
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

NAME Utz, Rebecca L	POSITION TITLE Associate Professor of Sociology
eRA COMMONS USER NAME rebeccautz	

EDUCATION/TRAINING			
INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE <i>(if applicable)</i>	MM/YY	FIELD OF STUDY
Miami University, Oxford, OH	B.A.	1996	Psychology
Miami University Oxford, OH	M.G.S.	1999	Health Care Admin. & Gerontology
Max Planck – Institute for Human Development, Berlin Germany	Certificate	2004	LIFE: Lifespan Human Development <i>(evolutionary and ontogenetic perspectives)</i>
University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI	Ph.D.	2004	Sociology: Demography & Life Course

A. Personal Statement

Drawing on my training in demography, sociology of the life course, gerontology, and research methodology, my scholarly interests fall within two broad categories: 1) how families cope with end-of-life issues such as spousal loss and caregiving, and 2) how health risks (primarily obesity) are structured by environments (including policy), familial resources, and individual choices. The first gerontological research area has provided me considerable experience in primary data collection including the design, implementation, and evaluation of community-based interventions for individuals and families experiencing the transitions associated with aging and end-of-life. The second epidemiological research area has been based mostly on the analysis of large population-based data sets, including the Utah Population Database. The substantive nature of my work is clearly related to the proposal, as it bridges the areas of lifespan (or life course) human development, health, and families.

My professional employment and research training have provided considerable experience in collecting and managing primary data. From 1997-2000, I worked at Scripps Gerontology Center and AARP, where I learned survey development, sample recruitment, and practical data management skills. During my doctoral training at the University of Michigan, I worked as a TA for the “Detroit Area Studies” where I learned sampling techniques and survey development. I also worked as an RA for the “Changing Lives of Older Couples” study, in which I lead the efforts related to the public release of the data and documentation of this NIA-funded dataset. From 2005-2010, I served as Project Director and Co-Investigator on an NIA-funded R01 project (with Drs Lund and Caserta), in which I managed a dual-site intervention study of newly bereaved persons, which included an 18-month longitudinal data collection via mailed surveys. From 2010-present, I am a Collaborating Scientist on a NCI-funded P01 award investigating the end-of-life and bereavement experiences of hospice patients and their spousal caregivers (with Drs Lund and Caserta). This study delivers a 14-week intervention to newly bereaved spouses and follows them via repeated-measures surveys for 18 months. These roles have provided me with opportunities for both administrative and scientific leadership, including numerous peer-review publications. Most importantly, however, these positions have given me hands-on experience in sampling, recruiting, enrolling, and following participants over time. They have required considerable interface with IRB applications

and amendments. They have employed mailed and electronic survey methodologies. They required m direct supervision and management of research assistants and clinical interventionists, as well as the establishment of interdisciplinary teams across multiple site. Finally, the longitudinal nature of the data collections have honed my analytic skills used with repeated measures data. All of these methodological skills are relevant to the proposed interdisciplinary initiatives aimed at building a Centers on Excellence related to lifespan perspectives to family health.

B. Positions and Honors

Professional Employment

- 1997-1999 *Research Assistant* (to Robert Atchley, Robert Applebaum & Jane Karnes Straker), Ohio Long Term Care Project, Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami University (Ohio)
- 1996, 1999 *Project Manager*, Resident Satisfaction Survey, Maple Knoll Management. Cincinnati, Ohio
- 1998-1999 *Research Associate*, State Legislative Issues Research Division, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). Washington DC
- 1999-2002 *Research Associate*, Changing Lives of Older Couples Study, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan
- 2004-2012 *Assistant Professor*, Department of Sociology, University of Utah. Salt Lake City, Utah.
- 2012-current *Associate Professor*, Department of Sociology, University of Utah. Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Faculty Affiliate (member)*, Center on Aging, University of Utah
- Adjunct Affiliation (courtesy)*, Gerontological Interdisciplinary Program

Professional Memberships and Service

- Gerontological Society of America, Member & Fellow
- American Sociological Association, Member
- Population Association of America, Member
- American Public Health Association, Member
- Editorial Board Member: *Journal of Health & Social Behavior*
- Ad Hoc Reviewer: *The Gerontologist, Journal of Gerontology, Journal of Family Issues, Social Science & Medicine, Demography, Society and Mental Health, American Sociological Review, Sociological Perspectives, Urban Studies, International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Research on Aging, Environment & Behavior, Journal of Marriage and Family, International Journal of Behavioral Development, International Journal of Aging and Human Development, International Journal of Women's Health*

Honors

- 1999-2003 NIA Predoctoral Fellow, Population Studies Center at the University of Michigan
- 2005 NIA Summer Institute Award
- 2003-2004 Horace H. Rackham Predoctoral Fellow, University of Michigan
- 2004 Distinguished Dissertation Award, ProQuest & University of Michigan
- 2005 Roberta G. Simmons Outstanding Dissertation Award, Medical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association
- 2010 Superior Teaching Award, University of Utah
- 2012 Superior Research Award (junior faculty), University of Utah
- 2012 Fellow, Gerontological Society of America

C. Peer-Reviewed Publications (Selected from 38 peer-reviewed publications)

1. Utz, R. L., D. Carr, R. Nesse, & C. Wortman. (2002). "The Effect of Widowhood on Older Adults' Social Participation: An Evaluation of Activity, Disengagement, and Continuity Theories." *The Gerontologist*, 42 (4). 522-533. doi10.1093/geront/42.4.522
2. Utz, R. L., J. Metos, J. Reel, K. Fitschen, D. Cottle, N. Mihalopolous. (2008) "Eat and Live Well: Best Practices for an After School Weight Management Program.." *Utah Health: An Annual Review*, 13. 81-87.
3. K. Keyes, R. L. Utz, G. Guoha, W. Robinson. (2010) "What is a Cohort Effect? Three APC Models of Obesity Prevalence". *Social Science & Medicine*, 70 (7): 1100-1108. doi10.1016/j.socscimed.2009.12.018
4. M. Caserta, R. L. Utz, D. Lund, & B. DeVries. (2010) "Sampling, Recruitment, and Retention in a Bereavement Intervention Study: Experiences from the *Living After Loss Project*" *OMEGA: Journal of Death and Dying*, 61 (3): 181-203. PMC2948412
5. Utz, R. L. (2011) "Like Mother, (Not) Like Daughter: The Social Construction of Menopause and Aging" *Journal of Aging Studies*, 25: 143-154. doi 10.1016/j.jaging.2010.08.019
6. K. Keyes, R. L. Utz, G. Guoha, W. Robinson. (2010) "What is a Cohort Effect? Three APC Models of Obesity Prevalence in the US". *Social Science & Medicine*, 70 (7): 1100-1108.
7. Utz, R. L., M. Caserta, D. Lund. (2011). "Perceived Self-Competency Among the Recently Bereaved." *Journal of Social Work in End of Life and Palliative Care*, 7 (2-3): 173-194. doi 10.2190/IL.18.4.b
8. E. Coffield, N. Waitzman, R. L. Utz, J. Metos. (2011) "Counterweight: A Multivariate Analysis of Federal Wellness Policies on Adolescent Obesity" *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 49 (4): 363-370.
9. Utz, R. L., D. Lund, M. Caserta & S. Wright. (2012). "The Benefits of Respite Time-Use: A Comparison of Employed and Non-Employed Caregivers" *Journal of Applied Gerontology*, 31 (3): 438-461. doi 10.1177/0733464810389607
10. Utz, R. L., M. Caserta, D. Lund. (2012) "Grief, Depressive-Symptoms, and Physical Health Among Recently Bereaved Spouses" *The Gerontologist*, 52 (4). 460-471. doi:10.1177/0733464810389806
11. Utz, R. L., E. Reither, N. J. Waitzman. (2012) "Prenatal Care, Childhood Obesity, and Ethnic Health Disparities: Analyses from a Unique Population Database" *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 23 (1): 302-320.
12. M. Hollingshaus & R. L. Utz. (2013) "Race & Ethnic Disparities in Depression After Major Health Diagnosis" *Society and Mental Health*. 3 (1). 22-29.
13. Utz, R. L., Lund, D. Caserta, M. (2013). An evaluation of the Living After Loss intervention – Part 2: Do bereavement-related outcomes vary by the dynamics of support groups? *Grief Matters: The Australian Journal of Grief & Bereavement*, 16(2), 36-40. NIHMS488295.
14. Utz, R. L., Caserta, M. Lund, M. (2013). An evaluation of the Living After Loss intervention - Part 1: Do bereavement-related outcomes vary by the content of support groups? *Grief Matters: The Australian Journal of Grief & Bereavement*, 16(2), 32-35. NIHMS488292.
15. Utz, R. L. K Swenson, D. Lund, M. Caserta, B. DeVries. (2013 – epub ahead of print). Feeling Lonely vs. Being Alone: Loneliness and Social Support Among Recently Bereaved Older Adults. *Journal of Gerontology B: Psychological and Social Sciences*. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbt075
16. Utz, R. L., Metos, J., Coffield, E. "School Wellness Policies & Adolescent Obesity: An ecological study" *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*.

D. Research Support

Ongoing

Enhancing End-of-Life and Bereavement Outcomes Among Cancer Caregivers.

NCI P01 CA138317-01

05/01/10 – 04/30/15

Aim: To improve end-of-life care for cancer patients and their spousal caregivers before and after bereavement. Project 1 tests a telephone delivered symptom management intervention, Project 2 examines communication patterns between caregivers and hospice nurse care manager, and Project 3 tests the effectiveness of an individually tailored bereavement intervention for the surviving spouse or partner. Interdependent aims across the three projects explore whether better pain and symptom

management of patient during the end-of-life period or hospice-related services may influence well-being of spouse during bereavement

Role: Collaborating Scientist, Project 3 (K. Mooney, PD)

Determining Level of Need Among Disabled Persons

Contract, DSPD (Division of Services for Persons with Disability)

Fall 2013 to 2015

Aim: To create a valid and reliable assessment tool to determine wait-list position for clients and caregivers eligible to receive respite and disability-related services in Utah

Role: Key Personnel with K. Chambless, S. Hart, S. McCormick

School Policy, Familial Resources, and Adolescent Food Choice

Pilot Project, Center for Clinical and Translational Research University of Utah

Fall 2014 to 2015

Aim: To look at adolescent food choices during the school day, exploring how high school students make specific food choices within the context of school policy change, community level availability of food, and familial sociodemographic resources

Role: PI with J. Metos

Completed

Dual Process Intervention for Recently Bereaved Spouses

NIA 1 R01 AG023090-01A1

09/01/04-06/30/10

Aims: To (1) compare the effectiveness of the Dual Process Model (DPM) intervention versus a traditional support group in enhancing bereavement adaptation, and (2) determine the extent to which oscillation between loss orientation and restoration can be facilitated by the DPM intervention.

Role: Project Director & Co-I (Caserta, PI)

Development & Testing of a Data Infrastructure for Conducting a Large, Multilevel Longitudinal Analysis

F. Marion Bishop Foundation

10/01/09 – 10/01/10

Aim: To explore feasibility of creating linkages between population, clinic, health, and environment databases to identify the multi-level determinants of childhood obesity

Role: Co-I (VanDerslice & Joy, PI)

Weight Gain from Birth to Adolescence: A Multi Level, Multi-Cohort Epidemiological Analysis

U of Utah Vice President for Research

1/1/2009 – 06/30/10

Aims: To gain experience using the Utah Population Database (UPDB). To build a multi-disciplinary team that will apply for extramural grants. To build a secure computing infrastructure to facilitate cross-disciplinary and multi-institutional collaboration.

Role: Principal Investigator