OMB No. 0925-0001 and 0925-0002 (Rev. 10/2021 Approved Through 01/31/2026)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Provide the following information for the Senior/key personnel and other significant contributors. Follow this format for each person. **DO NOT EXCEED FIVE PAGES.**

NAME: Littman, Danielle Rebecca

eRA COMMONS USER NAME (credential, e.g., agency login): N/A

POSITION TITLE: Assistant Professor, College of Social Work

EDUCATION/TRAINING: *(Begin with baccalaureate or other initial professional education, such as nursing, include postdoctoral training and residency training if applicable. Add/delete rows as necessary.)*

| INSTITUTION AND LOCATION | DEGREE  (if applicable) | Completion Date  MM/YYYY | FIELD OF STUDY |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Northwestern University | BA | 06/2013 | Theatre; Creative Writing |
| University of Chicago | AM (MSW equivalent) | 06/2018 | Social Service Administration |
| University of Denver | PhD | 06/2023 | Social Work |

**A. Personal Statement**

**The overarching aim of my research is to understand and co-create affirming settings and relationships for youth and communities who have endured historical and systematic marginalization.** **Throughout my research, I hold a commitment to stewarding community-engaged and participatory processes, and being held accountable by research participants and partners in actively realizing the social justice aims of the social work profession.**

**Before obtaining my PhD, I worked for over a decade in clinical and community settings. I have LCSW licenses in Utah and Colorado, as well as extensive experience facilitating clinical sessions, clinical groups, community development processes in settings like parks, schools, and residential programs. I am currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Utah College of Social Work. As an early-career scholar, I have had the opportunity to collaborate on several publicly and privately funded research projects amounting to over $500,000 (over half of this being federal funding). These experiences have helped me develop skills in mentoring research assistants, publishing manuscripts and book chapters (23 published or accepted for publication) and forming and maintaining community partnerships – thus preparing me to serve as a PI for this study.**

**My recent study – Sense of Community and (Third) Place among Young Adults in Permanent Supportive Housing – partnered with young people with histories of homelessness to reimaging affirming third place (community) settings. This qualitative work found that third places (community settings) which support young people who hold marginalized identities need to** *explicitly inclusive*, to offer *agency and individualization*, and to *meet everyday needs*. **My research agenda, alongside my experience working in community and clinical settings, prepares me for a PI role on the proposed study which aims to understand the prevalence of and access to low-barrier third places (e.g., community centers, parks, libraries). The proposed research will (1) advance empirical understanding of third place measurements using community-engaged methods alongside nationally available census data; 2) offer me valuable quantitative analytic skills; and (3) use statewide Utah pilot data as the groundwork for a building research proposal at the national level.**

**B. Positions, Scientific Appointments and Honors**

**Positions and Scientific Appointments**

2023- Assistant Professor, College of Social Work, University of Utah , Salt Lake City, UT

2020-2023 Adjunct Instructor, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver, Denver, CO

2019-2023 Research Assistant, Graduate School of Social Work, University of Denver, Denver, CO

2018-2019 Transitional Counselor, Brooke Whitted Center, Chicago, IL

2017-2018 Research Assistant, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, University of Chicago, Chicago, IL

2014-2016 Cultural Liaison, Department of Culture, Arts, and Nature, Chicago Park District, Chicago, IL

**Honors**

2023 Doctoral Fellows Award, Society for Social Work and Research

2020-2022 Fellow, Social Work Health Futures Lab, Portland State University and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

2017 Human Rights Internship Award, University of Chicago, Pozen Family Center for Human Rights

2013-2014 Fellow, Urban Prep Academies - Englewood Campus, Chicago, IL

**C. Contribution to Science**

1. **Advancing theoretical and empirical knowledge of third** **places.** Third places (community settings) serve as vital sites of emotional and instrumental support outside of first places (home) and second places (school/work), especially for young people and communities whose needs are not met in first and second places. However, third places may also serve as sites of discrimination (e.g., through loitering laws and defensive/hostile architecture). My early publications offer theoretical grounding for the need to meaningfully consider third places in social work theory and practice (b), especially among young people who hold marginalized identities (a). Further, I have a paper under review at the *American Journal of Community Psychology* which draws upon my recent study with young people (N=23) to propose an updated model of third places grounded in empirical, community-engaged methods*.* This growing body of scholarship has positioned me as a contributing scholar on third place theory, where I have had the opportunity to speak about my work at multiple conferences, invited talks, and in radio and print media. The proposed study will move forward these empirical findings towards more generalizable exploration of third place accessibility.
   1. **Littman DM**. [Third Places, Social Capital, and Sense of Community as Mechanisms of Adaptive Responding for Young People Who Experience Social Marginalization.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/34080191/)Am J Community Psychol. 2022 Jun;69(3-4):436-450. doi: 10.1002/ajcp.12531. Epub 2021 Jun 3. PubMed PMID: 34080191.
   2. **Littman DM**. Third place theory and social work: Considering collapsed places. Journal of Social Work. 2020; 21(5):1225-1242. doi: 10.1177/1468017320949445.
2. **Understanding peer support for young people experiencing homelessness through community engaged research methods.** Young people who have experienced homelessness and housing instability have often endured myriad (intersecting) oppressions and experience limited avenues for support. Peer support is one formal intervention in which those with lived expertise (e.g., with homelessness, mental health challenges, substance use) are employed to support others navigating similar recovery processes. Our participatory research team, funded for over 5 years by AmeriCorps, has partnered with two community-based organizations which center peer support and lived expertise among young people experiencing homelessness. In our manuscripts, led by community-based researchers, we have found that peers initiate relationships with young people in ways unique from service providers (c), value self-directed growth over traditional change goals among young people (b), and that the impact of peer support feels “like a weight off my shoulders” (a). The proposed study draws upon this research to center lived expertise of community members in self-defining access and prevalence of third places in Utah.
   1. Mollica M, **Littman DM**, Lucas T, Marvin C, Erangey J, Bender K, Milligan T. ["Like a weight off my shoulders": Participating in peer support from the perspectives of young people experiencing homelessness.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/36943692/)J Community Psychol. 2023 Sep;51(7):2563-2580. doi: 10.1002/jcop.23032. Epub 2023 Mar 21. PubMed PMID: 36943692.
   2. Erangey J, Marvin C, **Littman DM**, Bender K, Mollica M, Milligan T, Lucas T. [How do peer support workers value self-directed growth over conventional change goals among young people experiencing homelessness?.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/34191286/)J Community Psychol. 2022 May;50(4):1935-1951. doi: 10.1002/jcop.22649. Epub 2021 Jun 30. PubMed PMID: 34191286.
   3. Erangey J, Marvin C, **Littman DM**, Mollica M, Bender K, Lucas T, Milligan T. How peers initiate relationships with youth experiencing homelessness. Children and Youth Services Review. 2020; (119):1-9. DOI: 10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105668.
3. **Mutual aid amongst communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.** Mutual aid has been a longstanding practice amongst communities experiencing acute crises (e.g., disasters) as well as long-term crises (e.g., systemic marginalization and poverty), and proliferated during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way for individuals and communities to share resources when government and nongovernmental services were inadequate. I co-led our research team, who interviewed individuals involved in mutual aid in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic (*N*=25) in Summer 2020. We found that participants used digital organizing approaches (d), had unique values and beliefs – such as solidarity and reciprocity – underlying their work (c), conceptualized mutual aid in different ways based on social identities (b) and often developed social bonds and a sense of collective responsibility alongside mutual aid participation (a). These findings have informed my understanding of the need to center community-led practices when understanding social care structures, especially among those who hold marginalized identities and who have experienced longstanding systemic oppression.
   1. Bender K, Saavedra K, Milligan T,**Littman DM**, Dunbar A Z, Boyett M, Holloway B. (in press). How mutual aid participation developed social bonds and sense of collective responsibility in the early months of COVID-19. *American Journal of Community Psychology*
   2. **Littman DM**, Morris K, Hostetter C, Boyett M, Bender K, Holloway B, Dunbar AZ, Sarantakos S. How do participants conceptualize mutual aid in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic? A critical phenomenological analysis. Journal of Community Practice. 2023; 31(2):193-214. DOI: 10.1080/10705422.2023.2210136.
   3. **Littman DM**, Boyett M, Bender K, Dunbar AZ, Santarella M, Becker-Hafnor T, Saavedra K, Milligan T. Values and beliefs underlying mutual aid: An exploration of collective care during the COVID-19 pandemic. Journal for the Society of Social Work and Research. 2022; 13(1):89-115. DOI: 10.1086/716884.
   4. Bender K, **Littman DM**, Dunbar AZ, Boyett M, Milligan T, Santarella M, Becker-Hafnor T. Rapid emergent media scan of digital mutual aid organizing during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Journal of Community Practice. 2022; 29(3):280-298. doi: 10.1080/10705422.2021.1980477.
4. **Using participatory and community-engaged methods in social work research.** Participatory and community-based research methods, such as participatory action research (PAR), partner with individuals and communities directly impacted by social conditions to work towards changing them. These methods are increasingly popular among social work researchers, who recognize the value of centering the needs of those most impacted by research in shaping its process and outcomes. I have led a PAR team in the process of identifying best practices for navigating power on PAR teams (b), and a group of social work scholars who engage PAR methods to make suggestions for social work institutions and funding bodies to better support PAR research (a). This work aims to continue moving forward social work field towards community engaged and participatory research – grounded both in empirical rigor and social justice values.
   1. **Littman DM**, Ortega-Williams A, Beltran R, Wagaman M, Bender K, Wernick L. Navigating, subverting, and replacing conventional academic structures and expectations to co-create with PAR teams: Where to for PAR scholarship?. Journal of Community Practice. 2023 October. DOI: 10.1080/10705422.2023.2271923.
   2. **Littman DM**, Bender K, Mollica M, Erangey J, Lucas T, Marvin C. Making power explicit: Using power and values mapping on power-diverse participatory action research (PAR) teams. The Journal of Community Psychology. 2020; 49(2):266-282. DOI: 10.1002/jcop.22456.

Complete List of Published Work in My Bibliography: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/myncbi/danielle.littman.1/bibliography/public/>