

## Melanie A. Sonsteng-Person

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### EDUCATION

- Ph.D. Department of Social Welfare, UCLA, 2022 (expected)  
Dissertation: *The (re)production of violence and trauma in high schools: How institutional policies and practices influence teacher and staff decision making*  
Committee: Todd Franke (Chair), Ron Avi Astor, Sheryl Kataoka, Jorja Leap
- M.S.W School of Social Work, Boston University, 2014  
Advisor: Melvin Delgado  
Concentration: Macro Practice
- B.A. Department of Psychology, Azusa Pacific University, 2011

### PUBLICATIONS

#### Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

- 2021 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Loomis, A. (2021). The Role of Trauma-Informed Training in Helping Los Angeles Teachers Manage the Effects of Student Exposure to Violence and Trauma. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma*, 14, 189-199. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-021-00340-6>
- 2020 Loomis, A. **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jagers, J., and Osteen, P. (2020). School discipline as a consequence of violent victimization: Understanding the mediating roles of head injury and fighting. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 1-29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520959635>
- 2020 Jagers, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Griffiths, A., Gabbard, W. J., & Murray, M. (2020). Behavioral problems and psychological distress among seriously delinquent youth: Assessing a mediational pathway of parental monitoring, peer delinquency and violence exposure. *Youth and Society*, 53(2), 230-251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X20922114>
- 2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Herrera, L., Koonse, T., & Zatz, N. (2020). "Any alternative is great if I'm incarcerated": A mixed-methods study of court-ordered

community service in Los Angeles county. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 48(1), 32-53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854820923373>

### In Submission

**Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Jagers, J., Loomis, A. (*First Round Review*) Academic Achievement after Violence Exposure: The Indirect Effects of School Attachment and Motivation to Succeed. *Children and Youth Services Review*.

### In Preparation (\*Community Researchers, \*\*Students)

**Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & \*\*Fensterstock, N. “*At what point do you ask a suicidal teen to do their math homework?*”: How Los Angeles teachers are navigating the impacts of community violence and trauma.

**Sonsteng-Person, M.**, \*\*Vugic, L., and \*\* Sandell, L. *A process model of MSW Intern exposure to trauma in the field: The role of the self, supervisor, and systems.*

**Sonsteng-Person, M.**, \*Abrams, D., \*Van Leeuwen, J., \*Bunney, R., \*Cooley-Valdez, R., \* Jarman, B., and \*Taitingfong, S. “*What I Would Do to Take Away Your Pain*”: A Photovoice study with mothers of children with medical complexities.

\*King-Shaw, N., \*King-Shaw, S., & \*Orduro, A. **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, \*\*Mikell, D. *The normalization of continuous trauma derived from White Supremacy culture in educational systems: A Photovoice study with Black undergraduate students.*

### Research Reports

2021 Franke, T.M., Litt, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Sabat Bass, N, and Leap, J. *LACOE Community Schools Annual Evaluation Report – Year 1*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Agile Visual Analytics Lab.

2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.** and \*Van Leeuwen, J. *Cultivating engagement in a virtual photovoice project on a sensitive topic*. PhotovoiceWorldwide White Paper Series (1)2. Marlborough, MA: PhotovoiceWorldwide LLC  
<http://www.photovoiceworldwide.com/wordpress-whitepaper/papers/CultivatingEngagement.pdf>

2020 Franke, T., Blagg, R., & **Sonsteng-Person, M.** *The Antelope Valley Community Survey: Year 2*. Sisylana Evaluation and Consulting.  
<http://www.antelopevalleysettlementmonitoring.info/>

2019 Herrera, L., Koonse, T., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Zatz, N. *Is Forced Labor the Price of Freedom?: Court-Ordered Community Service in Los Angeles*, University of California, Labor Center. <https://www.labor.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Get-to-Work324.pdf>

- 2016      **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, *Promising Strategies for Youth Gun Violence Reduction: An Analysis of the Ceasefire Model*, Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies.
- 2014      **Sonsteng, M.**, *An Evaluation of Resident Engagement in Community Coalitions to Reduce Community Violence: Are We Doing It Right?* Boston Public Health Commission, Division of Violence Prevention and Intervention.

## SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND FUNDING

- 2018-2020      Social Justice Graduate Fellowship, UCLA Institute of American Cultures
- 2019              Graduate Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship, UCLA Graduate Division
- 2017-2022      Luskin Graduate Fellowship Fund Award, UCLA Department of Social Welfare
- 2012-2014      Urban Practice Scholarship, Boston University School of Social Work

## CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

### Panels Organized

- 2021              **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Ritterbusch, A., Mikell, D., Jordan, S., & Brock-Petroshius, K. *Centering Social Justice in the Social Work Research Process: Reflections from Doctoral Students' Participatory Action Research Initiatives in Southern California*. Society for Social Work Research. Virtual.
- 2020              **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Ritterbusch, A., Teixeira, S., and Mikell, D. *Advancing Justice or Tokenism? Critical Discussion of the Past and Future of Participatory Approaches to Research in Social Work*. Society for Social Work and Research. Washington DC.  
<https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2020/webprogram/Session10523.html>

### Papers

- 2020              Lee, D., Umemoto, K., Nguyen, T., **Sonsteng-Person, M.** & Allen, T. "Ethnic Studies and Public Scholarship: The Co-Creation of K–12 Curriculum Using University-Based Archival Materials." AERA Annual Meeting San Francisco, CA <http://tinyurl.com/srzk2wn> (Conference Canceled)
- 2020              **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Zatz, N., Koonse, T., and Herrera, L. "Any Alternative is Great if I'm Incarcerated: A Mixed-Methods Study of Court-Ordered Community Service in Los Angeles County. Society for Social Work and Research. Washington DC.  
<https://sswr.confex.com/sswr/2020/webprogram/Session11107.html>

2019 “Educational Implications of Community Violence & Trauma: How Los Angeles Teachers are Dealing with Effects in the Classroom.” National Center for School Mental Health. Austin, Texas.  
<http://www.schoolmentalhealth.org/media/SOM/Microsites/NCSMH/Documents/ASMH-2019/Presentations-2019/CS-1.09.-Educational-Implications-of-Community-Violence-&-Trauma.pdf>

## Posters

2021 Jagers, J., Loomis, A., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, & Osteen, P. “Victimization and Suspension/Expulsion in Adolescence: Exploring Pathways through Fighting and Head Injury.” Society for Social Work Research. Virtual.

2020 **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Vugic, L., Sandell, L., & Easton, S. “Secondary Traumatic Stress: How Prepared are MSW Interns and Supervisors?” Council on Social Work Education. Virtual.

2020 Jagers, J., **Sonsteng-Person, M.**, Church, W. “Mediating Factors Contributing to Psychological Distress in Serious Delinquent Offenders.” Society for Social Work and Research. Washington DC.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2021-2022 Principal Investigator  
Project: Photovoice and Social Change: How Researchers use Photovoice to Influence Policy and Practice Worldwide  
Management: Collaborated with Photovoice World Wide staff to conduct a mixed methods study on the social change and policy outcomes of Photovoice projects conducted internationally.

2020-2021 Co-Principal Investigator (with community researchers)  
Project: “Black Lives Matter All the Time:” A Photovoice Study on the Black College Experience  
Management: Collaborated with self-identified Black and African college students to create a virtual exhibition with over 100 attendees. Led to university policy for responding to racist incidents on campus.  
Exhibit: <https://youtu.be/BbmgHJAjiU8>

2019-2021 Principal Investigator  
Project: Secondary Traumatic Stress: How Prepared are MSW Interns and Their Supervisors to Address the Effects?  
Funding: Boston College School of Social Work Trauma Integration Initiative (\$600)

Management: Trained and managed a team of LCSW's and graduate students conducting and analyzing qualitative data utilizing a grounded theory approach.

- 2019-2021 Co-Principal Investigator (with community researchers)  
Project: Finding our Voices: A Photovoice Study with Mothers of Children with Medical Complexities  
Funding: Community funded (\$2,000)  
Management: Collaborated with mothers to create a virtual exhibition with over 200 attendees that led to the following changes: (1) Three universities used the recorded exhibit as training for nurses, social workers, and public health professionals. (2) An arts support group for mothers was created in response to mothers highlighting the lack of supports. (3) Rady Children's Hospital in San Diego created a mentorship program for parents of children with medical complexities.  
Exhibit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2ZIEmI7xG8>
- 2019-2021 Graduate Student Researcher, UCLA and Department of Mental Health  
Project: Evaluation of the The Community Schools Program in Los Angeles County Schools  
PI: Todd Franke, PhD  
Funding: Los Angeles Department of Mental Health  
Management: Led the qualitative evaluation for the Community Schools Initiative across 16 high schools in the Los Angeles County Office of Education. Trained and supervised undergraduate and graduate students in qualitative data collection and analysis.
- 2019-2020 Principal Investigator  
Project: Educational Implications of Community Violence and Trauma: How Los Angeles Teachers are Dealing with the Effects in the Classroom  
Funding: Graduate Summer Research Mentorship, UCLA Graduate Division (\$6,000)  
Management: Trained and managed a team of undergraduate and graduate students conducting and analyzing qualitative data utilizing thematic analysis in ATLAS.ti.
- 2019-2020 Co-Investigator  
Project: Ethnic Studies and Public Scholarship: The Co-Creation of K-12 Curriculum Using University-based Archival Materials  
Funding: Institute of American Cultures, UCLA  
Management: Aided in the development and implementation of an evaluation of a K-12 Ethnic Studies training for teachers on curriculum development on Japanese American Internment, Mass Incarceration, and Solidarity Movements.
- 2019-2020 Research Assistant, Sisylana Evaluation and Consulting  
Project: The Antelope Valley Community Survey: Year 2  
Funding: Department of Justice

Management: Conducted survey data collection and analysis Aided in data of an annual survey for Antelope Valley residents intended to assess perceptions of the relationship between the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the community.

- 2019 Graduate Student Researcher, UCLA Labor Center  
Project: The California Workforce Development Board High Road Training Partnership Evaluation  
PIs: Ana Luz Gonzalez-Vasquez, PhD and Magaly Lopez, MA  
Funding: California Workforce Development Board  
Management: Led qualitative analysis of focus groups to evaluate the High Road Training Partnership. Trained and supervised a team of work study students and graduate students in Dedoose.
- 2018- 2019 Graduate Student Researcher, UCLA Labor Center  
Project: Community Service as an Alternative Sanction to Incarceration  
PIs: Tia Koonse, J.D. and Noah Zatz, J.D.  
Funding: Arnold Foundation  
Management: Conducted mixed methods study to examine labor coercion among individuals serving community service sentences as an alternative to incarceration in Los Angeles County. Collected and analyzed qualitative data. Trained and managed a team of work study and graduate students through the transcribing and coding process utilizing Dedoose.  
Outcome: Findings used to influence the State Bill SB71 and the motion to repeal LA County's fees passed in February 2020.
- 2017- 2018 Graduate Student Researcher, UCLA Department of Anthropology  
Project: Gang Reduction Youth Development Program Evaluation  
PI: P. Jeffrey Brantingham, Ph.D.  
Management: Analyzed a quantitative database of 25,000 respondents to evaluate prevention program outcomes of the Los Angeles City Mayor's Office Gang Reduction Youth Development Program.
- 2015-2017 Research Assistant, Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies  
PI: Lyke Thompson, Ph.D.  
Management: Analyzed Detroit Police Department data utilizing CompSTAT and GIS to identify precinct hotspots and inform crime reduction strategies. Participated in the development of a new research project on Intimate Partner Violence in Detroit. Trained and managed a team of undergraduate students.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

### **UCLA, Teaching Fellow (Primary Instructor)**

MSW Capstone, Interpreting and Disseminating Research (Spring 2020-2022)

MSW Capstone, Data Gathering and Analysis (Winter 2020-2022)

**UCLA, Teaching Fellow**

Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools (Fall 2021)

**Wayne State University, Field Instructor**

Clinical and Community Practice (2016-2017)

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Photovoice Exhibits**

- 2020 “‘Black Lives Matter all the Time:’ A Personal PhotoVoice Project by Black College Students Navigating Predominantly White Universities.” Virtual Exhibit, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbmgHJAjiU8&feature=youtu.be>
- 2020 “‘What I Would do to Take Away Your Pain:’ Glimpses into the Heart of Motherhood.” Virtual Exhibit, <https://www.melaniesonsteng.com/two-moms-a-researcher>

**Invited Talks**

- 2021 Advancing Smart Decarceration Through Research: A Two-Part Virtual Conversation, Smart Decarceration Project, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, University of Chicago,
- 2021 *The Impact of Trauma on Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2020 *The Impact of Trauma on Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2017 *Violent Communities, Trauma, and Educational Outcomes*, California State University Los Angeles, Urban Families and Resilience
- 2017 Careers in Macro Social Work and Beyond, School of Social Work, Wayne State University School of Social Work
- 2017 Providing Trauma Informed Responses to Crime Victims, Detroit 8<sup>th</sup> Police Precinct Radio Patrol Members, Detroit, MI
- 2017 Trauma Exposure Response for Clinicians Working with Crime Victims, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University

- 2017      Experiencing a Crime: The process, common reactions, and community resources, Grandmont Rosedale Neighborhood Association, Detroit, MI
- 2017      Domestic Violence and Teen Dating Violence in Detroit, Church of the Messiah, Detroit, MI
- 2016      Active Listening and other Clinical Tools for Victim Advocates, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University
- 2016      Court Preparation and Accompaniment for Crime Victims, Detroit Service Corps Domestic Violence Advocates, Center for Urban Studies, Wayne State University
- 2016      Detroit Crime Statistics and the Impact on the Community, Detroit Community Empowerment Summit, Detroit, MI
- 2016      Trauma Exposure: The Emotional and Behavioral Responses in Students, East Detroit Public School District
- 2016      Crisis Response and Brief Treatment for First Responders, Detroit Community Clergy Alliance, Detroit, MI
- 2016      The Criminal Justice Process, Detroit Police Department Chaplain Corps, Detroit, MI

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

**Peer Review**

*Journal of Social Work Education*, 2021-present

*Journal of Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 2019- Present

**Profession**

Doctoral Student Committee, Society for Social Work and Research Conference, 2020-2022/2020-2021

SSWR Doctoral Mentor, Society for Social Work and Research Conference, 2020

Planning Committee, International Summer University in Social Work, 2019-2020

**University**

Student Mentor, UCLA, Department of Social Welfare, Incoming PhD Students, 2019-2020

Technology in Health/Mental Health Hiring Committee, UCLA, Department of Social Welfare, 2019



Student Representative, Doctoral Committee, UCLA Department of Social Welfare, 2019-2020

Conference Organizer, Civil Rights in California- An Ethnic Studies Perspective, UCLA Department of Education, 2019

Creator & Chair, Ph.D. Sunshine Committee, UCLA Department of Social Welfare, 2018-Present

Student Mentor, UCLA Community College to Ph.D. Program, 2018-2019

Student Representative, Luskin Dean's Committee, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, 2018-2019

Chair, Ph.D. Professional Development Committee, UCLA Department of Social Welfare, 2018-2019

Conference Organizer, *Resistance Through Research: Social Justice Research + Activism in the Trump Era*, UCLA, 2017-2018

Student Representative, School of Social Work Hiring Committee, Boston University, 2014

Co-President, Macro Student Government Subcommittee, Boston University, 2012-2014

### **To Community**

Educational Rights Holder, Los Angeles Children's Law Center, 2019- Present

### **OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

2016- 2017      Certified Trauma Practitioner, St. John Providence Health System, Detroit, MI  
Worked with a multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, lawyers and community agencies to provide crisis intervention and court advocacy after homicides and violent crimes occurred. Lead psychoeducational trauma and grief support groups for adults and children. Conducted outreach and education on the impact of trauma and grief on individuals and the community.

2015-2017      Program Manager, Wayne State University, Center for Urban Studies, Domestic Violence Advocate Project, Detroit, MI  
Worked as the program manager and field instructor for the Domestic Violence Advocate Project. I recruited and trained MSW staff to work within 10 police stations throughout Detroit. I aided in professional development of staff through weekly supervision, training in crisis response and brief treatment, and self-care practices. Along with this I wrote successful grants and ran fundraisers to increase program funding.

2014-2015      7<sup>th</sup> grade Science Teacher, Brooklyn East Collegiate Charter School, Brooklyn, NY

Designed and implemented lesson plans that lead to a 5% increase in mastery on Interim Assessments. Utilized a variety of instructional methods including cooperative learning, discovery, and discussion.

2013-2014 Program Evaluator, Boston Public Health Commission Division of Violence Prevention, Boston, MA

Evaluated intermediate outcomes of community coalitions through a mixed methods study. Utilized evaluation findings to train coalition leaders on best practices for community outreach, engagement, and sustainment. Aided in collective action to homicides through action research, and implementation.

2012-2013 Program Manager, City Mission Society, Boston, MA

Worked to increased educational attainment and decrease student suspension and expulsion in a low performing elementary school. Developed a mentoring and tutoring program for students at risk of falling behind in school through needs/assets assessment, identifying best practices, creating a curriculum, and recruiting volunteers. Increased 4<sup>th</sup> grade state math scores by 4% by creating math-based day camps during breaks. Designed after school parent programs to increase parent involvement.

2011-2012 Clinical Case Manager, Guiding Our Youth Group Home, Los Angeles, CA

Worked with young women ages 14-18 within the foster care system to assess needs, create care plans, and achieve goals. Delivered health, educational, and behavioral services and conducted crisis intervention.

## **PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Association for Community Organization and Social Action, 2021-present

Social Welfare Action Alliance, 2021- Present

Society for Advancement of Violence and Injury Research, 2019-Present

Society for Social Work and Research, 2018-Present

California Center for Population Research, UCLA, 2017-Present

Detroit Police Department Aftercare Program, 2016-2017

Task Leader for Social Service Impact on Violence Prevention in Detroit, Community Accountability Network, 2016-2017

Victim Advocate, Detroit Community Clergy Alliance, 2016-2017

## **CERTIFICATIONS**

2019-Present Teachstone, Certified CLASS observer, Toddler

2019-Present Teachstone, Certified CLASS observer, Pre-K  
2016-Present National Institute for Trauma and Loss in Children, Certified Trauma Practitioner  
2016-Present Certified in Danger Assessments  
2015-2018 Michigan Department of Regulatory Affairs, Limited License, Master of Social Work