

# STRIPED

A PUBLIC HEALTH  
INCUBATOR

Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders

A Collaboration of Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Boston Children's Hospital

Newsletter Fall 2018

## From the Director



S. Bryn Austin

More than a few times, my wife, Liz, has asked me, "Wouldn't you rather read a novel sometime?" I do of course read novels, sometimes, but what she sees me reading

90% of the time is nonfiction, especially books on policy, social movements, and leadership — the wonkier the better. So when STRIPED Fellow Rebecca Hutcheson (p. 2) introduced me to the work of Emerson and Nabatchi, leaders in the field of collaborative governance, I was enthralled.

They use the term *collaborative governance* to describe when people from across sectors (i.e., government, non-profit, business) come together to "engage in cooperative activities to enhance the capacity...to achieve a common purpose."

A bit abstract? Here's a good example: In the early 2000s, advocates, scientists, business leaders, and state policymakers in the U.S. Northeast were concerned about climate change but realized they couldn't keep waiting for the feds to take action. No one sector caused climate change, and no one sector would solve it. What was needed was collaborative action led by cross-sector stakeholders on local and regional levels.

The result? The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), which led to massive reductions in carbon emis-

sions and improved pollution control, all without impeding economic growth in the participating states.

By now you might be wondering, what's the environment and pollution got to do with eating disorders prevention? It's simple: Just like greenhouse gases and carbon emissions in our *physical* environment, pollutants in our *social* environment are caused by forces across all sectors – societal norms promoting distorted beauty and thinness ideals, commercial industries that profit from these destructive ideals, weak civil rights laws that don't prevent weight discrimination, and lax regulations that allow snake oil diet pills.

Like the RGGI environmentalists recognized with climate change, no one sector is going to solve the problem of our toxic social environment either. What can we do? That's simple too: We can sit down together across sectors and start taking action — *collaborative action*. With STRIPED, we intend to do everything we can to make this happen. From our cross-sector convening in April 2018 (p. 2) to our cadre of visiting scholars, all hailing from different disciplines and sectors (p. 3, 4), we are in it for the long haul.

As for those novels? Maybe next year.

S. Bryn Austin, ScD

## What Our Trainees Say About STRIPED



Supriya Misra

“ Researchers are often convinced we need to impartially rely on available data. Yet without regular surveillance, the data we need may not exist and we may miss critical trends. Working on STRIPED's CDC Eating Disorders Monitoring Project has taught me tangible strategies to advocate for inclusion of neglected health topics in our national monitoring systems. ”



Kuanysh Yergaliyev

“ STRIPED gave me the opportunity to engage in policy translation research and public health advocacy to protect youth from dangerous dietary supplements. I had the unique experience of hearing the health concerns of local communities and converting this knowledge into tailored advocacy strategies. I look forward to applying these skills in serving my community in Kazakhstan. ”

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# Navigating the Fast-Changing Universe of Online Ed

Online learning opportunities in higher education are expanding at a rapid pace, but can the online experience really equal the in-person interaction of a traditional classroom? How can instructors stimulate interactive and engaging conversations with large, geographically diverse groups? How does the learning platform itself impact the educational experience? STRIPED considered these and other questions during the pilot of our second online case-based course in January 2018. Public health professionals from around the country participated in the 4-week e-course titled, “Who’s Calling Me Fat?” designed to build skills in non-weight stigmatizing approaches to public health nutrition programs. Instructors and students alike reported a positive learning experience.

“ I am in the midst of planning a campaign for our county. The information I learned in this module will directly impact how well I plan and how successful the campaign will be. I now see areas that I've missed in my research and plan to include these moving forward. ”

—e-Course Participant

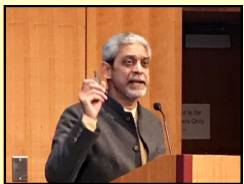
We plan to launch two new ventures this year: We'll be leading a half-day interactive workshop for educators from across Harvard on best practices for bringing case-based teaching and active learning techniques to the online space. Participants will hone new skills as they work with our

teaching case “Coloring the Narrative.” Also in partnership with the federal Office on Women’s Health, we will lead a webinar for pediatric primary care providers from across the country, helping them gain crucial skills in early detection and referral

for the young patients in their care. Recognizing the life-saving potential of this training, **U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Jerome Adams** will open our webinar, urging clinicians to create a nonstigmatizing and welcoming space so patients can feel safe asking for help.

## STRIPED/Harvard Catalyst Symposium: Bridging Across Disciplines, Sectors to Spark Collaborative Innovation

In April 2018, the generous support and vision of our donors enabled STRIPED and Harvard Catalyst to develop a cutting edge symposium with the goal of reimagining the frontier of eating disorders prevention. The symposium attracted more than 230 researchers, clinicians, educators, advocates, and policymakers who engaged in lively discussion with the diverse panels of speakers. The energy sparked by the morning’s presentations, including a video address from **Senator Elizabeth**



Vikram Patel

**Warren** and a keynote address by global mental health innovator **Dr. Vikram Patel**, poured over into the afternoon’s hack-a-thon sessions, where participants competed in teams to design innovative prevention-focused research initiatives. This healthy dose of creative competition inspired over a dozen creative proposals with a strong focus on cross-sector collaboration and community engagement.

**Missed the symposium?** Check out the digital recording: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped/news/events/eating-disorder-prevention-symposium/>



Senator Elizabeth Warren

## Symposium-Inspired Initiatives Extend Reach, Impact

Building on the momentum of the symposium in generating dialogue and collaboration across disciplines and sectors, we launched three new initiatives:

**PILOT GRANTS:** STRIPED teamed up with Harvard Catalyst Health Disparities Research Program to award four \$50,000 pilot grants to fund innovative, community-engaged research on primary and secondary prevention.

**DELPHI STUDY:** Looking for solutions to weight bias in health research, STRIPED and former Visiting Scholar Dr. Laura Hart will convene cross-sector stakeholders to generate consensus on new standards for research.

**WHITE PAPER:** STRIPED Fellow Rebecca Hutcheson of the U. of Washington, along with STRIPED Director Dr. Bryn Austin, are crafting a white paper based on the symposium themes, exploring novel ways to meld the best of strategic science, implementation science, collaborative governance, and legal epidemiology to chart a new course for public health activation in prevention.



Rebecca Hutcheson

# What's New From the STRIPED Team?

## Thank You, Funders!

### Alvin Tran, ScD



Alvin Tran

A number of studies have found that sexual minority men experience more body image dissatisfaction and engage in more unhealthy weight control behaviors (UWCBs) compared to their straight male peers. But why? That was the question I wanted to answer through my work as a trainee with STRIPED. I wanted to understand why many sexual minority men suffer from body image concerns and how they navigate through their lives with this dissatisfaction. To explain this phenomenon, I designed a qualitative study and interviewed racially and ethnically diverse gay and bisexual men in Massachusetts. In short, partici-

#### *Eating Disorders in Sexual Minority Men*

pants felt that society idealizes a male body that is muscular, thin, and, in men of color, light skin toned. Many men whose bodies do not fit this ideal standard described experiences with discrimination, including racism. These experiences with discrimination happened in person and frequently through interactions on dating apps. In a second study based on a large online survey of adult men and women, I found dating app users have elevated risk of engaging in diet pill use, laxative use, and other UWCBs compared to non-users. My qualitative research study with STRIPED made these discoveries possible, and I plan to further expand my research into dating apps and their possible influence on body image concerns.

### Suman Ambwani, PhD



Suman Ambwani

Dieting and thin-promoting and fat-shaming sociocultural environments are two important risk factors for eating disorders. As a STRIPED Visiting Scholar and Kalaris Faculty Sabbatical Fellow from Dickinson College, I will conduct research that informs policies with regard to these risk factors. The first project will investigate public attitudes, barriers, and opportunities to enact anti-weight-discrimination legislation. The second project will investigate “clean eating,” “cleanses,” and related pseudo-scientific dietary behaviors to hopefully inform legislative efforts to regulate the sale and marketing of these products and dietary plans.

#### *Anti-discrimination and Clean Eating*

Interestingly, despite abundant popular and social media coverage of “clean eating,” there is almost no scientific research on the topic. Does embracing and advocating for so-called “clean eating” represent a broader pattern of pre-occupation with healthy eating, which in turn confers risk for eating disorders? Or, is “clean eating” a healthy pursuit that encourages balanced, mindful eating practices, thereby reducing risk for eating disorders? I hope that these projects will help us to move beyond the ivory tower of academia to inform policy and facilitate improvements to population health. I am so excited to join the interdisciplinary team at STRIPED and learn from their expertise in bridging the gap between science and policy in eating disorders prevention.

Ellen Feldberg Gordon Fund for Eating Disorders Research

Jennifer Perini

A Chance to Heal Endowment

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Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching

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#### **STRIPED Faculty**

S. Bryn Austin, ScD, Director

S. Jean Emans, MD

Holly C. Gooding, MD, MS

Allegra R. Gordon, ScD, MPH

Erica Kenney, ScD, MPH

#### **Collaborating Mentors**

Jerel P. Calzo, PhD, MPH

Michael Long, ScD, MPH

Jennifer Pomeranz, JD, MPH

Katherine Record, JD, MPH, MA

Rachel Rodgers, PhD

Mihail Samnaliev, PhD

Kendrin Sonnevile, ScD, RD, LDN

Davene Wright, PhD

#### **International Expert Advisory**

Debra Franko, PhD

Jess Haines, PhD, RD

Dianne Neumark-Sztainer, PhD

Susan Paxton, PhD

# The Ellen Feldberg Gordon STRIPED Challenge Campaign

Longtime friend of STRIPED, Ellen Feldberg Gordon of Newport Beach, CA, will match every dollar donated to STRIPED up to \$100,000. That means your gift, of any amount, will be doubled! Philanthropy is critical to STRIPED. Private contributions directly support:

- Student financial aid and research grants
- Pioneering research in eating disorders prevention and adolescent health
- Events and advocacy to raise awareness about dangerous weight and shape control behaviors
- Case studies to be used to teach thousands of public health students and healthcare professionals around the world



Ellen Feldberg Gordon

STRIPED is deeply grateful to Ellen for this wonderful opportunity and asks the STRIPED community to help us reach our **\$100,000 goal**. To make a gift, visit <https://goo.gl/MyI7Wl> or contact David Kelley, Director of Development, Harvard Chan School, at 617-432-8435.

## STRIPED Visiting Scholars

As a training initiative and public health incubator, STRIPED is committed to providing immersive learning for emerging scholars and collaborative opportunities for experienced professionals.

STRIPED is thrilled to welcome three new visiting scholars for a collaborative meeting of the minds in the summer and fall of 2018.

Iyiola Solanke, PhD, is a Professor in the School of Law at the University of Leeds, where she holds the Chair in EU Law and Social Justice. She sits on the General Council of International Society of Public Law and is an Associate of the



Iyiola Solanke

Centre of Intersectional Justice. Dr. Solanke is interested in exploring how anti-weight discrimination law impacts the lived experience of weight stigma for those in larger bodies and has been working with legislators and advocates to examine the impact of such legislation. She comes to STRIPED to share ideas and collaborate with other researchers with the broader aim of identifying legal pathways to effectively protect this stigmatized group.

Nadia Craddock is a PhD student at the University of the West of England, where she is exploring whether and under what conditions the fashion, beauty, and advertising industries can foster positive body image. She seeks to understand how body image impacts those who work in these industries, as well as the opportunities for and challenges to



Nadia Craddock

fostering positive body image in their work. During her time with STRIPED, Ms. Craddock will delve into STRIPED's research studies related to the fashion industry and its educational and legislative initiatives on dietary supplements, UV tanning, and skin bleaching to help inform her future investigative partnerships.

After an 18-year battle with an eating disorder, Shalini Wickramatilake-Templeman, MHS, is now a passionate recovery advocate. She writes and speaks about the importance of screening and early intervention, the negative impact that stereotypes and stigma have on treatment seeking, and the role of self-care. At STRIPED, Ms. Wickramatilake-Templeman will examine ways to better



Shalini Wickramatilake-Templeman

equip primary care clinicians to identify eating disorders in patients in larger bodies and refer them to care. She is Federal Affairs Manager for National Association of State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Directors and manages the blog Everybody Deserves Recovery.

Check out our website at [www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped)



Newsletter by: S. Bryn Austin, Erin Gibson, and Jordan Levinson