at the Spring Meeting of the American Psychological Association's Division 39.
- Suslovic, B. (2019). "Racial Loneliness in Analytically-Informed Social Work Training." Paper presented at the American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work conference, Durham, NC.
- Suslovic, B. (2019). "Gaslighting in the Public Consciousness—Primary Defenses in Response to #MeToo." Paper presented at the American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work conference, Durham, NC.
- Suslovic, B. (2018). "Transforming Silence into Language and Action: Psychoanalytic Readings of Audre Lorde." Paper presented at the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society Conference, New Brunswick, NJ.
- Suslovic, B. (2018). "Mitigating Racial Loneliness as Transformative Psychoanalytic Work." Paper presented at the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society Conference, New Brunswick, NJ.
- Suslovic, B. (2018). "Racial Loneliness in Social Work Training." Poster session presented at the National Association for Social Workers Massachusetts Annual Symposium, Framingham, MA.

AWARDS & HONORS

- American Psychological Association Division 39 Scholar, Multicultural Concerns Committee (2020)
Recipient of a travel scholarship and psychoanalytic mentorship for one year.
- American Association for Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work Siskind Award for Excellence in Writing (2019)
Awarded for a paper on racial loneliness in psychoanalytic social work training.
- American Clinical Social Work Association Judith Holm Memorial Scholarship Award (2018)
Awarded for a clinical paper on treatment of a patient with borderline personality disorder/complex PTSD.
- Pforzheimer Student Research Fellowship at Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America (2016)
Recipient of a \$2500 research grant to conduct archival research on NARAL Pro-Choice America.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Black & Pink Chicago Civil Commitment Working Group**, 2022 – Present
Student archivist responsible for collaboratively developing a virtual archive of civil commitment in Illinois.
- Society for Social Work and Research Doctoral Student Committee**, 2022 – Present
Communications sub-committee member for the doctoral student board of SSWR.
- American Psychological Assn. Div. 39 Conference Steering Committee**, 2022 – Present
Steering committee member for a working group tasked with planning a national psychoanalytic conference.

UChicago Graduate Students United, Steering & Care/Accountability Committees, 2022 – Present
Member of graduate student union steering committee as a social work student representative, and care lead in restorative and transformative justice work within the union’s accountability working group.

Harvard Club of Chicago Cook County Jail Tutoring Team, 2022 – Present
Social studies tutor for incarcerated individuals taking the HiSET (GED) exam, offering biweekly tutoring sessions.

American Psychological Assn. Div. 39 Section IX (Psychoanalysis for Social Responsibility), 2020 – Present
Board member-at-large for the Division 39 special interest group for social justice and psychoanalysis.

Restorative justice practitioner for New York Abortion Access Fund, 2020 – Present
Assessing organizational dynamics and providing facilitation support in developing and implementing a restorative justice process for harms within the leadership and board of an abortion fund.

Boston Abortion Support Collective, 2017 – 2018
Steering committee member, abortion support volunteer (20 hours of training).

Eastern Massachusetts Abortion Fund, 2017 – 2018
Hotline volunteer (18 hours of training) for an abortion fund operating in the greater Boston area.

Anti-Racism Consultation Committee, 2016 – 2018
Student representative to the Smith College School for Social Work’s working group on anti-racism.

Council for Students of Color, 2017 – 2018
Co-president of the Smith College School for Social Work’s BIPOC student group.