

<b>Session</b>	Session 13 Paper A
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<b>Title of presentation</b>	Ethics of conducting research in crisis settings: How does Flint measure up?
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>In thinking about humanitarian assistance in conflict zones, emergency intervention in refugee populations, fleeing vulnerable groups, etc.; images are likely to include a caravan of migrants at the U.S. southern border, disease-stricken kids in sub-Saharan Africa, or rescue of Vietnam War victims. To a researcher wishing to venture into those places, the tasks are like no other. To the contrary, this proposal aims to examine ethical challenges and experiences of conducting public health research in Flint Michigan. It is an acknowledgment that the explosive Flint water crisis of 2014 has presented researchers with wrenching challenges analogous to those in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Nepal and South Sudan. The assumption often is that scenarios such as named above are the norm with lower income countries than with higher income countries. That assumption belies daunting ethical issues confronting researchers across both low income and higher income countries. Research has found that the instability of conflict-affected areas, and the heightened vulnerability of populations caught in conflict and/or emergency situations, call for careful consideration of the research methods employed, the levels of evidence sought, and ethical requirements, such as the harm-benefit ratio for potential research participants. In the Flint case, there are added opportunities/challenges when integrating participatory methods into human rights-based research. It is an endeavor that tests the limits of designing a participatory action research approach that fulfills an advocacy-focused research grounded in human rights and community participation.</p>
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