

Athena Kheibari
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EDUCATION

- May 2019 *University of Kentucky*
Ph.D. in Social Work
Dissertation: *Suicide Attitudes and Terror Management Theory* (Proposal Date: November 5, 2018)
Committee Chair: Dr. Julie Cerel
- July 2014 *Ball State University*
M.A. in Social Psychology
- May 2012 *University of Michigan-Dearborn*
B.A. in Psychology (with Honors and High Distinction)
- May 2009 *Schoolcraft College*
Associates in Arts

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My primary research interests include (1) the role of death anxiety in suicide and stigma from a terror management perspective, (2) health disparities and socially constructed barriers resulting from stigma, and (3) attitudes toward substance use and opioid overdose. I also have interests in forensic social work and criminal justice reform.

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Kheibari, A.**, Cerel, J., & Sanford, R. (2018). Attitudes about suicide ideation among suicide loss survivors: A vignette study. *Psychological Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294118795882>
- Kheibari, A.**, Victor, G., Gutti, S. S., Gutti, S. N., Rao, S., Kitzman, P., & Dignan, M. (2018). Smoking and stroke in Appalachian Kentucky. *Journal of Neurology and Neurobiology*, 1(1), 1-4. doi:10.31487/j.NNB.2018.10.006
- Victor, G., **Kheibari, A.**, Staton-Tindall, M. & Oser, C. (2018). Appalachian women's use of substance abuse treatment: Examining the Behavioral Model for Vulnerable Populations. *Journal of Social Work Practice in Addictions*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1533256X.2018.1450264>
- Slovak, K., Pope, N.D., Giger, J.T., & **Kheibari, A.** (2018). An evaluation of the Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) training with an area agency on aging. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2018.1522410>
- Miller, J., Benner, K., **Kheibari, A.**, & Washington, E. (2017). Conceptualizing on-campus support programs for collegiate foster youth and alumni: A plan for action. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 83, 57-67. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.10.028
- Walker, J. R., Clark, J. J., Monahan, C. E., Shechet, A., Agharkar, B. S., **Kheibari, A.**, & Victor, G. (In Press). Can developmental impairments in moral reasoning be mitigating in criminal and capital cases? *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*.

Manuscripts Under Review

Kheibari, A., Walker, J., Clark, J., Victor, G., & Monohan, E. (*Under Review*). Forensic social work: Why social work education should change. *Journal of Social Work Education*.

Snell-Rood, C., Staton, M., & **Kheibari, A.** (*Under Review*). Women's first-person perspectives on the role of mental health in rural substance abuse. *Rural and Remote Health*.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Kheibari, A., & Cerel, J. (*In Preparation*). Attitudes toward suicide: A systematic literature review.

Kheibari, A., Cerel, J., Fray, L., & Sandford, R. (*In Preparation*). Exploring attitudes toward suicide in adults bereaved by suicide and suicide attempt survivors.

Kheibari, A., Sanford, R., Frey, L., & Cerel, J. (*In Preparation*). The burden of stigma for adults exposed to suicide: A qualitative study.

Kheibari, A. (*In Preparation*). Additions to social work human behavior theory: Evolutionary theory and terror management theory into social work human behavior curriculum.

Kheibari, A. (*In Preparation*). Integrating Twitter and Instagram in social work education.

Kennedy, A., Cerel, J., **Kheibari, A.,** & Watts, J. (*In Preparation*). A comparison of farmer and non-farmer suicides from the United States National Violent Deaths Reporting System, 2003-2016.

Staton, M., Cramer, J., Walker, J. R., Snell-Rood, C., & **Kheibari, A.** (*In Preparation*). The importance of language in evidence-based practices with rural participants: An exploratory linguistic analysis.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2016-present Capital Mitigation Specialist, Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy
- ♦ Investigate and analyze relevant mitigation evidence for trial proceedings in capital cases
 - ♦ Prepare comprehensive social histories of three capital defendants
 - ♦ Perform various assessments of client and his or her family, particularly regarding adaptive deficits
- 2017-present Graduate Assistant, University of Kentucky Transformative Learning Faculty Fellows Program
- ♦ Deliver various workshops related to academic achievement to diverse population of students
 - ♦ Provide curriculum support to faculty across the university on various topics including, multimodal communication assignments, instructional lesson plans, and assessment measures
- 2015 – 2016 Graduate Research Assistant, University of Kentucky College of Social Work
- ♦ Assist social work faculty with research endeavors, including but not limited to conducting literature reviews, creating databases from data entry, and producing brief data profiles of study samples
 - ♦ Supervise a team of MSW student research assistants
- 2012-2014 Graduate Assistant, Ball State University, Office of Student Center Programs
- ♦ Advise members of the University Program Board and Lite Nite – Largest student programming organization at Ball State University that provides many cultural events, educational programs, and diverse entertainment for students
 - ♦ Promote diversity, plan activities, and lead staff meetings for students
 - ♦ Manage budget of \$35,000 each semester for campus events

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Grant Involvement

College of Social Work Pilot Funding Award 04/01/2018

Project title: Suicide Attitudes from a Terror Management Theory Perspective (Amount \$2,120)

Role: PI

College of Social Work Pilot Funding Award (PI: Carlton Craing, PhD) 05/01/2015

Project title: Does a Parenting Skills Group Decrease Child Abuse Potential? (Amount \$10,000)

Role: Co-PI

Research Assistant, for Mark Dignan, Ph.D. (PI), University of Kentucky Prevention Research Center, August 2014-2015

Appalachia Community Cancer Network: Amount \$1,000,561

The major goal of this project is to work towards a reduction in cancer health disparities in Appalachia by conducting community-based education, research and training activities in rural areas of six states. The project will also include a faith-based intervention to reduce obesity among rural Appalachian church members by improving diet and increasing physical activity.

Research Assistant, for Mark Dignan, Ph.D. (PI), University of Kentucky Prevention Research Center, August 2014-2015

Project Title: Administrative Supplement for Strengthening Research, Training, and Outreach Capacity of the Geographic Management of Cancer Health Disparities Program (GMAP): Amount \$29,608

This project was designed to develop infrastructure to support research on Geographic Management of Cancer Health Disparities.

Research Assistant, for Michelle Staton, Ph.D., College of Social Work, University of Kentucky, August 2014-2015

- ♦ Transcribe participant interviews and analyze qualitative data
- ♦ Contribute to manuscript preparations and national conference presentations

Research Assistant, for Julie Cerel, Ph.D., College of Social Work, University of Kentucky, May 2013 – April 2014

- ♦ Summer internship and continued part-time work on a Department of Defense funded grant about the impact of exposure to suicide in veterans and community members
- ♦ Data collection, transcribing participant interviews, data coding
- ♦ Attended team meetings and observed structured clinical interviews

Psychology Honors study, with Joseph Musial, Ph.D. (Advisor), Department of Behavioral Sciences, University of Michigan-Dearborn, January 2011- June 2012

- ♦ Designed a study that examined special education service among traditional public schools compared to public school academies

Research Assistant, for Robert Hymes, Ph.D., Department of Behavioral Sciences, University of Michigan-Dearborn, January 2011-June 2012

- ♦ Investigated the influence of attractiveness in dating advertisements on memory, minimal groups prejudice, and empathy
- ♦ Ran experimental sessions, coded data, cleaned data, inputted SPSS syntax

REVIEWS FOR JOURNALS

OMEGA – Journal of Death and Dying

Death Studies

Criminal Justice and Criminology

International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology

INVITED TALKS

2016, August *Terror Management Theory and the Death Penalty*

Asbury University

Course title: Social Systems

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2017-2018 *Foundations of Professional Ethics in Social Work (Primary instructor)*
College of Social Work, University of Kentucky
(Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018)
This course introduces students to the fundamentals of ethical decision making in generalist professional social work practice. The major philosophical formulations that underlie ethics and relevant concepts derived from these formulations are highlighted. I have had experience teaching this course to students on the main campus in Lexington, KY and to students in the rural campus location in southeast Kentucky.
- Fall 2016 *Foundations of Social Justice (Co-instructor)*
College of Social Work, University of Kentucky
This course examines social justice from the broad perspective that all people are deserving of opportunities, rights, protections, obligations and social benefits. Definitions, theories and perspectives as they relate to the context and impact of power, oppression and privilege are examined within both historical and contemporary lenses
- Fall 2016 *Drugs and Crime: An Inside Out Prison Exchange Program Course (Co-instructor)*
College of Social Work, University of Kentucky
The goal of this course is to examine the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs through the lens of sociological analysis and a social work framework for policy and treatment. This class is conducted in an "Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program" seminar format where the classes are held in the Blackburn Correctional Complex. The class composition is a mix of University of Kentucky students and individuals who are incarcerated.
- Fall 2016 Guest lecture: *Capital Mitigation*
College of Law, University of Kentucky
Course title: Capital Punishment
- Fall 2016 Guest lecture: *Suicidality in Adolescence & Young Adulthood*
College of Social Work, University of Kentucky
Course title: Human Behavior in the Social Environment

PEER-REVIEWED PRESENTATIONS

- Kheibari, A.**, Cerel, J., Aldrich, R. S., & Brown, A. (2019, April). Suicide exposure in crisis workers. Poster to be presented at the 52nd Annual American Association of Suicidology, Denver, CO.
- Kheibari, A.**, Cerel, J., Brown, A., & Williams, S. (2018, April). Are suicide attitudes different in suicide attempt survivors? Poster presented at the 51st Annual American Association of Suicidology, Washington, D.C.
- Williams, S., Frey, L., Cerel, J., Brown, M., & **Kheibari, A.** (2018, April). Loss survivor perceptions of suicide: Comparing the United States and Japan. Paper presented at the 51st Annual American Association of Suicidology, Washington, D.C.
- Kheibari, A.**, & Victor, G. (2017, November). Existential terror, social injustice, and the death penalty. Paper presented at the American Society of Criminology 73rd Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.
- Victor, G., **Kheibari, A.**, Staton-Tindall, M. & Oser, C. (2017, June). Appalachian women's use of substance abuse treatment: Examining the behavioral model for vulnerable populations. Poster presented at the College on Problems of Drug Dependence Annual Meeting, Montreal, Canada.
- Miller, J., Benner, K., & **Kheibari, A.** (2017, March). Identifying collegiate supports for foster youth and alumni: A plan for action. Paper presented at the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.

- Miller, J., Benner, K., & **Kheibari, A.** (2016, November). Conceptualizing support programs for collegiate foster youth: A plan for academic administrators. Poster presented at the Council on Social Work Education 62nd Annual Program Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
- Kheibari, A.** & Victor, G. (2016, June). The role of terror management theory and social injustice in capital punishment. Oral presentation at the National Organization of Forensic Social Work Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Victor, G., **Kheibari, A.**, & Staton-Tindall, M. (2016, June). An examination of risk factors predicting injection drug use among previously incarcerated rural women. Poster presented at the National Organization of Forensic Social Work Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.
- Kheibari, A.**, Sanford, R., Frey, L., & Cerel, J. (2016, April). Personal experience with stigma in adults bereaved by suicide and suicide attempt survivors: A qualitative study. Poster presented at the 49th Annual American Association of Suicidology, Chicago, IL. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.23214.82248
- Kheibari, A.**, Sanford, R., Frey, L., & Cerel, J. (2016, January). Exploring attitudes toward suicide in adults bereaved by suicide and suicide attempt survivors. Poster presented at the Society for Social Work and Research 20th Annual Conference Anniversary, Washington, D.C. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.10107.62243
- Houston, J. F., Jaggi, N., Hebert, J. R., Gallagher, A. D., Cromo, M., **Kheibari, A.** (2015, November). Impact of targeted communications within a National Cancer Institute Center to reduce cancer health disparities geographical management of Cancer Health Disparities Program Regional Network. Poster presented at the 8th AACR Conference on the Science of Cancer Health Disparities in Racial/Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved, Atlanta, GA.
- Gutti, S., Gutti, S., Kitzman, P., **Kheibari, A.**, Johnson, A., & Dignan, M. (2015, March). Geographic distribution of stroke in the Big Sandy area development district. Poster presented at the 10th Annual Center for Clinical and Translational Science Spring Conference, Lexington, KY.
- Kheibari, A.**, & Chan, J. Y. (2014, August). Attitudes toward suicide survivors. Poster presented at the 122nd Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C.
- Kheibari, A.**, Musial, J., Drake, P., Henry, A., & McAuslan, P. (2012, May). Special education service among traditional public schools and public academy schools within the city of Detroit. Poster presented at the 84th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- McDowell, J., **Kheibari, A.**, Balaghi, D., & Bollinger, M., (2012, May). Religious stereotypes and attitudes in college students. Poster presented at the 84th annual meeting of the Midwestern Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.
- Kheibari, A.**, & Musial, J. (2011, May). A comparison of special education service among traditional public schools and public-school academies. Poster presented and journal published at the 20th annual Meeting of the Minds, Rochester, MI.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- 2015-2016 Capital Mitigation Training
- Participation in 15 capital case reviews as a doctoral student trainee case consultant under the direct

supervision of Robert Walker, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.

- ♦ Provided relevant literature on mitigating factors in capital case sentencing to defense attorneys with the Kentucky Department of Public Advocacy
- ♦ Received in-service training from expert mitigation specialists, Dawn Jenkins and Suzanne Hooper
- ♦ Received a three-day Mitigation and Social History Video training sponsored by the Kentucky DPA
- ♦ Received a two-day Capital Defense 101 training sponsored by the Kentucky DPA

HONORS AND AWARDS

2018	Dumez Research Scholarship, University of Kentucky
2015	College of Social Work Research Committee Travel Award, University of Kentucky
2015	Lyell Bussell Travel Award, Ball State University
2014	Aspire Student Travel Award, Ball State University
2014	Graduate Student Recognition Award, Ball State University
2012	Service Learning Certificate, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2012	Distinguished Students in the Department of Behavioral Science Award, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2011-2012	Psi Chi, National Honor Society in Psychology
2010-2011	Dean's List, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2010-2012	Psychology Honors Program, University of Michigan-Dearborn
2006-2008	Michigan Merit Scholarship
2005	Scholarship Competition in Communication Arts, Schoolcraft College

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

2017-present	American Society for Criminology (Student Affiliate)
2016-present	Society for Social Work and Research (Student Affiliate)
2013-present	American Association of Suicidology (Student Affiliate)
2011-2013	American Psychological Association (Student Affiliate)

CAMPUS LEADERSHIP

2018	Doctoral student committee member for College of Social Work, University of Kentucky
2017-2018	Doctoral student representative for the Graduate Student Congress, University of Kentucky
2012-2014	Second-year master's students class representative, Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services, Ball State University
2013-2014	Student member, East Central Indiana Prevention Coalition
2012-2013	Student member, Alive Campaign, Ball State University, August 2012- April 2013
2010-2012	Secretary of psychology club, University of Michigan-Dearborn

FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND SPECIAL SKILLS

Farsi (fluent speaker)

Computer Skills: SPSS, MAXQDA 11, Qualtrics survey software, GIS software, Microsoft Office