



AFTA
Monograph Series
Expanding Our Social Justice Practices:
Advances in Theory and Training

American Family Therapy Academy



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AFTA

Founded in 1977, the American Family Therapy Academy is a nonprofit organization of leading family therapy teachers, clinicians, program directors, policy makers, researchers, and social scientists dedicated to advancing systemic thinking and practices for families in their social context.

Through diversity in its membership, continuous dialogue, collaborative interchange, and commitment to social justice, AFTA flourishes as a learning organization that offers value to its members and to those whom they serve.

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Expanding Our Social Justice Practices: Advances in Theory and Training

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Editors' Preface

Jane Ariel, Ph.D., Pilar Hernández-Wolfe, Ph.D., and Sarah Stearns, Ph.D.



The three of us are excited to collaborate in editing this *Monograph* together, given our passionate commitment to clinical excellence and the integration of social justice into all aspects of our life and work. We are fortunate to have created trusting relationships with each other over time, for this has allowed us to openly discuss our priorities and concerns in shaping this issue. The process of soliciting and reviewing the articles required the same practices we were interested in exploring in the *Monograph*: how to think about the sensitive intersections of privilege and oppression and how to be fully inclusive of our different perspectives given our diversity and divergent life experiences.

In developing the issue, we wanted to showcase cutting-edge contributions in family therapy training and theory that have social justice at their core. Increasingly, there is an expectation that clinical education and licensure will require exposure to the concepts and skills relating to multiculturalism. However, we are concerned that many courses concentrate on the development of “cultural awareness” or sensitivity to social identity differences without an analysis of power or attention to the complex and nuanced experience of intersecting oppressions and privilege. We believe that addressing social inequalities requires expanding our attention to the multiple ways in which we use and misuse our power within our positions of privilege, adding accountability to our willingness to acknowledge experiences of victimization.

Another area of concern is that many “cultural competency” trainings are experienced by students

as challenging because they evoke intense feelings and may not provide the guidance needed to arrive at the self-awareness and humble curiosity necessary for exploring effects of deep-seated social conditioning on clinical work. In addition, faculty often feel their courses are offered in isolation from broader institutional initiatives to address cultural differences and that it may reflect on them personally if they receive mediocre evaluations from students who are uncomfortable with the more experiential techniques used to open hearts and minds to these issues. It is important to recognize and build upon efforts to design innovative educational programs and the institutional supports to ensure their effectiveness.

It was with these issues in mind that we sent out a call for articles that describe training programs and advances in theory that explicitly deal with disparities in power/privilege and the intersections of different identities and social locations. We sought programs that encourage developing the capacity for conversations across difference and that take into account multiple perspectives. We also asked that, if possible, these papers be written collectively with colleagues or with the participants in various projects. We hoped the products of collaborative efforts would be reflective of our desire for both diverse authorship and a greater platform for the voices of members of non-dominant groups.

Our submissions arrived from a wide variety of settings and activities. The contents of this *Monograph* include one article which describes clinical services which take place outside of the traditional

“office” and explores the effects of social location on creating collaboration with program participants. Two other contributions describe classes or programs within the university setting which are devoted to enhancing students’ understanding of complex diversity topics and provide opportunities for authentic conversations about experiences of privilege and marginalization. Another offers a tool which invites therapists and supervisors to reflect on variables of cultural identity and social location when seeking to understand client families. The last article challenges us to recognize the constraints of current language about “family” and invites us to expand our thinking so as to be more inclusive of families outside our heteronormative lens. Collectively, all these contributors offer unique and innovative ways of conceptualizing theory and delivering family therapy training so that social justice principles are more fully integrated.

Several proposed articles from state-of-the-art projects could not be included in this issue by the time it went to print. This partially reflected logistical constraints, but also reflected the fact that when addressing the complexities and impact of both privilege and oppression throughout all levels of interaction, the process of genuine collaboration is very intensive. Any training endeavor or collective project committed to do this must insure the availability of both the time and commitment to authentically address the issues that will arise in working together. The investment needs to include developing processes of accountability for the interpersonal and institutional dynamics that will inevitably play out. We look forward to seeing some of these very important efforts published in the future.

Training in Intersectionality Sensitivity: A Community-Based Collaborative Approach

DeShaunta Johnson, M. Phil.¹, Alba Cabral, Ph.D., Brian Mueller, M.A., Leora Trub, M. Phil., Jason Kruk, M. Phil., Emily Upshur, M. Phil., Laura Diaz, M.A., Letisha Marrero, Ph.D., Tanja auf der Heyde, M.A., MT-BC, Nate Thoma, M.A., Errol Rodriguez, Ph.D., Gabrielle Cione, B.A., and Peter Fraenkel, Ph.D.²

In this article, we describe and illustrate the effects of a community-based, collaborative approach to training persons, in this case family therapy trainees, to work with families in a manner mindful of everyone's complex combination of social locations. Although academic courses that integrate issues of social location with family therapy theory, research, and practice are also valuable, these are no substitute as a training opportunity for the sustained encounter with persons of different and less privileged social locations. A collaboratively-based program for families based in the community where they live provides such an opportunity.

As Madsen (2007) has described, one's fundamental stance towards others in helping relationships is the core "practice" that shapes all one's specific helping acts. Likewise, in the presently-described approach to training in intersectionality sensitivity, the stance of a collaborative, collective approach guides how the training is institutionalized and structured, the nature of the train-

ing activities, and the types of learning frames the training supervisor introduces.

The article begins with a description of the training context, emphasizing students' opportunity to develop their intersectionality sensitivity (hereafter referred to as IS) through multi-year involvement in a community-based, collaboratively-developed project for families living in homeless and domestic violence shelters, and in a program for first-generation/immigrant Latino families (Fraenkel, 2006a, 2006b). Following this, I (Peter Fraenkel)³ – the person among us who holds the designated roles, responsibilities, and privileges of "professor," "program director," and "mentor" – outline what I view to be the major challenges and practices of encouraging in students enhanced sensitivity to their own and families'⁴ social locations. This enhanced sensitivity focuses greatly on trainees recognizing ever more subtle instances and forms of the impact on the helping relationship of similarities and differences in social location between them and families. The descrip-

1 All co-authors listed as M.Phil., M.A., or B.A. are in the process of receiving their Ph.D. Those listed as Ph.D., completed their dissertations on data from the Fresh Start for Families or Fortalecerse projects.

2 Order of authorship for this article was selected randomly to reflect that writing is but one aspect of contributions to the work described herein. The majority of the writing, aside from vignettes, was by Peter Fraenkel.

3 To create a consistent "voice" for this multi-authored article, the first person pronoun ("I") and first person possessive ("my") indicates Peter's writing, unless "I" appears in a narrative vignette written by one of the student co-authors.

4 When we write of "families," we mean the persons whom we as therapists and community-based program facilitators are in relationships to assist. We are clear about our role as providers of therapeutic and otherwise helpful psychosocial services to families who desire them, and that this helping relationship requires a degree of hierarchy between us and these families, and that our different roles in this relationship require different levels of transparency – in that we know more about their lives than they know about ours. Both to ourselves and to families, we avoid describing ourselves as "therapists" and the families we serve as "clients" or "patients," as this language tends to create rigid role expectations that decrease emotional/relational present-ness (Fraenkel, 2002; Fraenkel et al., 2009).

tion of challenges and useful practices is illustrated by short narratives or vignettes by the article's co-authoring student staff members. Each narrative illustrates some aspect of how the contributor's intersectionality affected and was affected by interactions with families in the shelter and by participation with other staff in the training program.

Before describing the training program, I will explain how my intersectional privilege influenced the possibility, particular format, and writing of this paper. As the only AFTA member in the program, I was the member of the program team alerted to the call for papers for this issue of the *Monograph*. I elected to utilize the privilege of my security as a well-established family therapist, AFTA member, and tenured professor to invite my students to co-author the article, and to place myself as the last author, rather than to write the article myself or list myself as first author (which would have guaranteed citations of "Fraenkel et al."). Privileging my self through sole or first authorship would have implied full ownership and credit for the experiences, ideas, and practices in training that have evolved over years in conversation between me and my student staff members in interaction with families. In turn, the privilege of my present status is the fruit of life-long privileges of relative security to pursue my professional goals afforded by being, among other things, white, upper-middle class, heterosexual, able-bodied, and a third-generation U.S. citizen – protecting me from micro- and macro-aggressions and other negative social location-based experiences and encumbrances suffered by many of my colleagues who do not inhabit an intersectional location composed of all these sources of privilege. This protection has allowed me to concentrate on doing work that I believe to be valuable, and to spend a considerable amount of my career working with less advantaged persons.

While working with families in the shelter and mentoring my student staff members, the contrast between the racial and class locations of the

families in the shelter, and my whiteness and class location, are constant reminders – a kind of "bell of mindfulness" – of the privilege that allows me to live this life that resulted in me being able to write these words and to organize and narrate this article, an act that my students did not have the economic and career-security leisure to do at present.⁵ However, all the co-authoring students approved all drafts of this article.

The Training Context: A Collaborative Community-Based Program for Multi-stressed Families

The training setting is a community-based program called Fresh Start for Families (Fraenkel, Hameline, & Shannon, 2009). The product of a long-term collaboration between the Ackerman Institute, The City College of New York, and HELP USA (a non-profit provider of shelter and services to the homeless), Fresh Start is a multiple family discussion group program conducted in shelters for families that are homeless. In weekly meetings, the program fosters resilience by offering families an opportunity to support one another, discuss common challenges and share coping strategies, and break the isolation and stigmatizing effects of homelessness and shelter life. Two of the shelters are general family homelessness shelters; one is a domestic violence shelter. Based on the collaborative stance of viewing families as the experts on their situation, the program was developed and refined based on extensive semi-structured interviews with families about their challenges, coping approaches, and suggestions for program formats and contents (see Fraenkel, 2006a, 2006b for details). Several students have worked on a related program/project called Fortalecerse (Spanish for "Strengthening Families"), conducted in a Head

5 This allocation of responsibility by privilege mirrors the ways in which the desire for complete sharing of decision-making and responsibility in implementing collaborative community-based programs with persons of lesser privilege must also respect the time limits of those with less privilege (Fraenkel, 2006a).

Start/Early Head Start program in northern Manhattan, and based on the same collaborative model of program development (Fraenkel, Shannon, & Díaz Alarcón, 2006). In the last three years, the Fortalecerse program has been introduced into the domestic violence shelter. Most of the staff members are students in the doctoral program in Clinical Psychology located at CCNY; others are enrolled in the Masters in Counseling program.

Practices for Meeting Challenges in Enhancing Students' Intersectionality Sensitivity

There are three major challenges (among many others) that any attempt to nurture greater IS in students and other trainees must address: the need to create and institutionalize ongoing opportunities for interaction with families (rather than working on enhancing IS solely in classroom or time-limited workshop settings); the need to have students of diverse social locations enhancing their sensitivity together (as opposed to a mostly white heterosexual middle class group); and responding to the overwhelming anxiety and shame students anticipate and feel in revealing insensitivities, prejudices, and biases. A collaborative, community-based approach is particularly well suited to addressing these challenges.

Institutionalizing Opportunities for Real Interactions with Families in Challenging Social Locations

The Fresh Start/Fortalecerse program provides students weekly opportunities to experience and discuss their encounters with their own social locations in relation to other staff members and the families we serve. Maintaining this opportunity for over 12 years has required close collaboration among the partner institutions, utilization of the social and institutional location privileges of the two white, upper-middle class, highly educated male co-founders (Thomas Hameline, Senior Vice President for Programs, HELP USA, and Peter Fraenkel, of Ackerman and CCNY), and

a tremendous amount of time, effort, and flexibility in seeking funding. In an era of pared-down social services focused mostly on families achieving the concrete goals of permanent housing and jobs, HELP's dedication of substantial financial, space, and staff resources to a psychosocial family support program focused on the less concrete goals of fostering emotional and relational resilience can be viewed as a positive policy impact of the success of this program, albeit local institutional policy. The program's success provides a model for changing institutional policy not from the top down (through city, state, or federal legislation) but from the ground up – on the basis of a relatively small program's demonstrated positive outcomes for families, and for the trainees who staff the program.⁶

Students spend between 10-to-15 hours per week on the project, for a minimum of one year. Most are funded for their work, and most remain in the project for a minimum of three years, some for their entire graduate career. They conduct in-depth family interviews (from two to four hours in length), administer questionnaires on challenges and resilience, and conduct the weekly multiple family groups under my supervision. They also spend many hours per week doing qualitative coding — pouring over video or audiotapes of family interviews to glean the themes of family struggles and coping with homelessness. Several have completed Masters theses or dissertations on the data from the project.

Although all aspects of the program contribute to students' opportunity to hone their sensitivity to the impact of families' social locations, the in-depth collaborative interview and detailed qualitative coding that follows creates the kind of slowed-down, sustained focus crucial for making discoveries about others, and about self in relation. DeShaunta Johnson writes “as a mother, wife,

⁶ Research articles are forthcoming that demonstrate empirically some of the positive outcomes of this program for families.

woman, and Afro-Caribbean American who was raised middle class in New England,” and reflects on the power of the in-depth initial interview to enable women in the domestic violence shelter to “participate in deep truth telling and meaning sharing.” She writes: “I think this was so in part because in the initial interview, we communicated that we welcomed and expected their feelings about any given subject to sometimes be complicated; we welcomed the expression of nuanced, confusing, or conflicting feelings in the interview itself. Later, in the women’s group, we didn’t assume that their experience of being in the shelter or being with their batterers was necessarily all bad -- we often asked if there was anything positive about those experiences. Particularly during discussions of their relationships with their batterers, some women expressed relief and even joy for having the space to discuss positive memories about their batterer, their continued love for them, or their desire to reunite with them in addition to revealing the horror and desperation of the bad times.”

DeShaunta goes on to describe how this opportunity for real dialogue affected her, reminding her of experiences of isolation due to being Afro-Caribbean American in mostly white academic settings, and her struggles to belong. Her feelings of connection to the women in the shelter encouraged her to reveal in the staff supervision group her sense of isolation in the clinical psychology program, and her experience of being heard and affirmed by the rest of us in turn reaffirmed her role facilitating this core need for connection among the women: “After an upbringing and education in some very white places, I had vowed that after college I would never be an ‘only one’ ever again. I managed to do this until graduate school, when I found myself angry, scared, and isolated in a very white doctoral program in psychology. During this first year I began co-facilitating the discussion group for domestic violence survivors at the shelter, and sadly enough it became the only

almost completely black environment in which I engaged every week. Although I was a facilitator and not a member of the group, I could feel my shoulders loosen-up and my breath release as I approached the shelter every week, knowing that despite the vast and complex differences between myself and the survivors, I would soon feel the relief of being amongst other black women. I was very aware of these feelings, because communities in which I could feel at ease were shrinking out of my life as I progressed in my training, making me even more aware of the need for people at times to commune with those of shared identities, as varied as they might be in other ways. It became clear that while my job was to facilitate a process of heightened reflection for the women, it was also to foster their friendships and aid them in creating community, so that the supportive feeling of group could continue long past our meeting times. It was a triumph when the women would report going grocery shopping together, minding each others’ children, sharing clothes (and secrets), or watching soaps together during the day. Suddenly feeling so alone and misunderstood in my doctoral program really brought the point home for me, that of all the powerful things that could happen for the women in this group, helping them to amplify and solidify feelings of sisterhood as a way of mediating racism, the shelter, and their dislocation from their lives would be as ameliorative as any other function the group could serve.”

Nate Thoma, writing as a “white male graduate student,” described how his experience, perspective and “social space” while participating in the research interviews were heavily influenced by the privilege of his whiteness. He also reflected on conflicting feelings about how his educational privilege brought him to the shelter to expand that privilege, even while he was dedicated to being of use and service to the families. “I came to this project with two goals that seemed to present a contradiction to me. One goal centered on helping people who needed help, and learning more about

how I might be of help to them. The other goal centered on elevating my own status through doing so: I wanted to build my CV so that I could gain admission to a psychology doctoral program. Attempting to simultaneously achieve both of these goals gave me some ambivalence about myself, and made me especially aware of my position of privilege as a white man of higher educational background and possibility when working with the ‘subjects’ of our research, the Fresh Start families of color living in a Morris Heights homeless shelter. While assisting with in-depth narrative interviews of parents and their teen-aged children, I had the opportunity to hear the stories of individuals whose lives had been drastically different from my own. I was particularly struck by how unfair it seemed that I was a mere tourist in this world, a world of chronic poverty and marginalization, of prejudice, of dysfunctional civil systems, and of struggles for the basic resources to stay alive. And I was afraid that it was even more unfair that I stood to benefit from these encounters, in a kind of dubious anthropological colonialism. However, as I continued on the project, and continued to share my experiences with others in our supervision group, my perspective, and my attention, shifted. I began to realize that I had let compassion blind me to empathy. In this research project, there were no ‘subjects.’ There were only collaborators. The point was not to give some things and take others away. The point was to understand the experiences of others. And this is what ended up being the project’s most lasting effect for me: my memories of the encounters with people who had opened up a little bit of their lives to me and my colleagues. And in so doing, I think that we all left each other a little bit changed.”

Our approach to creating space for families to tell their stories and express feelings include both verbal modalities like the interviews and group discussions, as well as the nonverbal means of art and music. Gabrielle Cione, a white woman, notes the power of one of the arts activities: “In one of the activities at the domestic violence shelter we ask

everyone to decorate the outside of a cardboard box to show how they think they appear to others, and the inside of the box to show how they feel in the inside. I’ll never forget the box of a woman in her forties who had survived years of domestic abuse, where she put a single white ball in the center of box, representing the peace and happiness that she now feels. She said she would also want to put a pair of scissors in the box, to cut away the past. On the outside of the box, she drew her two daughters, because they are the most important people in her life. I’ve never created my own personal ‘Me Box’ with any of the moms or the kids at the shelter, and I’ve never mentioned my own personal experience with abusive relationships and how that has affected *my* life. Yet in some way, I feel that I am always carrying my box with me, and whether directly stated or not, the experiences I hold definitely inform the way in which I attend to the families living in the shelter. I am of course aware that I am a white woman, and that, in and of itself, affords me a multitude of privileges from the outside. Yet it is what is stored within my box, what I carry on the inside, of having faced fear and having felt I had lost my voice, that connects me to others in a much more profound way.”

Errol Rodriguez writes of how recognizing his current class and educational privileges helped him to distinguish between his experiences of oppression and those of the families, and allowed him to appreciate better the families’ struggles. “As an African-American male of high educational attainment whose family when I was a child was working class, I saw that many families felt they had little personal voice to assert themselves and take ownership of their life while living in a shelter. I felt especially drawn to these families, wanting to hear more from them, ask more from them, and say more to them. In essence, it was to the not-so-privileged aspects of my social location and the more oppressive, limiting aspects, that I was most attuned. I was initially less attuned to families’ more unique, individual struggles, struggles that

were quite different from my own. Hearing homeless families' plights, it was easy to join their fight against the larger oppressive system rather than to hear and respond to their feelings of personal failure. However, having spent time with homeless families has served to underscore for me a need to facilitate change within the system while remaining emotionally present to each individual family and their unique story."

Similarly, Emily Upshur, writing "as a biracial woman, born to a white mother and black father," notes how important it is to be "vigilant about assumed similarities that may hinder my ability to respond usefully to families. I make a conscious effort to listen for the multiple, discrete influences impacting a family's experience. I once assumed an African American family I interviewed was hesitant to disclose information about their family because of a cultural distrust of 'therapy,' a distrust I was familiar with from my own experience. While this might have been partly true, after listening more closely, I heard that this family was also concerned about not having enough time to be involved in the therapeutic group, concerned that they would let the other members down."

As is well demonstrated by these students' reflections, supervision of student-staff members encouraged them to reflect on how their particular intersectional location aided them in understanding the challenges and experiences of families, as well as how their social locations may at times have restricted their responsiveness. Brian Mueller writes of his experiences from his location as a "white male." "Working with the children's groups, I felt my gender attuned me to the need to show respect for *not* talking about the difficulties of shelter life, and that a group too focused on those negative experiences could feel, perhaps especially for boys, like an insult to their strengths. My social location blinded me to other aspects of the experience of the families. For example, one week our usual childcare was not available and as a result, our group of two teenagers, Tania, 13,

and Eric, 14, was augmented with three toddlers. When one of the toddlers wanted to get involved in what the big kids were doing, and I was unable to distract him quietly, Tania scooped him up, murmured a few words in his ear, and sat him on the seat next to her with a pencil and paper, taking care of him with ease and assurance. I was surprised that she had stepped in; from my location of male privilege I am sure that in her place I would have viewed this crying child as someone else's problem. This episode alerted me to the importance of taking care of the group in other small ways, for instance, in serving and cleaning up after our shared meal. I gained a small window into the multi-tasking world of these children and mothers who even as members of a therapeutic group continued to ask, "What needs to be taken care of next?"

Gathering a Diverse Group of Students

A critical condition for fostering a genuine process of self-disclosure and self-examination about social location, especially among students who inhabit social locations that have encountered greater degrees of oppression, is to have strong representation of students from a range of locations. A training opportunity like Fresh Start, which clearly offers opportunities to work with marginalized families, seems to attract students from a wide range of social locations. Students of more marginalized social locations may be more inclined to participate in a training opportunity clearly dedicated to addressing issues of privilege and oppression. In Fresh Start, the proportion of participating students of color and of gay and lesbian students is higher than the proportion of students of these social locations in the overall clinical psychology training program. Having a strong representation of persons inhabiting a range of social locations provides them a safer space to reflect on their emerging IS than in training settings where, as DeShaunta wrote, they are the "only one." In turn, the greater numbers of students from less privileged locations provides students of more

socially privileged locations a unique opportunity not to be the assumed majority. Letisha Marrero, a “Latina woman with a doctoral degree, who was raised in the South Bronx by working class parent,” writes: “Working collaboratively with each other, allowing ourselves to challenge our own beliefs and biases, allowing these beliefs and biases to be challenged by our peers in a safe environment, facilitated our ability to work more openly and collaboratively with the families. For example, being a fair-skinned, green-eyed Latina has often resulted in others (clients, peers, professors) not identifying me as a woman of color. Each time, this surprises me, as my Latina identity is a great source of pride and an integral part of how I define myself. Being able to speak openly with my peers in the Fortalecerse family program about my feelings of frustration, anger and, at times, isolation as a result of not being readily identified as a Latina, has allowed me to reflect on how these feelings impact my interactions with other minorities, and in particular, with other Latinos, and has helped me to better tolerate instances when my ethnic identity is overlooked or questioned. It took me longer to realize that others, and in particular, other individuals of color with darker skin may view my fair skin as affording me ‘an easier time,’ a position of privilege in white-dominant institutions. Has it helped me on interviews for college and graduate school? Have my white professors and bosses attributed to me talents and skills that they’ve not expected from my colleagues of darker complexion merely by virtue of being able to resonate with my appearance? The fact that I have often felt that my light skin tone was a hindrance to being identified as Latina, and thus at times, excluded by individuals of color, had created a blind spot as to how my skin color affords me privilege. Yet through the conversations with my peers and mentor in the Foralecerse family program, I’ve come to see more clearly how my privilege operates in ways that I was initially not consciously aware of.”

Alba Cabral describes how useful it was to

discuss with other Latino staff members her negative reactions to some of the choices made by young Latina women in the family program. Alba writes “as a first generation Dominican woman of high educational attainment who grew up in a middle class family that believes in higher education as a vehicle, not only for financial and intellectual achievement, but also as a means to break away from the stereotypes about Hispanic people. As a Dominican immigrant, it was not surprising to find myself identifying with the families’ emotional experiences in adjusting to life in the U.S. Nonetheless, I also found myself questioning and perhaps judging some of the choices made by most of the young Hispanic women I interviewed when they were planning for their lives in the U.S. For instance, I questioned in my mind their decision to have children before pursuing an education that could potentially open the door for financial stability. I quickly felt responsible to change their views without realizing the possibility that my privileged family background may have blinded me from seeing the context that influenced their decisions. While I had the advantage of receiving financial and emotional support from my own family during my immigration, most of these women did not. It is possible that they found in their children the emotional support that they were missing. Sharing my thoughts with my Latina colleagues involved in the research project helped me to process my blind spots and to realize that in order to truly understand the multiple contextual layers embedded in these women’s narratives, I could not rely solely on those shared aspects of our social locations that made us feel comfortable together, but also needed to examine and question ourselves about our locations that led us to judge others.”

Creating a Validating, Supportive, Non-Judgmental Supervision Experience

In our program, the key site for conversations about intersectionality is a weekly supervision that takes place in the shelter immediately after the

family group. Just as the multiple family groups balance discussion of challenges with recognition of resourcefulness and strengths, our supervision discussions encourage students to recognize both how their social locations at times assist them to be particularly attuned, and at times may interfere with connection and understanding. The qualities of this supervision process allow students to engage in a critical dialectic spiral between awareness of their social locations as a source of empathy, resonance, and connection with others of overlapping but also different intersectional locations, followed by awareness of how one's social locations limit empathy, resonance, and connection, followed at times by feelings of shame, guilt, sadness, and other unpleasant emotions that can lead the student to withdraw from the encounter, or that, when expressed, held, and validated in the supervision group, can spur them on to new, more complete levels of resonance and connection with others.

Laura Diaz describes this process well. Writing as "a first-generation Mexican immigrant of high educational attainment whose family when I was a child was a highly-educated but low income family," she notes that "...like many of the women (in the Fortalecerse program), I immigrated to this country not knowing the culture and the language, and like them, have experienced racism and micro-aggressions due to my race. But due to my educational and economic privilege, I did not share their fears of being deported, and did not share the cramped living situations some women described – for instance, 'feeling like a prisoner because you have everything in one room, like living in a match box.' It was initially challenging and painful to process some of these feelings and family stories. But when your work performance, ideas, and feelings are valued and validated in supervision, it promotes development that resonates in your interactions with the people with whom you work."

Tanja Auf de Hyde also captures this intersectional learning dialectic. "I write and reflect as an

immigrant therapist who grew up as a child of German parents in Hong Kong, and who is no stranger to a keen sense of homelessness even after 13 years in the U.S. But my inner homelessness is utterly different from that of the people we work with at the shelter. The buffer of privilege and access to education, health care, and culture buoys me and lifts me up throughout many areas of my life. And yet, as we enter the family shelter with our gleaming video cameras and reams of psychological measures, my baggage of privilege adds its own weight. It chafes my shoulders and makes me want to turn around and leave. Throughout this experience, I have learned to turn towards my own experience of homelessness, and my feeling of confusion about where I feel safe and where I belong, in order to learn how to sit and be present with intense feelings, such as a homeless mother's pain of seeing her teenage daughter raise her own daughter in a shelter. To the extent I am aware of my discomfort and guilt for having what those I work with do without, I learn to remain open to both the skepticism and the trust we encountered."

We have found several associated practices help to create a safe, non-judgmental, and productive supervision context for enhancing IS. These are described below.

Casting the Training Context as a "Community of Care"

An important practice in creating a safe and supportive supervision experience is to emphasize at the outset the training group's responsibility for our collective growth in IS sensitivity. As the supervisor, I (Peter) draw a parallel between the "community of care" we offer for some of the most marginalized and oppressed families in New York City, and the care and support we must offer one another so as to increase our collective IS. As our collective IS increases, so does the IS of each member of the collective; but each member can hold, represent, and remind the others about certain aspects of social location. We need each other

to hold the full range of these sensitivities (shared, distributed sensitivity building), and we need to hold each other to these sensitivities (collective accountability). Given that we all start with particular sensitivities and ignorance derived from our own social locations, this takes the pressure off any one student (and me as the professor/mentor) to become sensitive to all aspects of the families' challenges, all at once. Supervision sessions often involve various members of the team reminding others of the need to remember particular aspects of the families' social locations, as well as our own. Importantly, the members who end up representing and reminding others of particular aspects of social location are not entirely predictable based on their own social locations. For instance, in one case it was a straight white male staff member who, conscious of his own attempts to become more mindful of the challenges of gay and lesbian teens in black and Latino communities, reminded the group that we needed to consider that a certain teen in the shelter may be struggling with his sexual identity. Likewise, an African-American female staff member once reminded the group to consider the impact of a black-centered family group discussion on a white woman in the group married to an African-American man.

Sustaining the sense of the training group as a "community of care" is critical to encouraging students in the difficult task of repeatedly revisiting their sense of privilege, and holding the emotional tension and pain that ongoing awareness of one's privilege engenders. Leora Trub, describing herself as a "white Jewish female from a world of opportunity and open doors," captures this emotional tension well: "My grandparents -- working class, uneducated immigrants — enabled the life I lead today, and my awareness of their sacrifices inspired me to translate their legacy into maintaining a universal and empathic perspective in which I try not to take things for granted. In my four years of working in the shel-

ter system, I have listened to the angry stories of injustice of those who have lost their homes and have no support network upon which to fall back, whose words are a plea to be seen as more than 'just homeless people.' I empathize while sitting with the uneasy recognition of the privilege I carry as a white American who returns home elsewhere after each group, while they trudge past security guards through the small courtyard, disappearing into identical doorways leading them to overcrowded units that make them feel less than human. I know that holding onto the discomfort of this awareness is necessary as I try to manage the delicate balance between validating their experiences of oppression, immigration struggles, poverty and homelessness, while respectfully acknowledging my inability to step into their shoes. This usually entails holding onto their pain even when I long to shed it, like the intense anger I felt on behalf of an adolescent client who became victimized at school after revealing where she really lived; and the pain and frustration of imagining her mother -- a woman I came to greatly admire -- waiting on line for hours to find out about housing, only to be brushed off by an agency employee and turned away until tomorrow. Having the support of the supervision group, in which others shared similar feelings, was instrumental to my being able to hold the pain and guilt generated by acknowledging my privilege, so I could keep being a listening, caring presence for the families."

Jason Kruk, describing himself as a "white middle-aged male," reflected similarly about moments of uncomfortably recognizing his privilege in contrast to the families in the shelter. "I often left the shelter at the end of an evening feeling a deeper sense of meaning, doing something to contribute to social justice and assuming that those less-privileged, battered, and oppressed were grateful for my extension of a hand. And perhaps I felt meaning from doing so, but I also came to realize that I felt power by having the ability to extend."

“Getting it Wrong is Getting it Right”

The ever-changing nature of the impact of social locations means that one can never fully “know” all the ways in which these locations affect other persons, never mind fully grasp how our own nexus of locations affect ourselves. Ample research and clinical observation (Adams et al., 2000; Carter, 2005; McGoldrick & Hardy, 2008) document the many frequent, similar effects on persons sharing particular locations in terms of their race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, class, and others. Yet the challenge, and the excitement, of learning about the impact of any one person’s or family’s experience of themselves in terms of their particular mixture of social locations in a particular context and at a particular juncture in their lives is that this “knowing” is always incomplete and one must strive to appreciate persons’ “idiographic,” uniquely individual experiences (Fraenkel, 1995). In this view, “cultural competence” is unattainable; instead, the goal is to increase one’s appreciation of the uniqueness of individual experience while appreciating general trends of the impact of particular locations in their power to afford privilege and safety or oppression and marginalization.

Therefore, it is critical for the supervisor to introduce, and model, the notion that “getting it wrong” is essential to “getting it right.” The teacher/mentor must demonstrate, early on, her or his own history of struggle with the shame of having ignorance and inadvertent insensitivity revealed, and the liberation that comes from acknowledging that there is no “getting it right,” only continuous learning, mistakes, humility, appropriate levels of anxiety and shame (useful in spurring us on to change), apologies, and trying again. Monica McGoldrick once counseled me after a plenary presentation in which I felt unjustly criticized because a colleague questioned whether I was sufficiently addressing the issue of race and internalized racism for black families in homeless shelters. Monica said, “Stay with it.” Staying with it is the critical thing for

persons of greater privilege to do in relation to those with less privilege: The willingness to get it wrong over and over again, and not retreat from the desire to learn and get it a bit “righter”. More than any knowledge one may accumulate about the challenges faced by persons inhabiting particular locations, it is the dedication to “staying with it” that likely has the most therapeutic value for persons who inhabit less privilege and more oppression than one does oneself.

Staying with it also means deliberately holding in mind and being willing to encounter in interaction the wide range of possible feelings that persons of lesser privilege may experience in relation to one’s greater privilege. I recognize that my mere presence as a white middle class man with an advanced degree and the prefix of “Dr.,” working in a context in which families as well as shelter staff and students inhabit any number of locations of lesser privilege, may inspire any number of emotions based on their less privileged locations — among them, fear, rage, mistrust, envy, and deference, as well as unearned respect, hospitality, friendliness, and forgiveness for my unwittingly insensitive remarks. My belief is that all of these potential reactions to my privilege are warranted unless I provide, through my way of being and interacting, experience-based, observable reasons that persons might respond otherwise to me. Awareness of these possible responses to my privilege has contributed greatly to my dedication to developing and training students in the collaborative stance and practices of research and program development described in this and other cited articles. This collaborative stance, in which persons of lesser privilege are regarded as experts on their own lives and I am a learner, seems to create a space in which, despite the potentially oppressive effects of my privilege, persons of lesser privilege can express something genuine about their lives in my presence, and I can thereby become a useful “appreciative ally” (Madsen, 2007).

Summary

A community-based program for marginalized families provides a uniquely effective setting for students to explore both the biases and the assets contributed by their intersectional social locations in understanding and connecting with families. Applying to training and supervision the same respectful, collaborative, collectivist stance that underpins the family support program creates a consistent orientation to providing care and support that students carry with them long after their training experience ends.

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Working with Affinity: The Journeys of White Students and Students of Color in Anti-racism Courses

Sarah Stearns, Ph.D., and Edith Fraser, Ph.D.

Many academic programs designed to train future clinicians have undertaken the responsibility of providing courses to develop “cultural competency” in their students. At Smith College School of Social Work, this commitment was heightened by the school’s decision in 1994 to include in its mission statement the goal of becoming an “anti-racism” institution. Implementation of this mission has included curriculum changes, pedagogy training, aggressive recruitment of faculty and students of color, the formation of an Anti-racism Consultation Committee, and monthly meetings of the resident faculty to support their development, personally and in their institutional roles, towards an anti-racism capacity. An institutional audit is done bi-annually to measure progress on a number of dimensions and student course evaluations now include items that hold faculty accountable to the expectation that cultural variables and social disparities will be addressed in the syllabi and class presentations of all coursework.

In the second summer of coursework (Masters level students attend three summers of academic studies with clinical placements during the intervening two years), every student is required to take a class on “Racism in the United States” that examines the individual, institutional, and cultural manifestations of race and racism and the implications for clinicians. The course is offered within sections divided by three separate designs: a class that focuses on dominant white culture, a “mixed perspectives” class intended to provide a dialogue space for white students and students of color to address race, and finally, a class that looks at issues for “Clinicians of Color.” These classes meet for ten two-hour sessions over a five-week period. Students can self-select their section and

it is usually the case that the Dominant sections are composed of all white students and the Clinicians of Color section is an assembly of students of color. All Racism classes are co-taught so that the perspectives of both a professor of color and a white professor are represented. The advantage of this arrangement is that it allows the students to observe how each professor models taking an anti-racism position and how their relationship represents an authentic collaboration across racial differences.

This article is a reflection on the experiences of an African-American professor (EF) and a white professor (SS) as we co-taught both an all white “Dominant” section and the “Clinicians of Color” section for two consecutive years. It is our intention that by sharing our observations, we can contribute to the discussion of how best to provide adequate training to clinical students, as well as to advocate for the importance of intra-cultural group work given the significantly different needs of each group. This article will overview the frameworks of each section, describe student differences in class participation and responses to assignments, thematic differences in classroom dialogues, and in conclusion, our reflections about the implications for designing coursework as a part of clinical training.

Differences Upon Entering Class

Both sections begin with two exercises that are introduced during the initial class period to set the tone and parameters for the classes that follow. The first activity invites students to create a “poem” out of their responses to the prompt “I am from...” around the four dimensions of place, people, food, and expressions/sayings. They are given only ten

to fifteen minutes for this exercise and then take turns sharing their poems aloud. The second activity elicits students' hopes and fears for the class and invites them to generate "guidelines" that can support and contain their discussions. From the beginning with these assignments, we begin to see and feel the differences that will emerge between the journeys for each group.

In the Dominant class, "I am from..." elicits many items that are common to traditional U.S. culture (familiar images, words, standard fare) that are greeted with smiles of recognition as many students share those same references. The diversity in the group emerges around differences in regional locales and from the occasional linkages students share about their ethnic and class backgrounds. Often this exercise helps raise consciousness that many white students who identify as "American" have difficulty claiming something "cultural" as connected to their core sense of self. Our students vary greatly in terms of their knowledge about their ethnic backgrounds and, even if they have received prior "cultural sensitivity" training, they often have not thought about what it means to be white. They enter a class of white students, which is not an unfamiliar experience, yet because this class is composed on the basis of their white identity, it raises many apprehensions. They are concerned that the primary focus of our conversations will be to expose their biases and blame them for their unconscious exercise of privilege, even when they have selected this section because of their willingness to do their own work.

The activity of stating hopes and fears and developing guidelines for this class reveals their anxious anticipation of judgment or misunderstanding. The chosen guidelines include items such as "encourage people to take risks", "do not judge and instead ask questions for clarification", "do not make assumptions about what others say", and "be aware that this is a journey with people occupying different places along the path." As one student states: "It is hard to be scrutinized, to

become known in a way that is not something I am in control of." Their listing of fears also speaks of being scared of intense emotion, especially shame or embarrassment at being exposed for something of which they are unaware. Their hopes emerge around wanting the courage and skills to be able to address incidents of racism, to become effective allies, and to find constructive ways of dealing with their white privilege.

The fact that they begin with such discomfort translates into classroom behavior, which is tentative, where fewer students will speak in the large group and those who do, begin from a more intellectualizing place. The early classes are dominated by this silence, with the same handful of students willing to venture into more self-disclosure while the others avoid eye contact or appear to be in a state of reverie. Very quickly, we learned the value of beginning all exercises with initial conversations in dyads or triads to ensure that everyone engages. However, it is striking that when we return to the large circle to debrief, the same avoidant behavior ensues. We attempt to talk directly about the silence. The instructor of color shares her experience that in her life, there was rarely a dinner conversation that didn't include race thereby offering the opportunity for white students to reflect on the unfamiliarity of those conversations. The white professor encourages the class to recognize that the typical norms for academic settings (having the right answers and valuing thoughts over feelings) will interfere with their ability to engage authentically on this topic and offers her own lessons about learning from mistakes and holding oneself with compassion.

In contrast to the white section, the students of color come to class expectantly, very aware they are entering a different and unfamiliar setting, clearly interested to see which students of color have chosen this section. There is both excitement and apprehension around the experience of "belonging" in this space. Their introductions include reflections about how rarely, if ever,

throughout their academic lives, they have been in a class with all people of color. The “I am from” poem elicits celebrations of home countries, cultural foods and sayings spoken in native language, and the introduction by name of beloved ancestors. The poems are shared with great excitement and celebration of ethnic identity, longing for comfort foods and tearful honoring of family. There is clear understanding of their identity as hyphenated Americans and the joy and sadness of bringing all of themselves into this room. As the poems expose differences between these students of color, it leads them to bemoan the fact that in most of their classes, all people of color are lumped together and categorized.

As the Clinicians of Color explore hopes and fears and generate their class guidelines, many students acknowledge that they are somewhat unprepared for the waves of strong feeling they are experiencing. Some students describe an awareness that as a part of their accommodation to “white space,” they have developed “a protective fronting” or have “put on suits.” One student says: “In other academic settings, I was taught to defend myself. Now I need to put down my sword and shield.” Another speaks of her vulnerability because she had been “conditioned to fit in, to know how to act to prove myself. Being in this room, what now? This is scarier because, if it is not necessary to guard myself, I feel so exposed.” At the same time, there also is eagerness and gratitude that this place feels like a container for a different conversation. One student says, “So much happens to us every day and this is the place to unpack it. Other classes are about content. Here it is our lives.” Their list of hopes reflects this notion with the desire to find “empathy from others like me” and “comfort in our shared experiences.” There is the wish for “healing cultural wounds” and for continuing to “learn about our own and others’ cultures” (interestingly, no one in our white classes has ever hoped to learn more about their own culture, though this is clearly an important element of growing more

culturally grounded). The list of fears includes the “digging up of pain and anger” and the “intensity of dialogue between people of color” especially as it expresses itself in “horizontal hostility.” There is also a wry observation that white friends have asked about this section with an “expectation that we are having a kumbaya experience” while the students themselves are acknowledging the reality is more likely to include conflict and painful interactions. (The students of color are traditionally less curious about what is happening in the section with dominant culture students.)

Thus, from the very beginning, there are clear differences in energy, interactions, emotions and intensity between the two sections of the class. Other differences can be seen when we examine the different reactions to class structure and the different sequencing of topics that we discuss.

Class Processes, Activities, and Sequencing

Each subsequent class for both sections usually begins with a “check-in” process that invites reactions to the readings, reflections on something in the news, or opportunities for discussion of relevant incidents on campus. In the dominant class, there continues to be a level of hesitancy even with the open-endedness of check-ins. In these early classes, white students have difficulty initiating content for the class, perhaps fearing that they themselves will become the focus of examination rather than the topic or situation they describe. Their readings are already demanding that they learn more about the history and systemic structures of racism in the US (Miller & Garran, 2008) and students may feel overwhelmed by the concept and reality of white privilege. Also, white students often experience their targeted identities as more salient than their privileged identities and have difficulty exploring any aspect of privilege without first being able to make their experiences of marginalization visible. Therefore, early on, we offer exercises that allow them to name the various cultural locations in

which they live. Part of the discussion that follows the examination of these multiple locations asks, “What are the benefits and challenges to deepening one’s appreciation for both the advantaged and targeted elements of our cultural identity?”

We have found we need to provide materials and exercises that engage white students in exploring “white culture” and recognizing the subtle and pervasive ways that their world views and behaviors have been shaped by often unconscious assumptions and practices (Rothenberg, 2005). Given their difficulty even having conversations on race, privilege, and white culture, we ask students to form small groups to meet outside of class-time where they can share their journals or discuss self-selected topics. In class, one activity uses a visualization to invite students to re-experience their “earliest encounter with someone of a different race”. This exercise typically evokes clearer memories of the feelings connected to such exposure and their reluctance to share their thoughts and feelings with others, even when the experience had a positive tone. White students can then reflect more generally on the ways in which they carry their histories and “lessons” around racial differences as well as the covert messages they received from family, friends, and society to adopt strategies of “color-blindness” or avoid discussions on race. Debriefing this activity often reveals that students are processing “racism” at an individual level and as something about their essential “being,” rather than as an inevitable result of social conditioning. Often this awareness helps lessen the paralysis of deep shame and shifts their sense of responsibility toward addressing current realities (interpersonal and structural) by moving out of denial. (So while their first journals may speak more about their targeted identities or their struggles to “try on” that they have privilege, their second journals include more disclosure of the attitudes within their families around race and grappling with seeing the racial dynamics in subsequent encounters or situations they have faced.) Some additional con-

cepts that support this shift for students from the dominant culture are related to understanding the difference between “intent vs. impact” and role of micro-aggressions (Sue, Capodilupa, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, & Esquilin, 2007). Grasping the difference between intention and consequences invites white students to remain in the discomfort of receiving feedback when their words or actions have a racist impact not aligned with their intent. Acknowledgment that micro-aggressions as painfully real, even when they are unintentional, helps students be willing to avoid the defensiveness and retrenchment resulting in micro-invalidations for people of color.

For Clinicians of Color, the “check-in” process is a time for open dialogue that overflows with reports on experiences in other classes and their need to process incidents from their clinical placements the previous year. There is more urgency and pain in the room. Students provide support, reality testing, and alternative frames to work with whatever anyone brings into the class. For example, in response to one situation, students spontaneously role-played a range of possible responses and developed a supportive and empowering strategy to challenge micro-aggressions in their classes. Based on this discussion, they agreed that other students of color would provide affirming and supportive comments when the issue was revisited within that other class, so that the impacted student would not feel alone.

Several unique issues occur in the clinician of color class that also demands the allocation of class time. One such issue, which frequently arises, is the questioning of who belongs in this section. While this question may be asked relative to the presence of the white professor (which leads to an open discussion of the underlying pedagogy as well as making transparent the ways that we anticipate that our roles and participation will be different), the more painful dynamic is related to feelings around “complexion” and questioning of “light-skinned” classmates who do not appear

to be people of color. Frequently, conversations about the role of coloration between students from various races and ethnic groups uncover negative messages about color they received from family and friends. Naturally issues related to internalized oppression are a primary focus in this class and emerge in a number of guises. While students in dominant section are struggling with their shame about being white, students of color are ashamed of revealing indications of their internalized oppression (Batts, 2002).

In this section, we postpone our exercise on intersectionality and move directly into racial identity development as a way of allowing these students to share their complex histories while keeping the focus on their targeted identity around race (Wijeyesinghe & Jackson, 2001). Exploration of racial identity is fraught with many challenges for diverse groups of students of color because they are exposed to the common threads of experience around racism while being confronted with the multiple variations in their identities as shaped by immigration, religion, gender and class. Differences in social identity also arise when a bi-racial student or a student with a cross-race adoption history has been raised in a predominantly or completely white environment and therefore may have a very different sense of racial identity than their peers. One way to address these differences is by using a “fishbowl”. The fishbowl exercise invites several students (4-5) to come to the center of the room while the rest of the class observes the dialogue. This format provides an opportunity for students in the inner circle to experience a more intimate and transparent discussion, while the outside circle can witness and self-reflect in silence. For this particular fishbowl exercise, students self-select into one or more affinity groups by their racial/ethnic identity (usually, African-American, Latino, Asian, and Bi- or multi-racial identities are represented though we also have been challenged when there are solo individuals of Native American or Arab descent), and share the

similarities and differences of their backgrounds and perspectives on racial identity while the outer circle listens.

After listening to these powerful personal stories, the students are moved by common themes of pain around racism while simultaneously recognizing that they themselves carry misinformation and stereotypes about the other racial and ethnic groups. Therefore, the following class, we move to interracial dialogue, a source of much vulnerability for the students of color who fear that such direct conversations about the internalized negative messages of racism between groups could lead to injuries and division (Conklin, 2008; Fong, 1998; Payton, 1998). Again using a fishbowl format, we invite a rotating subset of the students to admit and address the biases they “caught” about other racial or ethnic groups.

The verbalization of stereotypes, while challenging, can be an opportunity for authentic interracial dialogue and growth. In one class for example, an Asian female in the inner circle reflected on her fears of black men; one black male became very agitated and joined the inner circle. Once in the fishbowl, he attempted to control the direction of the conversation in ways that were experienced as an exercise in male privilege and less clearly coming from his pain as a black male. This stance ignited divisions in the class, as some students remained connected to the obvious anguish of the Asian woman for having to admit her fears, while some black women in the class felt their pain in connection to their black sons, and others in the class became triggered by the gender dynamic. In the following class, we needed to address the group tensions that had arisen as various students felt triggered and reinjured by the conversation. The healing process was facilitated by asking each student when their perception of a “breakdown” occurred, what they understood about what was stimulated for them, and what they needed for reparation. The slow and careful unpacking of each students’ experience of that interaction, with

more honest sharing about how each person's perspective was shaped by their various subjugated and privileged identities, underscored the importance of exploring intersectionality and led to expressions of hope that interracial dialogue could lead to healing conversations.

Case Studies and Application of Racism Content

The second half of the course invites students into small groups to discuss and then present a "case study" from their nine months of clinical placement. This assignment asks each student to write a description of experiences and interactions involving an interracial relationship or interaction about which the student has unresolved questions about the implications of race and racism in social work practice. Profiles can be drawn from their experience with peers, supervisors, institutional settings, or clients. The outcomes of this assignment will reveal more differences between the focus of work that occurs in each section.

Because the primary position of the white intern is as a witness to racist behavior, most cases in the Dominant group focus on how to appropriately confront or intervene when such scenarios occur. The "power" issues in these interactions are usually about the level of the social work intern in the agency, especially when it is the supervisor who is less interested or attuned to the racial component of a case. The dilemmas that emerge are often the result of non-response by interns, the silence again, and the consequent feelings of anger, shame, and powerlessness. When a few of these cases are chosen for class presentation, the student-led discussions that follow are commonly about generating new options for speaking up on these issues, especially to address students' concerns that the interactions not create alienation in the supervisor-intern or intern-client relationship. The white students are wrestling with wanting to practice their newly energized convictions to act as allies in confronting racism while still recog-

nizing the gap they feel in having the skills and courage to act effectively. Problem-solving about these incidents often involves encouraging students to stay committed to action even when they are afraid they may not "do it right" and coaching them around thinking strategically, at both interpersonal and institutional levels, to be able to have a voice even when they don't have positional power to change things.

On the other hand, for Clinicians of Color the incidents usually involve the interns' own experiences as the recipients of name-calling, insensitivity, or other micro-aggressions. The issues in their case studies often revolve around how to maintain a professional demeanor in the face of these violations and how to deal with the added risk if they express their outrage. The reactions from the clinical supervisor or other agency personnel (as well as the Smith faculty field advisor) may involve either micro-invalidations or micro-insults (Sue et al., 2007) such as having the impact of the incident minimized or being told they need to have a "thicker skin." So while clinicians of color also experience difficulty speaking up in those moments, it is the silence that occurs when one's perspective on reality is consistently dismissed or when the intensity of one's affect is judged as non-professional. For these students, there is the need for reassurance that "finding one's voice" is possible under these conditions. The student-led discussions often focus on validation of the interns' feelings and sharing of similar experiences with suggestions for alternative responses.

In many cases, an important element in the process is allowing the expression of anger and/or self-doubt and the recognition of the added burden of isolation that many students of color feel in their placements. For example, an Asian student who was frequently confused by name with another Asian intern in her agency is assured that her feelings around this "invisibility" are legitimate and, as other students recall similar instances of not being seen or known in white settings, is provided with

some empowering responses. Or a student who is called “nigger” by a client is allowed the space for her anger and tears and then provided with recognition that oppressive language (as well as more covert slights) are realities for clinicians of color. Strategies for dealing with this challenge, both personally and institutionally, can only be developed once the student no longer feels invalidated nor held accountable for a reaction that is labeled inappropriate. The nature of these examples also highlights the imbalance in resources available to address the issues for clinicians of color in their work with white clients or other clients of color; the predominant focus of what we write and teach about cultural competency targets white clinicians working with clients of color.

The process of working through these case presentations leads to our final class where we introduce all students to the expectations for an “anti-racism project” they will complete during their second practicum year. Having examined the challenges students personally feel when confronted with incidents of racism, we prepare them to bring this lens to an assignment where they are asked to complete an assessment of their agency placement and then design a small intervention that they will implement in the spring. The school maintains records of these projects so that students can access samples of previous institutional interventions and more specifically build on the projects conducted at their upcoming site. Hopefully, this project keeps students engaged with further applications of our course and often, students commit to remain in contact as a “peer support group” that will offer feedback during the following practicum year.

Commonalities

While we have wanted to share our observations about the differences between these classes, there are also many similarities we will briefly highlight. Every individual, in both classes, begins at a different place. White students have a wide

range of exposure to people of different races depending on the context of their upbringing and life circumstances. Those with family members of color or students who had more significant relationships with people of color as adults were more likely to begin with some race consciousness. However, even for these students with more cross-race connections, this class was often their first opportunity to participate in an analysis of privilege or apply a racial lens as a means of unearthing their unattended to feelings and reactions. Whether white students came in denial or simply with the absence of the language and skills to engage these topics, many were able in this short five-week class to begin to re-evaluate some of their life experiences, though they were still more inclined to do this in the privacy of their journals as opposed to general class conversation.

The students of color also begin with a wide range of consciousness from naivety to sophistication depending on whether they have lived in homogeneous communities or within families who were proactively teaching them about race relative to whites and other groups of color. Family messages, even those intended to be protective, can surface with the same pain and embarrassment that accompanies white students’ acknowledgement of their racial conditioning. And while most of these students had experience being the only person of color in white settings, few had many cross racial or multiracial experiences or had dealt directly in conversations about the intersectionality of race with class or sexual/gender identity. Finally, because the Clinicians of Color group includes many students with immigration histories, their narratives are different since they began dealing with the impact of racism only once they moved to the US and encountered discrimination based on skin-color, but also on ESL or their accented English.

Developing a deeper understanding of the intersectionality of oppression and the multiple components of social identity is a challenge for stu-

dents in both classes. Many students are aware of the concept “complex social identity”, yet there are variables to which they have given little attention and they may remain especially oblivious about their privileged identities. Most students are more affectively connected to their subjugated identities as women, sexual minorities, or persons with disabilities while being less aware of their privileged status as heterosexuals, Christians, or formally educated, middle class professionals. Thus, recognition of the benefits of various categories of privilege is an important expansion of the discussions in both sections; while students in the dominant culture are more likely to approach this class with some resistance to acknowledging privilege, students in the clinician of color section are equally reluctant to own the benefits of privilege.

As difficult as this process feels for most students, in both classes the majority of the students use the class to gain key conceptual frameworks for understanding racial dynamics, practice authentic racial dialogues and as a time for introspection and reflection. Most students show a commitment to leaving their comfort zones to engage in conversations about race and ethnicity with intensity and feelings. In both sections, we hear requests for this course to extend across the entire ten-weeks of summer sessions as well as suggestions that the third year summer would be an ideal time to take the next step into cross race dialogues across our two classes.

Personal Reflections

We would also like to share our personal reflections on being the one person of our race in each different section:

EF: As an African American, heterosexual woman and the only person of color in the room for the past two years in the dominant culture section, I experienced a variety of thoughts and feelings. I felt responsible and believed that in some ways I was representing all people of color and knew this was an impossible expectation. Yet in the class-

room, when I spoke and shared an experience or told a story, I was providing a human face for the experience of a person of color. At times I felt vulnerable, especially after I shared a painful story or experience. It was difficult to share when the pain of the moment was relived. To have shared such an event with students for the service of learning can be difficult. So naturally at times I felt frustrated, reflecting on what had been shared by me personally, on what students had read, and on what had been discussed in class. It was frustrating to see some students still grapple with basics or be obdurate. “What more could be said?” and “How much more do they need to read?” were questions that coursed through my brain. I also at times felt disconcerted because of the immense guilt students in the dominant culture feel. I would think, “Let it go,” “Let’s move on,” “This is not productive”. Yet I know this shame and guilt are part of the process. Another feeling was vigilance. Growing up in America and attending majority white schools and colleges for about 85% of my academic career, I learned early the importance of code switching and becoming a bi-cultural person. This knowledge framed most of my remarks; I knew that my message had to be filtered and delivered in a manner that would be acceptable for students in the dominant culture. When people of color speak in an unfiltered manner it is not heard or misheard, e.g. President Obama’s remark and that the policeman acted “stupidly” became more important than the policeman’s actions. While at times I felt alone, I actually knew that my co-teacher had my back and while she is not a person of color, I felt she understood. So this feeling was more fleeting. Finally, I felt pleasure, especially near the end of the class in journals and discussions to see how engaged students were in the learning process and the ability to learn, grow and be transformed. It is this feeling which motivates me to continue with this work.

SS: As a white woman, of WASP heritage, I am always aware of questioning my presence in the

Clinicians of Color section. At times, I have even joined the controversy amongst the faculty who teach sections of this course on the side of those who want two faculty of color from different racial groups to teach this section. However, it is also true that there are moments when my willingness to speak from my experiences as a member of the dominant culture as well as to serve as a witness to the extraordinary disclosures made by students of color seems valuable to the healing that needs to occur. Edith and I inform the class that she will be the lead instructor and initially, I am very careful about what and how much I say. However, I have learned that my silence also can be negatively stimulating and so it is important that I be willing to be known, especially to expose my feelings, and to listen deeply as a way of contributing a non-reactive white presence. I am grateful for the many years I have spent working in a predominantly black organization for it has helped me be able to trust the intense range of feelings that emerge and can cycle rapidly between anger, laughter, and tears. Not having experienced that affective range in my background, I needed to learn how to not get scared or act to shut things down out of my own discomfort. There are particular aspects of the clinicians of color journey that the students want to work out with me. For example, one student needed to hear me talk about my understanding of “power” as something beyond the exercise of “power over” and another appreciated my willingness to play the role of her white supervisor as she practiced confronting some of the previous year’s issues in that relationship. The greatest gift of being in this class is to be able to continue my own learning and occasionally offer a reflection on my white location that allows these students of color to gain understanding and hope relative to their desired relationships with other white people.

EF: I recognize that many other faculty members, who teach the Smith racism course, believe that having two faculty of color to teach the students of color would enhance dialogue and

interaction between people of color. However, I still firmly believe that having a professor from the dominant culture, able to be a white ally and in dialogue with the faculty-person of color, provides an in-class model of the interracial dialogue we hope for in this class. Therefore, this is one area upon which Sarah and I do not agree, as we have acknowledged to the students. This too is an example of the complexity of interracial dialogue.

Recommendations and Conclusions

While many academic institutions provide “cultural” training for future clinicians, we wonder if the absence of adequate space and support for the independent work required of privileged and subjugated groups around race is a neglected element of such program designs. As Ken Hardy (lecture, June 15, 2009) so eloquently implores, the tasks of each group are different and must be attended to for substantive change to occur. We would like to contribute the lessons from our experiences as evidence of this reality.

Within the Dominant group, the presentation of cognitive information, especially when it is focused on learning about the cultural “other” is wholly inadequate to the process white students need in order to address issues of white privilege. The ability to move beyond some degree of awareness of the complexity of social identity requires personal exploration of intersectionality with deliberate attention to owning the aspects of social location that bestow privilege. In the presence of students of color, it is more likely that white students will return to the pattern of seeking information about racism from members of the target group while putting a premium on not offending or making mistakes. This will be a barrier to their genuine exploration of white culture and privilege and will inhibit their experiencing the value of risking exposure to learn in the company of other whites.

Also, it is essential to integrate working with the affective component of unlearning racism,

given the pattern of silence and anxiety which makes most white students unable to adequately address issues of race, *even when this is aligned with their values and desires*. And while it can be important to acknowledge the emergence of shame, it is essential to provide tools that enable students to move beyond the self-involved paralysis that can occur and instead to find pathways for channeling shame into advocacy for social change. The development of “sensitivity” is unlikely to prepare students with the tools to take action unless they are given concrete opportunities to apply their emerging awareness to actual situations and contexts. By doing their problem-solving in all white groups, they can learn to turn to other whites, rather than to students of color, to develop strategies for intervention both interpersonally and institutionally.

On the other hand, Clinicians of Color need the space and support to explore internalized racism and the negative messages they carry about themselves and other groups of color. Not only are they unlikely to do this with a white audience, they also need the rare opportunity to experience an academic setting where they can shed some of their defenses and recognize their own sense of vulnerability in talking about race. Given the chance to hear the painful disclosures of other students across different dimensions of oppression, students of color deepen their capacity to hold the complexity of intersectionality and its role in creating tensions and misunderstandings within and between communities of color. By sharing experiences of racism in clinical and academic settings, they can develop concrete strategies to support each other and to become advocates for other people of color. And having received validation of their intense feelings in a space where this is not labeled as unprofessional, they can prepare themselves with a greater repertoire of responses for when they return to the field. Finally, they can allow themselves to recognize the positions of privilege they *do* hold once these do not threaten to discount the realities of their subjugation and, in fact, can be seen as

possible instruments of empowerment, especially when they are in positions to advocate for marginalized clients in oppressive systems.

We both recognize the privilege we have working in an academic setting that has committed this amount of resources to fulfilling its antiracism mission. While we could easily write another paper on the remaining challenges that exist for our institution, we are grateful to have been able to co-teach in this course and generate these observations for the advancement of our field.

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- We are happy to share more of our readings/resources upon request.

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Hearing Student Voices: Developing Diversity Sensitivity and Humility on a College Campus¹

Marsha Mirkin, Ph.D., Iván González, B.A., Mabel Valenzuela, B.S., Merryl Raubeson, B.S., Hafsa Lewis, B.S., and Marian Salama, B.A.

Over the past years, diversity has been addressed in topical courses offered on many college campuses². Undergraduate courses are a very important step in developing cultural awareness, defined as a cognitive process requiring intellectual processing (Hardy & Lazloffy, 2005), yet they may not be sufficient to develop a campus-wide “cultural humility” (Falicov, 2005) or cultural sensitivity (Hardy & Lazloffy, 2005). Cultural humility can be understood as the recognition of both how little we know and how much we need to understand about each other’s complex identities in a multicultural society. Cultural sensitivity, according to Hardy & Lazloffy (2005), is an affective process. They argue that the exploration of perceptions and feelings central to cultural sensitivity is often ignored when teaching focuses on content-driven cultural awareness. When culture is defined in its broadest sense (Mio, Barker-Hackett, & Tumambing, 2006), teaching diversity involves teaching cultural awareness, sensitivity, and humility.

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2 American Psychological Association recommended articles for teaching diversity at an undergraduate level can be found at <http://www.apa.org/ed/divhcollege.html>

In an effort to teach undergraduates about diversity through developing cultural humility and sensitivity, the authors suggest utilizing panels of student speakers, research projects that develop from and contribute to the panels, and follow up classroom activities that are all designed to engage students and faculty in ways that facilitate emotional resonance with the diverse identities of self and others. We are fortunate to be at a college that utilizes a “connected learning” philosophy to link academic studies with real world applications, and that is committed to increasing diversity and cultural sensitivity in both the college community and the curriculum. The administration has supported these efforts by funding invited speakers who discuss topics of privilege and oppression, faculty research, student and faculty conference presentations, and the writing of this paper. Rather than reporting about the methods of teaching diversity, this article will utilize our model by including the voices of each of the authors and how they contributed to and experienced the proposed educational process.

Before discussing the model, we will briefly introduce and locate ourselves as we do in greater detail before each presentation. This self-description along lines of privilege, marginalization, and its intersectionality³ allows us to engage with each other in more mutually authentic ways, recognize privilege and power dynamics that might otherwise be ignored, and work together across difference.

3 By intersectionality, we are referring to the interactions among one’s many identities, both privileged and oppressed. So, while all the authors may be privileged by educational level, some are marginalized by immigration status and/or as people of color, while other authors are privileged by being white and/or being born in the U.S.

Marsha Mirkin: I am a psychology professor and a Jewish, Caucasian daughter of a Polish-Jewish immigrant mother and a U.S. born father who was the son of Polish-Jewish immigrants.

Mabel Valenzuela: I graduated in 2007 with a BS in Psychology. I emigrated from the Dominican Republic to the United States at the age of 13. Spanish was the language I had used until that time. My mother had already been residing in the United States for many years before my siblings and I arrived.

Iván González: I am a 2008 Lasell graduate with a major in Communications. My experience as an immigrant began at the age of nine when my immediate family moved to the United States from the Dominican Republic. My family and I arrived in Massachusetts with little idea of what was to come. To us, it was a totally different place—with a different culture, language, and way of life.

Merryl Raubeson: I am a 2008 graduate with a BS in psychology. I am a Caucasian woman and had a hard time locating myself ethnically and culturally in part because I am a member of the dominant culture. My family moved to the U.S. many generations ago, so many that it is hard to trace back to when exactly my family immigrated. I also had difficulty learning about my nationality since my father never knew his father and spent many years in and out of foster homes. I do know that my mother's side of the family is predominantly English. I also have French and Scottish heritage.

Hafsa Lewis: I am a 2008 Lasell graduate. I majored in psychology and am now planning a career in nursing. I am a British-American daughter of Pakistani-British-American parents. We immigrated to the U.S. when I was seven. My mother is Christian and my father is Muslim.

Marian Salama: I graduated in 2008 with a BA in Legal Studies. I am Egyptian-American and my parents emigrated from Egypt the year before I was born. They maintained a strong commitment to Egyptian customs and culture. Arabic was my first language and my parents spoke very little English.

Student Voices Panels

In order to help develop cultural sensitivity and humility, Student Voices Panels are convened. Student Voices panelists give expression to experiences that rarely have been publically shared, confront and burst stereotypes, and engage with the school-wide audience in difficult conversations. Panel topics over the past five years have included race, class, gender, immigration status, religion/spirituality, and physical and emotional challenges. Four of the authors of this paper (MV, IG, HL, MS) participated in the series of panels on immigration experience which were facilitated by the first author and that are the focus of this paper.

The panelists and facilitator collaboratively develop a series of questions that are presented to the panel during the school-wide event. Examples of questions include “What strengths have you developed from your experience as an immigrant?” “What challenges have you faced as an immigrant at this college?” “What would you like non-immigrant students to understand about your experience?” Panelists do not hold conversations about the questions in advance of the panel in an effort to have a more spontaneous and authentic discussion with the audience. They are, however, given the option of meeting with the first author to “think aloud” before the event.

Panelist responses to questions often are in the form of storytelling (White, 2007) used in a way to construct richer meanings and form connections. The strength of a teaching technique that uses story telling is that the person telling the story has the possibility of moving from the margins and claiming definition of his/her own experience. The listener can find his/her meaning-making changed by hearing the story because stories often enable the listeners to emotionally resonate with the storyteller and see beyond stereotypes. Stories presented can challenge the dominant stories, and allow the “constructor” to find voice and experience his/her story that was previously silenced, ignored,

or denigrated. Engaged, empathic listening further supports the person telling the story, or as Jordan (2003) says, we “listen into voice” (p. 2).

The professor serving as facilitator needs to maintain a stance of curiosity, careful listening, and nonjudgmental support. The facilitator needs to hold him/herself accountable and be held accountable to the panelists. Students are the experts on their own experience and the facilitator helps to create an environment where students can share the experience. Audience participation, questions, comments and reflections are encouraged throughout and ground rules are set so that discussion is respectful. The agenda is not set in advance: We do not need to “get through” the prepared list of questions, and we can explore threads that emerge rather than continuing with our initial list. This enables the panelists and audience to engage more deeply with each other. In the future, it may be useful for both panelists and the audience to participate in small group discussions following the panel. Currently, these discussions occur in particular classes but are not institutionalized.

I (MM) recognize that I am both white and a professor, and as such I have a great deal of power and privilege in this situation. I continue to be vigilant about committing microaggressions, recognizing that perpetrators are often unaware of committing these slights (Sue, 2004). Further, as Hardy noted, “Conversations between the privileged and subjugated...break down when the person or group in the subjected positions is principally concerned about consequences where the person in the privileged position is concerned with intentionality. And because the person in the privileged position has power, they have a greater opportunity to frame the discussion around the purity of intentions rather than honoring consequences (Wyatt, 2008, p.6).” I therefore cannot assume that just because my intentions are good, the experience of the panelists is positive. I must be very aware of the power dynamics at all times, continue to work on my own issues around cultural

awareness, sensitivity, and humility, hold myself accountable to the panelists, and also count on my colleagues to continue to challenge me on these issues. It is generally easier for people to identify themselves through identities of oppression, so by publicly recognizing my position of racial and class privilege even though some of my identities are not privileged, I can demonstrate to students from dominant groups an awareness and acknowledgment of privilege.

Benefit to Student Panelists

In developing these panels, professors/facilitators must be careful that panelists find the experience useful and important to their own growth. Panels should be utilized only if the panelists do not feel burdened but rather that the panels are useful and empowering for them. It is only under those circumstances that the panelists’ generosity in sharing about their own lives can be non-exploitative. Student Voices panelists overwhelmingly felt that the panel made a difference to them. Below are their reflections about the panels:

Marian: Being of Middle Eastern decent (Egyptian), the most important thing I experienced from the Student Voices panel was the opportunity to teach my classmates about our culture and practices after 9/11. I could understand the extreme confusion and frustrations many felt after that horrific day, but it was nice to be able to explain oneself and see from across the room that those same folks can find an understanding. I do find that the student panels did make a huge difference, if only for the simple fact that now these folks can understand and keep an open mind about different cultures and their practices. Something I was personally able to learn and appreciate is that my peers were looking forward to learning about the Middle Eastern culture and practices; I didn’t realize how little they knew and how interested they truly were.

Mabel: The Student Voices panels were extremely helpful to me, not only because I was able to express myself, but also because other students attended and I felt that I was able to identify myself

with them. I felt that the panel made a huge difference in the community because we were not only educating other students, we were also educating some professors who did not understand how we felt and why certain situations occurred. For example, immigrant students sometimes received a lower grade on an essay or a speech and through the panels, some professors could begin to experience what it was like for me to learn English as a teenager. I personally felt that after the first panel I was taken in and seen as part of the college campus and that other students were able to empathize with me. From the process I learned to identify myself around others without feeling embarrassed of my accent; I learned that even though people can be from the same culture and class, that does not mean that they think alike. I feel that I taught the community to empathize with others without being prejudiced; I feel that people sometime have a stereotype because people are afraid to talk about issues. Being on Voices panels gave me the opportunity to express my experience and my feeling without being judged.

Iván: The panels have been an opportunity for me to learn more about other individuals' experiences as I listened and analyzed their thoughts. In particular, I was surprised to learn some of the difficult situations encountered by other panelists and how they dealt with them. I am a firm believer that the panels have made a difference in our community. The various discussions have resulted in our community having a better understanding of the immigrant experience. Community members have come to understand that although we live in the U.S., different values from our country of origins play vital roles in our daily lives. They have a better appreciation of our traditions. My notion is that people attending our presentations, both within our college community and other communities, understood more about the topic by learning from our personal accounts. Also, getting the perspectives of other immigrants who perhaps have very dissimilar cultural backgrounds from mine made me realize that even though we all come across to different circumstances and experiences, there are aspects from our experiences that are very similar such as how much we value the role our family plays in our lives.

Hafsa: Student Voices was a great opportunity

to hear the different perspectives on immigration by my peers. One of the things I most enjoyed was listening to their stories, especially because they were all so different. I was also able to answer some really insightful questions from the various audiences we presented to. I was able to communicate a lot about how for me, I cannot talk about my immigration experience without talking a little bit about religion. It was important to voice my positive opinion of Muslims (since my father is Muslim) especially because the opinions of people are somewhat biased perhaps because of current events.

Before becoming involved in the panel over the past few years, I agreed with people who said I was from Pakistan even though I was not born there myself—it seemed convenient to just agree. It wasn't until after a number of panel discussions that I, at age 22, started to take the extra ten minutes to explain to people, "NO, I am not from Pakistan, my mother and father were born there and moved to England at a very young age. I am still a British Citizen; I have been to Pakistan only once in my life and I do not affiliate myself with Pakistan as much as I do with England." As it became an issue that was discussed more, I began to take where I was from and why that was important to me more seriously. The panel allowed me to do some real "self-identifying" and I was always thinking about the questions that were asked even after the panel was over.

While panelists felt that they were able to impact how they were viewed by non-immigrant students, this is a process and not an overnight change. However, it is a process that can reach students who might not sign up for topical diversity classes, a critical population to access.

Commonalities and Differences

Student panelists shared some common experiences that connected them with each other and that differed from many non-immigrant students. Each panelist reported difficulties with trying to figure out a new culture and/or having a foot in two cultures, more hierarchical parent-child relationship in their families than in many non-

immigrant families; a strong sense of loyalty and responsibility to nuclear and extended family, and a sense that many students from non-immigrant families did not know about the immigrant experience. They also all voiced resilience and strengths that they attributed to the immigrant experience. In their words:

Mabel: I emigrated from the Dominican Republic to the United States at the age of 13. I remember that I felt completely lost in a culture that was very different than my own, and with a language that I could not understand. When I entered school, other students were involved in extracurricular activities and I was not able to do the same because my mother needed me after school to take care of my siblings. I would like non-immigrant students to understand that immigrant students have to work double in order to make it in school, that there are a lot financial responsibilities, family responsibilities and language issues. All of these issues need to be overcome in order to successfully get a career. I was the first one in my family to graduate from college. My family was extremely proud of my success. However I do not think this was something they were expecting because they knew all the responsibilities that I had on my shoulders when I was attending school. I think that families of immigrant students are emotionally supportive of the children's education even if financially they are not able to provide.

The stereotype that I confronted included comments that most Dominican girls come to this country, get pregnant and do not continue their education. Comments like this irritated me because I felt that I was very different from that and sometimes due to language barriers and financial difficulties, Dominican parents may not be able to help their children with schoolwork and that may be why some students are not able to continue with their education. However, immigrant students value education because they know for a fact that if they do not prepare themselves academically, they will be doing the same type of jobs that their parents are doing, and that for the most part is housekeeping or factory labor.

Iván: Most importantly, I would like non-immigrant students to understand about my experi-

ence as an immigrant-- where I come from, what I consider to be my successes as well as my adversities, and what I represent. I would like them to be aware of the fact that there is more to the immigrant experience than just categorizing someone as coming to the United States from another country and then assuming a general reason as to why this person migrated. This holds true regardless of whether the supposition is positive or negative. It is of great significance for me that non-immigrant students understand that when I left my country, I left behind part of my identity. I identify myself as someone who loves his culture, someone who thinks highly of his language, someone who believes family is one of the most important aspects of human beings, someone who values education to the highest standards.

It is with great pride that I find myself graduating from college with high achievements after overcoming obstacles such as language barriers or dealing with individuals who assumed that someone coming from my cultural background would always fail. It is important to learn from each other about each other and to keep in mind that we are all different. I believe that when we base our attitudes on stereotypes we are holding back the human race from moving forward.

Like any parents who care for their child's future, my parents had high expectations when I was in college. They were confident in my abilities to reach all of my educational goals. I think my parents did not have to worry much about where my education was heading because they were fully conscious of my desire to obtain a college degree. They knew it was something I aspired to ever since I was a child and besides they witnessed how well I did in school all the previous years.

Hafsa: I never really gave much thought about how I fit into the "immigration" category until this panel came about and brought up a lot of very interesting questions. I have lived in the States for 16 years now so I always feel like I "belong" here, but I feel like I "belong" in the UK too because that is where a lot of my family lives. For me it's like I come from two separate worlds. The "American" way of things is certainly nowhere near what things are in England (at least not for me). Once during a panel, I said that my parents did not let

me sleep over at a friend's house unless they knew the parents and first asked me a number of questions. A member of the audience responded, "Why don't you just tell your parents that there is nothing wrong with sleeping over?" I responded, "You don't *tell* my parents anything."

Our panel had a number of discussions about class, ease of entering the country, stereotypes, etc. This discussion was important to me because I realized that this is part of the reason I hadn't felt like an immigrant. I was born in England and my parents were born in Pakistan but I do not have very dark skin and I have an American accent because I moved to the States when I was seven years old. These things made the adjustment much easier for me than for someone who did not speak English as a first language. My contribution to these discussions was mainly that although I may not look or speak like non-immigrants' perceptions of an immigrant, there are still a lot of the similar values and traits that I share with other immigrants, such as the importance of family and education.

I situate myself by adjusting myself to my surroundings while still maintaining a sense of self, which is so important and necessary if you want to hold onto parts of your upbringing that can get lost in different environments. As I've grown it has become much easier to be "different." While growing up there is always a pressure to fit in but now that I have established who I am and have learned more about myself, it has become easier for me to be who I really am instead of trying to fit into something I'm not. You can function well in society and maintain the cultures and values that make you unique.

Marian: My parents raised my sister and me as though we were living in Egypt. At least that's how it felt. We weren't allowed to do much, including slumber parties or school dances. Arabic was my first language and I needed to attend ESL classes throughout all of my elementary and junior high education, including a good part of high school. My parents had moved to the United States only a year before I was born, and spoke very little English. Every day I was sent to school with leftover dinner from the night before. My classmates often made fun of my lunch and would tell me it smelled funny. I remember at the time thinking that I hated being different; I wanted to be petite

and blonde with blue eyes. In high school things changed a lot for me. I joked a lot about how being Egyptian was like being a part of the invisible race. People knew you were different, but didn't know how and didn't care. Your skin color matched, but your food smelled funny, otherwise they weren't part of it, so they didn't care. After 9/11 questions arose about my practices. Now I was different and dangerous, and that was something I struggled with for a short while.

I later realized that my background could help me become the woman that I want to be. When I went to college my parents were going to give me no slack. They felt that it was their responsibility to be helping me pay for tuition, and so I needed to do my best. However, they still didn't know what that was. I am lucky because my parents were really supportive of me, and were proud of all my accomplishments. I am the first college graduate in my family, and my father is constantly bragging about my accomplishments. It means a lot to me to know that they are proud of me. I find that my experiences have kept me open-minded and patient with others from a variety of different backgrounds and circumstances. I'm not saying that only folks from different cultures are open-minded; however, for me I find that these experiences have only helped me.

It became clear early in the panels that in spite of some shared experiences, there were differences among immigrant students just as there are within any group of people. The panel grew into a nuanced discussion of the intersectionality of immigration status with class, religion, race, and ethnicity. While some students were privileged by class, parental education, and language, they could still be marginalized by religious affiliation, race, and immigration status. For example, while Hafsa recognizes the privilege she has due to emigrating from an English-speaking, Western country, she also recognizes religious marginalization and erroneous assumptions people make about her country of birth due to her race and name. The recognition of intersectionality enriched the discussions and the growth of self-

awareness experienced by the panelists and the audience.

Audience Emotional Resonance with Immigrant Students

A panelist talked about seeing neighbors, friends, and extended family murdered in a raging and seemingly endless civil war in his birth country. He talked of a hazardous escape and of the long journey to the United States. He talked about the shoulders he stands on and the hope that he carries, but also about the times he felt that his values and those of other students did not match.

A panelist spoke about being privileged in his country of birth and then coming to a new country where people stereotyped him and demeaned him because of his skin color and religion.

A panelist said that he left his country of birth when he was a young child and lost the language. When his family returned to visit, he was seen as not belonging there—he was the *Americano*—but he felt that he did not fit in when he was in the U.S. Where is home?

Stories often contained repeated experience of microaggressions (Sue, 2004) and effectively made the audience aware that unintentional slights can be hurtful; that the issue is the consequence of an act, not the intent. For example, a few immigrant students new to the English language felt that other students did not direct as many comments or questions to them because they did not want to deal with the immigrant student's accent or pace of figuring out an English response. The immigrant students questioned whether what they perceived as being ignored was simply that the other students were engaged in a discussion together or whether the immigrant student was made invisible. Several U.S. born students reported to MM that they had not been aware that they might be doing just that—not paying attention to the immigrant student whose English may be more halting than their own. They felt surprised, embarrassed, and committed to change.

While not every audience member experienced this movement toward empathy and awareness, many of the privileged members of the audience heard the stories without getting defensive because each story is personal so listeners could empathically resonate with the speakers. Some audience members from non-immigrant families had not considered the difference in experience between their immigrant classmates and themselves or noted the strengths and resilience of their classmates. One student sheepishly reported to MM her initial surprise that the parents of one of the panelists were highly educated and economically secure professionals since the non-immigrant student had made the assumption that immigration occurs only for economic reasons. Other students were shocked that some of their classmates had been speaking English for only a few years but yet were able to write papers in the adopted language. For a number of students, this was the first time they thought of language and accent in terms of privilege and marginalization. For others, it was the first time that they thought of privilege and marginalization at all.

Administrative commitment to addressing diversity and to utilizing Student Voices as part of that process was highlighted two years ago when the college President was inaugurated. The President could have chosen any activities for that day, and he decided to hold two Student Voices panels as inaugural day activities. Students, faculty, administration, and trustees were invited to the events. The panels were addressed immigration and on race. The Student Voices about Race panel involved black, Latino, Mideastern, Asian, and white students and was co-facilitated by a black, male professor and the first author. Students spoke together across difference as they discussed privilege and marginalization, and this process was given critical administrative support.

There are still challenges ahead. The time slots for panels and other campus wide activities make it hard to process the panels in small groups

afterwards, and we need to revisit that issue. We also need to find a way to reach more students and faculty given the many events, commitments, and time demands, especially on a campus where so many of the students need to work in addition to attending school full-time.

Research

The interest in the panels made us (MV, MR, MM) wonder how a larger range of students who may not have attended the panels understood the immigration experience. Since research is so fundamental to psychology education, the logical next step became to teach students how to do research that could continue to promote learning about diversity. Immigrant students, non-immigrant students, and their professor (MM) developed surveys about the immigrant college student experience based on themes raised in the panel as well as in previous research (e.g. Falicov, 1998, 2005; Llerena-Quinn & Mirkin, 2005; Mirkin & Kanya, 2008; Szapocznik, Rio, Perez, & Kurtines, W., 1986; Tseng, 2004). The goals of the research were to see how a broader range of immigrant students and children of immigrants view the immigrant experience, learn how students from non-immigrant families understand the immigrant student experience, develop further panels using information from the research, and develop further research using the information from the panels. Results informed questions that would be asked at the next panel and the panels informed questions that would be included in future surveys. As of this writing, a second survey has been developed based on revisions from the Voices panels and the new results have been evaluated and presented.

Since the survey was given to a number of non-immigrant students, and the results were shared during the end of semester school-wide symposium of student work, the research served as an educational experience about diversity for many students and faculty rather than only for those

conducting the research and panels.

Because the research team members had attended or been panelists at Student Voices, they were more eager to read empirical, scholarly articles since the readings connected with their personal experiences:

Mabel: It was very exciting for me to conduct this research because I was learning about myself and about how I could help others be more conscious about immigration. At Symposium, other students were interested in my culture and asked me questions that I never realized had interested them. I feel that I taught the community to empathize with others without being prejudiced.

Merryl: The role that I had in this research project was different than others since I was the only student who was born in the U.S. and was part of the dominant culture. To be able to participate in this project I had to be very open-minded and have a great interest in learning from others. Through my readings about immigration that I did as a member of the research team, I gained a much greater understanding of what it must be like for someone to have to leave the comfort of home, culture, language, friends, and even family in hopes of a better life. Some shocking statistics I learned were that 85% of children emigrate without at least one of their parents and 49% emigrate without either one of their parents due to separation during the immigration process (Suarez-Orozco, Todorova, & Louie, 2002). I was surprised to learn that many immigrants who were doctors, lawyers and other professionals were unable to maintain these jobs after they moved to the US because their degrees and licenses weren't accepted in the U.S. In addition, it is very difficult to afford to go back to school to get another degree or license. Therefore, many immigrants are forced to work at jobs for which they are overqualified. I am grateful for the experience and the ability to hear so many life changing stories. One important role I played in this project was to absorb the information that I was given and then internalize it and work to be able to share what I had learned with others.

Iván: I think the fact that the topic is related to me at such a personal level made it more

interesting to conduct the research. The process was even more pleasant because I had the opportunity to do the investigations with other individuals who demonstrated interest in the topic. I learned a lot from the process. In particular, I learned more about myself and how other immigrants' experiences were much like mine and how they differed.

While our results indicated that there were significant differences on several issues between how immigrant/child of immigrant and non-immigrant students understood the immigrant student experience, a number of results showed no differences. Thus, our research offered further insights into the complex patterns of student beliefs and experience and guided our development of further panels. Understanding limitations in the scope of this small-scale research project also helped the student researchers learn how to approach research critically. Further, students' participation in and exposure to the research initiative helped to generate interest for follow-up classroom activities. A major limitation of the studies was that they did not include a qualitative component. To more fully understand the nuances of the immigrant experience, it would be useful to also interview both immigrant and non-immigrant students based on themes that emerged from both Student Voices and the survey results.

Integrating Diversity Themes into Courses

Since several classes were required to attend the Student Voices panels and many students participated in the survey, the school-wide events could be followed up with classroom discussions, exercises and projects about diversity sensitivity and awareness. The following can serve as excellent tools for opening up more emotionally rich discussions of diversity in a range of courses: Jodie Kliman's matrix (see article in this *Monograph*), Hardy & Lazloffy's (1995) cultural genogram and Mirkin

and Geib's (1999) star diagram. Each of these exercises offer students the opportunity to develop and integrate a deeper understanding of one's own culture, identities, privilege, and marginalization and to develop greater cultural awareness and sensitivity through self-exploration as well as listening to the stories shared by classmates.

Further out-of-class encounters to develop cultural sensitivity and humility can be facilitated by getting students involved in programs and follow-up discussions that expose them to contact with groups and situations unfamiliar to many, if not most, of the students. A valuable project developed by Professor Jenifer Drew (personal communication) offers students an opportunity to tutor campus service employees who are trying to learn and practice English. The project is contextualized by learning how few openings there are in English Language Learner classes (formerly known as ESL) and that many employees work two jobs and cannot afford time off for classes. Internships tied to on-campus seminars also offer many opportunities to process issues that arise in the field through the lens of cultural awareness and sensitivity. The seminar professor is encouraged to help students develop more nuanced alternatives to the dominant and pathologizing story about individuals and families they encounter at their internships. For example, a student intern's initial report that a particular mother "just doesn't care about her son's school problems" was reconstructed in class as "a low income single mother who has to be at work by 8:30 am or loses the day's pay said she could not come to a 9 a.m. meeting so the school needs more flexibility in offering meeting times; however, the teacher is also a single mother who needs to get home to her own children after school. So, how do we understand the conflict?"

Assignments that involve careful reflection offer further opportunities to develop cultural sensitivity and humility. These projects can range from those that are emotionally difficult (e.g. viewing testimony of women who were raped and became

pregnant during the Rwandan genocide and the link to issues around gender and conflict) to others that are lighter but still impactful (e.g. going to a greeting card store and noting gender, sexuality, race, and religious privilege based on what cards are available and what they say).

Speakers, readings, and films can promote cultural sensitivity and humility. Speakers who tell powerful stories related to diversity and the experience of non-dominant groups as well as stories of privilege and becoming allies can be invited to school-wide events and classes that are not designated as diversity courses. Film is also an important tool that can be powerful in helping students to explore and challenge assumptions and promote useful dialogue (Bacigalupe, 2009; Mock, 2008). We also suggest that professors integrate readings about diversity into all courses. It is often easier for people to recognize their marginalized identities than their privileged ones, so readings, reflection papers, and class discussion needs to look at intersectionality of privilege, and oppression without ignoring privilege (cf. Ayvasian & Tatum, 1995).

Even the simple technique of including non-dominant names on tests and assignments can contribute to diversity awareness. For example, the question is constructed about a man named Diego, a woman named Ye, men named Yusef and Yosef, etc. One word of caution is to be careful not to stereotype when linking a name to a situation (e.g. Ye does not have to be an outstanding student).

Conclusion

To teach diversity through a lens of cultural sensitivity and humility requires that professors and students not only be exposed to the content area but also to the emotional experiences that help develop both self awareness and empathy. This requires professors to be curious about our students' experiences, willing to non-defensively develop our own self-awareness, able to hold ourselves and be held accountable for what we say and

for what we do not say, open to listening fully to stories that may not match what we had been taught, and creative about finding ways to engage students in experiential activities and hard discussions while maintaining a self-critical eye and feedback loop to keep us from abusing our own power in the classroom. Students can develop this sensitivity and humility as they hear and emotionally resonate with each other's stories, explore their own matrix of dominance and marginalization, and utilize opportunities to self-reflect.

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Authors after presenting their Student Voices Panel and research at the New England Center for Inclusive Teaching Conference:
 Top left to right: Mabel Valenzuela, Marsha Mirkin, Merryl Raubeson
 Bottom left to right: Hafsa Lewish, Marian Salama, Iván González

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Intersections of Social Privilege and Marginalization: A Visual Teaching Tool

Jodie Kliman, Ph.D.

Introduction

This article introduces a visual tool to help students and professionals explore the influences of multiple, intersecting domains of social privilege and marginalization in their personal and professional relationships. It highlights overlooked or minimized differences in relative power and privilege in familial, therapeutic, and supervisory relationships, arousing curiosity about the effects of those differences. It is a consciousness-raising tool to inform students' clinical work, rather than an instrument to use directly with clients, and is intended to draw students' attention to how sharing different areas of relative privilege and marginalization with each member of a client family can influence one's perceptions and actions with the family as a whole (Falicov, 1995; Hardy & Laszloffy, 2002; Kliman, 2005).

We all have domains in which we are privileged. Readers of this *Monograph* have educational privilege, even if they are marginalized in other realms of identity. It is easy to notice or assume another's greater power or privilege and to see the effects of that differential on our relationship with him or her. We less often notice how we draw on and perform our own domains of privilege in relation to others (McGoldrick & Hardy, 2008; Mirkin, Suyemoto & Okun, 2005). This tool stimulates thinking about how having more privilege than our clients can influence our work with and assumptions about them and their possible assumptions about us. It also helps us consider our experiences of having less privilege than clients in some domains, thus limiting attendant shame, resentment, or confusion (Hardy & Laszloffy, 1995; Kliman, 1994).

The graphic at the heart of this model (see Figure 1) is "Intersecting Domains of Privilege and Marginalization: Locating Oneself in a Social Matrix," (Kliman, with Bedoya & DiChiara, 2008), or, more simply, "the social matrix." Mapping subjective understandings of complex intersections of difference between one's own and one's client families, and within each family, helps clarify misunderstandings, limit unintentional performances of privilege or subjugation, and strengthen points of connection. It can be used to deconstruct assumptions and blind spots, helping move interactions in family therapy and supervision out of "stuck" places and into growthful dialogue (Hardy & Laszloffy, 2002; Kliman, 2005; McGoldrick & Hardy, 2008).

A Visual Tool for Locating Family Members in a Social Matrix

It is no small challenge to render the complex interactions of family members and their respective social memberships accessible to doctoral students who are new both to systems thinking and to a social justice approach to clinical work. Earlier, I likened multiple aspects of identity and belonging (e.g., social class, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation) to kaleidoscopically overlapping lenses, with each lens ground by one aspect of social location (Kliman, 1994). I also invoked layered anatomical transparencies in which the respiratory, nervous, muscular, vascular, and other systems all provide context for one another. However, these metaphors fully captured neither the importance of power differentials in relationships nor the layered complexity of how each family member makes sense of those differentials. I moved toward a radial visual model depict-

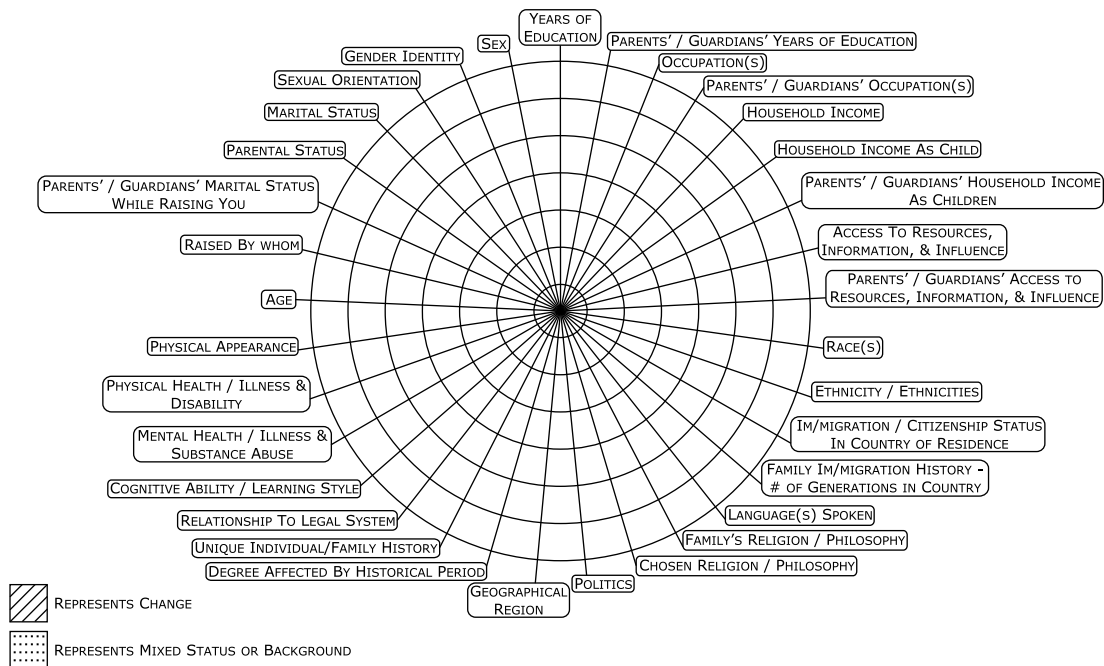
ing those differences, in relation to each other, in an effort to replace the dominant hierarchical language of higher and lower, better and worse (see figure 1) with one of centrality or lack thereof, and so as to relate different domains to each other.

At first, my students protested that they could not think about so many variables at once -- wasn't it enough to keep track of several people yelling, crying, or sulking, at the same time? It is, of course, impossible to consider simultaneously all the domains proposed here. However, the social matrix figure provided them a way to: a) remember there are always more domains than those they consider; b) easily check back in on domains forgotten or put aside; c) remember they don't know the experiences of or meanings that family members make in any of those domains; and d) consider that family members often don't know each other's experiences of or meanings for those domains, because their social locations overlap but are not identical.

The social matrix figure has several functions. First, it depicts the multiplicity of overlapping social identities and memberships, including aspects of identity that are not salient to any or all parties in a relationship. Second, it stimulates curiosity about the particular meanings those aspects may have for each family member, in the context of their overlapping but distinct circumstances, histories, and cultural narratives. Third, it illuminates the combined influences of many domains of social membership: one's race can enhance or limit class privilege, while sexual orientation does so for gender privilege, all three affect health, and vice-versa.

Fourth, it portrays each domain (or axis in the matrix) of social membership as a continuum from power and privilege (at the center) to subjugation and marginalization (at the outer margin, or outermost concentric circle). With many domains at play, family members cannot share identical social locations with each other, let alone with their therapist. Thus, *all* family therapy involves differ-

Figure 1: Blank Template for the Social Matrix



ences in privilege and marginalization.

Moreover, because membership in any one social group (say, Chinese immigrants, families of soldiers, or heterosexuals) means living in relationship to many competing discourses of power and subjugation constructed by and about that group (Hare-Mustin, 1994; Kliman, 2005), the meanings of that membership cannot be predicted or assumed. This complexity calls for therapists to take a not-knowing stance of respectful, collaborative curiosity. Even if we share an identity like immigration history or sexual orientation with members of a client family, we can't assume we understand their experience. This continuum is depicted in a radial, rather than vertical fashion, focusing on centrality or lack thereof, rather than relying on the top-down or better-than/less-than hierarchies often seen in the portrayal of power and subjugation in dominant discourse (as in upper, middle, and lower classes).

Fifth, the graphic is intended to give a rough sense of different people's *overall* relative privilege or marginalization, which is missed when we focus on only one or two particularly salient domains. The matrix has 33 axes, each representing a domain of social identity or group membership. Some axes cluster into related meta-domains (e.g., one's own educational and income levels with one's parents', or one's citizenship status with one's family immigration history, ethnicity, and language). These axes are overlaid with seven concentric circles representing degrees of centrality (privilege) or proximity to the margins (marginalization).

The intersection of each axis by these circles provides a 7-point Likert-like continuum of relative privilege, with decreasing privilege toward the outer margins. One depicts overall relative privilege or marginalization by choosing a location on each domain axis and then literally connecting the dots between the axes, forming a

Figure 2: Mother's Social Matrix

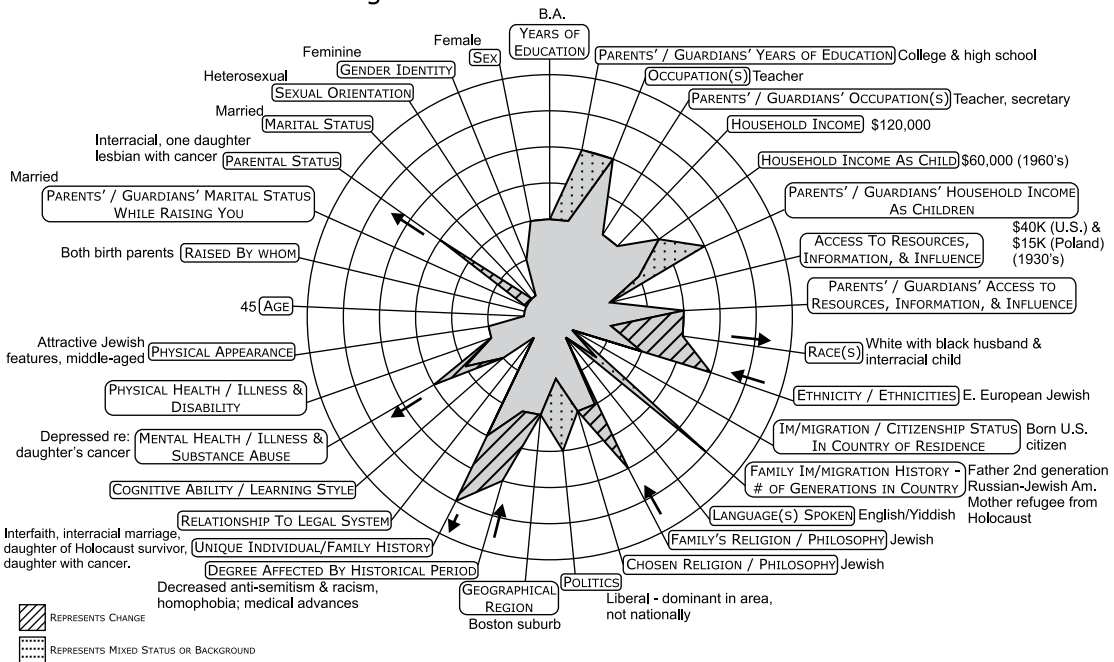
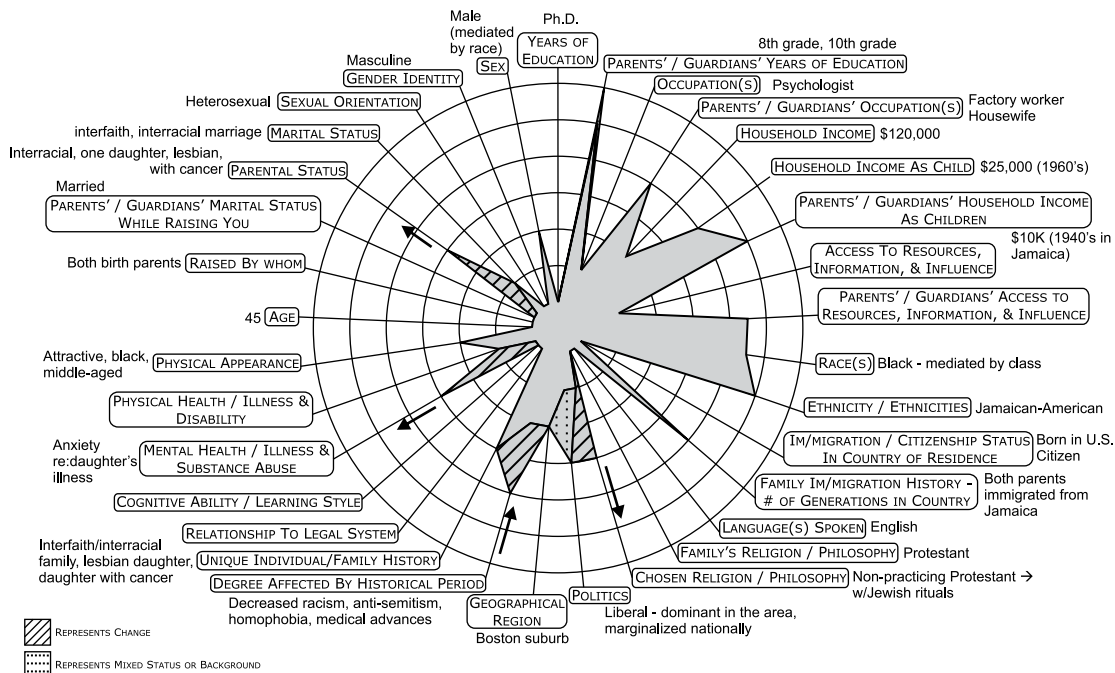


Figure 3: Father's Social Matrix



complex polygon, which is shaded in. The bigger the polygon's volume, the greater the marginalization; the less area is filled in, the greater the overall privilege.

For example, in the domain of years of education, Mother's BA places her at the third circle from the center, with a score of 3 (see Figure 2). Father's Ph.D. gives him a score of 1, at the innermost circle (see Figure 3). Their daughter's two years of college gives her a score of 4, while an eighth-grade dropout would score at 7, at the outer margins. In a different domain of identity and membership, Father, the son of two immigrants, scores 6 on family immigration history, while Mother, whose parent are an immigrant and a native-born American, scores 5. The couple's daughter, the grandchild and great-grandchild of immigrants, is located at the third circle from the center, with more privilege in this domain than either parent.

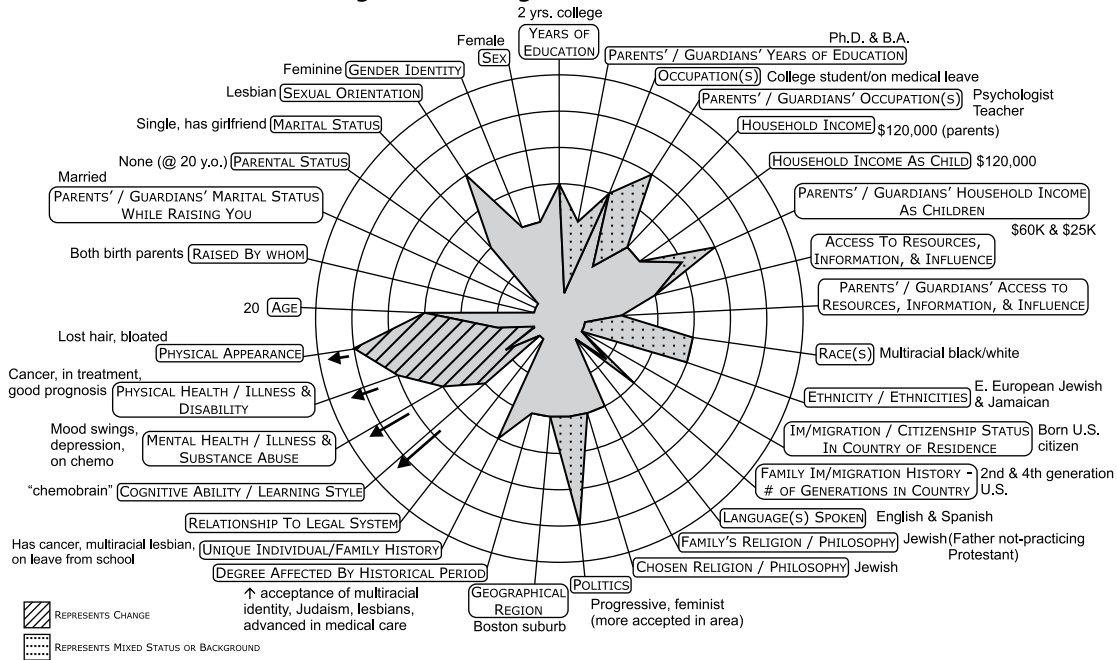
The matrix comes with instructions which,

being too long to include here, can be accessed elsewhere, along with copies of the blank matrix template.¹ The instructions for filling out the matrix figure are unambiguous for some matrices (e.g., years of education), and altogether subjective for others, such as race, ethnicity, religion, health, sexual orientation, and degree affected by one's historical period. Although this subjectivity presents research challenges, it invites student therapists to question assumptions they might have about where their clients would place themselves on the matrix and how their clients would see them. I hope in the future to study how therapists and all the members of their client families view their own and each other's social locations and to explore the meanings they make of those different perceptions.

The previous three matrices and the two that

1 To receive detailed instructions for filling out the matrix figure, along with blank matrices and information regarding training uses of the matrix, contact the author at jodie_kliman@mspp.edu.

Figure 4: Daughter's Social Matrix



follow offer a multiplex comparison of the social locations of three members of a (composite) client family, their (highly disguised) therapist (see Figure 5), and myself, as their therapist's supervisor (see Figure 6). These figures allow the therapist and supervisor to "eyeball" what they think might involve patterns of greater or lesser overall privilege as well as specific areas that may be particularly relevant to the work, with the understanding that they cannot know the family members' actual experience. (I have filled out all the matrices as if I knew the other four players' subjective experience of privilege and marginalization, a liberty I can take only with composite, rather than actual people.) A quick scan of each of the matrix figures shows areas of significant marginalization for each player in the family therapy system and in the supervisory dyad, but those areas differ from person to person. For instance, Father, a Jamaican-American black man, has the least racial privilege, his daughter, a biracial American and his therapist, a phenotypically white Argentinian immigrant,

have somewhat more racial privilege, and mother and supervisor, both white Jewish Americans, have the most. Daughter alone is marginalized by sexual orientation (as a lesbian) and by her health (as someone living with cancer). Therapist, the only immigrant and the only person to have English as a second language, is the most marginalized on family immigration history and language. All these differences, among others, and the relationships among them become more salient to the therapist when visually depicted.

Families often seek treatment because they are contending with the effects of change in their lives, including transitions they have might not considered important enough to mention in therapy. Therefore, the matrix highlights changes in privilege in any domain and the effects of those changes on other domains. Striations from the original point to the new point for a particular domain's axis mark the degree of change and arrows indicate the direction of change.

Figure 5: Therapist's Social Matrix

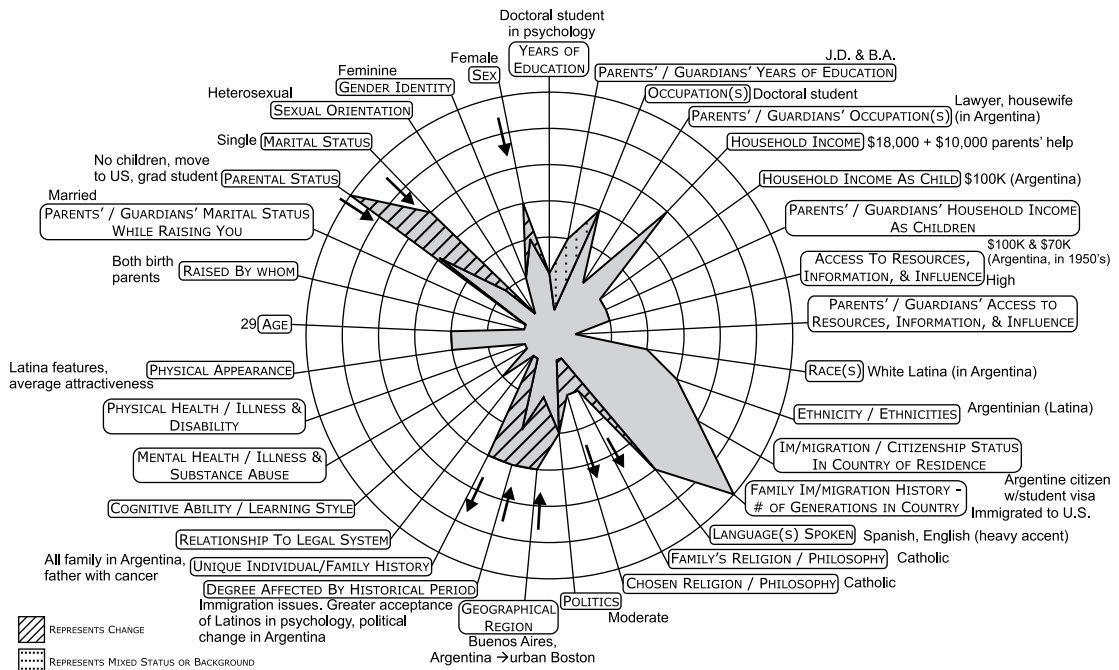
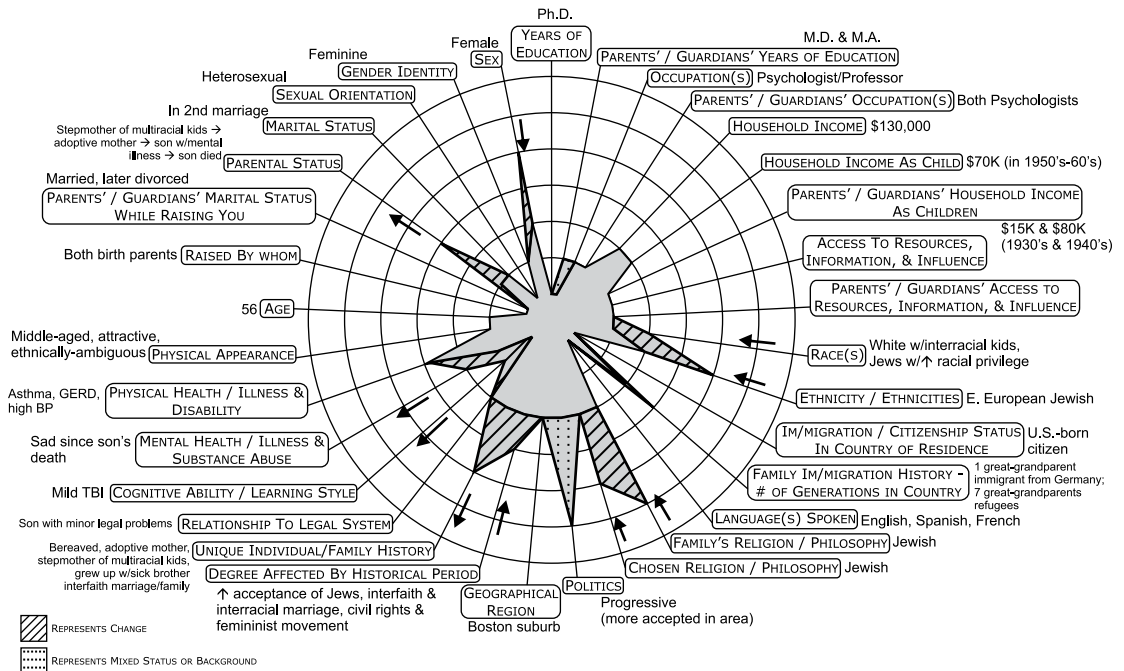


Figure 6: Supervisor's Social Matrix



For instance, outward-pointing arrows depict how Therapist's racial, ethnic, and linguistic privilege decreased on immigration, while inward-pointing arrows show that immigration lessened her marginalization as a single, childless woman of 29. Daughter's physical appearance, mood, and cognitive ability changed dramatically with her cancer diagnosis and treatment, as did her parents' standing as parents of a sick, rather than healthy, child. Similarly, Mother's and Supervisor's matrices reflect decreased religious and ethnic marginalization as Jews in their lifetimes, while Father's matrix shows that although he has a PhD, he grew up with less educational privilege than the others, as his parents had 8th and 10th grade educations. These changes, invisible at the moment of therapy, can have enormous implications in family and therapeutic relationships.

The matrix figure also allows the user to explore the meanings of a mixed or complex social membership in any domain. For instance, flecked areas for ethnicity and race point to Daughter's mixed Jamaican/Jewish and black/white history; we only know her *experienced* identity, however, if we ask. Similarly, her mixed class background becomes clearer when we see that her mother grew up on \$60,000 a year, while her father grew up with \$25,000 annually.

Using the Social Matrix in Supervision and Training

In supervision and academic or postgraduate clinical training, the matrix can help trainees to think more carefully about how their social locations and those of their client families may shape their perceptions of each other's behaviors, motives, and values. In turn, this may allow engagement in dialogues that open up new possibilities for respectful collaboration with families.

Supervision

Therapists' assumptions about the importance or meaning of their clients' identities do

not necessarily match their clients' lived experience of their social identities. Even family members' assumptions often diverge from each other's lived experience, separated by differences in their social memberships and identities and the meanings they make of them. These differences often lead to misunderstandings within families and between family and therapist (Kliman, 1994, 2005, in press).

In the composite family therapy and supervision constellation shown in Figures 2-6, the matrix helps in exploring a number of important domains of difference. The crisis precipitating therapy, Daughter's cancer, involves not only health and mortality, but also meaning-making and communicational style. The Therapist, an intern at the cancer treatment center, describes Mother as overly demanding of the doctors and as needlessly catastrophizing about mortality. The intern believes that less "pushiness" with the doctors and more prayer could soothe Mother, allow the doctors do their work, and create less stress for Daughter. Mother thinks that Therapist has no idea what it's like to fear for a child's life and, feeling both urgent and dismissed, intensifies her advocacy. Father is somewhat more optimistic and much less insistent than Mother about Daughter's health, but he also is offended by Therapist's telling his wife to step back.

In supervision, I asked my supervisee to fill out the matrix for herself and her client family, using her best subjective judgment, so that she might explore why she found herself butting heads with her young client's parents. I already had filled out my own matrix as a player in the therapeutic system. As a bereaved mother myself, I wondered aloud if Therapist, being childless and having had no major losses, resonates with what it means to have a child with a potentially fatal illness; she realized she did not. Attending to this important difference in parental status and personal history allowed her to move into a not-knowing stance and to validate the legitimacy of Mother's worries.

This was a key first step in improving her faltering relationship with the family. Then, we began to explore how culture played a part in her dilemma with the family.

She learned that Mother's paternal grandparents lost a child and many other relatives during the Holocaust and that her father had raised her to see the world as a dangerous place in which she must do *anything it takes* to protect her family. She learned that Mother had grown up experiencing her father's bitterness toward God for having abandoned his family; she began to see how her own comfort with Catholicism's intercessory prayer could be a poor fit for Mother. As a fair-skinned Argentinian immigrant, she learned that Father's Jamaican family had quickly discovered that problems arise for black men in America who make demands. Father wanted the doctors' best efforts no less than Mother did, but he believed that his daughter was likely to get better treatment if he did not push them. His wife was not similarly constrained. Therapist's respect and appreciation for the parents grew with this recognition, as did her alliance with them.

Using the Matrix in Academic Settings

For some years, I have used several iterations of the social matrix tool as the basis of a midterm paper in an introductory doctoral-level class in family and systems theory. Students start by filling in a blank template for themselves, each member of their immediate families of origin, and each member of a client family (or the family of an individual client). They are required to hand in the matrices for themselves and for their client families; while they must write about a comparison of the two families, handing in the actual matrices for members of their own families of origin is optional.

I do not ask them to fill out the matrices with their clients or to ask clients about domains they wouldn't otherwise explore; I consider it unethical to ask them to change what they are doing in

therapy in order to write a paper. However, I do ask them to speculate in writing about domains of identity and privilege that may have been misperceived or neglected in their thinking (leaving those domains blank or showing guesses punctuated with question marks). If working on the paper leads them to decide it would be useful to ask, for instance, about immigration history or class background in order to be a better informed helper to a family, then that is a great outcome. More often than not, it does.

Students then write a paper placing their own families' narratives and their clients' family narratives about "healthy" or "appropriate" family life in the context of the dimensions of privilege, or lack thereof, based upon what they notice in the matrices. I also ask them to think about how intrafamilial differences in privilege and marginalization influence family interactions and meaning-making and their own perceptions of both. They then consider how assumptions based on contrasts and similarities between the two families might have contributed misunderstandings, discomfort, or "stuckness" in their work and discuss what they have learned in writing the paper.

In the process of doing this exploration of their own social location in relation to client locations, new understandings of the clinical work emerge. For instance, a gay white student from a liberal, professional family initially pathologizes his male client's family for excluding his client's partner from family and social events. He encourages his client to distance himself from his family and doesn't understand why his client, hurt as he is, is reluctant to do so. The therapist begins to rethink his stance when he considers his client's working-class Puerto Rican parentage; he learns of their evangelical beliefs that their beloved son's soul will be eternally damned and that they themselves will be rejected by the religious community at the center of their lives if they accept what they see as a willful choice. Moreover, as he begins to learn about *familismo*, in which family comes above

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all other concerns, he better understands his client's torn loyalty between his partner and college friends on the one hand and his cherished family, religious, and cultural upbringing on the other.

Another student rethinks her assumption that, like herself, her teenage client would view her adoptive status as most salient to her identity. Remembering her own teens, the therapist assumed that conflict over being adopted fully explains the girl's "low self-esteem" and sexual acting out. She discovers, however, that for the girl, the impact of adoption is vastly outweighed by her experience being a short, dark-skinned Guatemalan Indian, raised in a tall, white, Irish-American family and attending a mostly white school. As the therapist explores the meaning of race to the family, it becomes clear that the teen's sexual adventures relate to internalized racist stereotypes about what it means to be a Latina girl. Now she can begin to work with the girl and her family to counter those oppressive narratives and help her find a more positive way to live as a Latina girl in a white community.

Finally, students who experience themselves as marginalized by virtue of their race, language, religion, class background, or sexual orientation, among others, often find this matrix exercise allows them to move away from shamed silence when clients act upon their social privilege in the therapy relationship. When the students experience racial or sexual stereotypes or corrections of their English, understanding these behaviors as related to domains of privilege can be freeing, allowing the students to "speak truth to power."

This brief essay is an introduction to a flexible and adaptable teaching tool, which has more uses than can be addressed in this space. I have used it in training exercises with predoctoral psychology interns and mental health professionals and in lectures to public health students to stimulate thinking about the intersectionality of public health risks and outcomes. It has many research

possibilities as well, some of which I am exploring with my colleague, Andres Bedoya. My hope is that others will also use the tool in research as well as in training.

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Doing Family: Decentering Heteronormativity in “Marriage” and “Family” Therapy

Jacqueline Hudak, M.Ed., Ph.D., and Shawn V. Giammattei, Ph.D.

Introduction

What would family therapy teaching and training look like if we were to deconstruct the core concept of “*family*?” In this essay, we begin that conversation by addressing the issue of heteronormativity and the profound impact it has upon the ways we think about and legitimize relationships.

The words “marriage” and “family,” the nomenclature of our profession, are central to some of the most fiercely debated issues of our time. Despite the increased visibility of gay men and lesbian women, and the increasingly younger ages at which youth “come out” (Savin-Williams, 2005; Tanner & Lyness, 2003), there remains no definition of “family” in the public consciousness that refers to same-sex couples with children. In fact, in the not too distant past, the notions of lesbian mother, gay father or lesbian/gay family would have been nonexistent and the constitutive terms seen as mutually exclusive. We are further challenged to incorporate the discourses of a younger generation that refuses to define itself within the binary construction of sexual identity and chooses instead to live out narratives of queerness, heteroflexibility, ambisexuality (Morris, 2006; Savin-Williams, 2005). Current research (Diamond, 2008a, 2008b) compels us to incorporate the idea of sexual fluidity into our thinking about life trajectories.

In contrast to these cultural shifts, our field continues to engage in heteronormative discourses seen clearly, for example, by the frequency with which the language of “marriage,” “couple” and “family” is used in theory, training, and conference plenaries without naming heterosexuality. As postmodern theorists have posited, attention must

be given to the importance of cultural discourses and language as they shape and impact the conception of both reality and legitimacy (Bruner, 2002; Flax, 1990, Harding 1990; Lather, 1992; Hare-Mustin, 1994, 2004). What is silenced or left unsaid is of tremendous consequence. As Rachel Hare-Mustin (1994) stated, “We do not only use language, it uses us. Language is recursive: it provides the categories in which we think” (p. 22).

This silence around heterosexuality maintains it as the default position, a position of dominance and superiority. For example, the descriptive terms “couple” or “family” refer to heterosexual couples or heterosexual families. Couples and families who are “gay” or “lesbian” have to be named as such because otherwise they are invisible. Within these heteronormative discourses, heterosexuality and heterosexual forms of relating are considered the norm. This maintains the illusion that only LGBT individuals have a sexual orientation and that it is unnecessary to examine the development of *heterosexuality*.

As post-modern, feminist family therapists, we begin by situating ourselves in relation to this work. I (Jacqueline), one of the authors, am a second generation, European-American, middle-class woman who has practiced and taught family therapy since the early 1990’s, always with a focus on issues of gender, power, diversity and social justice. I was in a heterosexual marriage for thirteen years and am the mother of two children. In my mid-forties, I divorced and became partnered with a woman, necessitating that I “come out” to my children, family, and community.

I (Shawn), the other author, am a second generation Italian-American, upper middle-class

married man who has practiced family therapy since 2000. I have been teaching family therapy and specifically about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues in therapy since 2002. Similar to Jacqueline's, my work always has a focus on gender, power, diversity, community, and social justice. I have identified with the LGBT community since I was very young, but have spent many years trying to be "normal and straight" for my family. I have had long-term, significant relationships over the years with people of different genders.

If pushed to choose a category, each of us would identify as queer because that best represents the fluidity of our life trajectories and who we are today.

Heteronormativity

We contend that heteronormativity, defined as the dominant and pervasive belief that a viable family consists of a heterosexual mother and father raising heterosexual children together (Garrison, 2000), is an organizing principle that shapes and constrains family therapy theory, practice, research and training. Perlesz, Brown, Lindsay, McNair, deVaus and Pitts (2006) make the following distinction between it and heterosexism: "We have defined heteronormativity as the uncritical adoption of heterosexuality as an established norm or standard. Heterosexism is the system by which heterosexuality is assumed to be the only acceptable and viable life option and hence to be superior, more natural and dominant" (p. 183). Aptly described by Oswald, Blume and Marks (2005) as a "vast matrix of cultural beliefs, rules, rewards, privileges and sanctions" (p. 144), heteronormativity is buttressed by claims about what is considered "normal" and "healthy" for individuals, couples and families.

Heteronormativity sustains the dominant norm of heterosexuality by rendering marginal any relational structure that falls outside of this "norm." Further, heteronormativity renders the diversity of human sexuality and identities invisible. This

invisibility is marked by the fact that there is limited language to describe sexual minority experience and identities within dominant discourses. This creates a category of "other" in our culture, which is rendered invalid or pathological. What little language there is often creates false binary systems that are inaccurate representations of the actual lived experiences of many individuals. Given this lack of language, we often are left with the antiquated and imprecise categories of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT).

The heteronormative presumption, that everyone is heterosexual unless proven otherwise, is best expressed by the concept of "the closet," a metaphor for keeping one's sexual orientation and/or gender or sexual identity a secret. Sedgwick (1990) referred to "the closet" as "the defining structure for gay oppression in this century" (p. 71). Kenji Yoshino (2006) described it beautifully: "It was impossible to come out and be done with it, as each new person erected a new closet around me" (pp. 16-17).

Gender, Sexuality and Family

Intrinsic to heteronormative assumptions are ideas about "correct" or "normal" gender, sexuality, and family. Oswald, Blume and Marks (2005) point out that it is the combination of these three structural components that constitute heteronormativity as a system of privilege. Oswald et al. state: "Heteronormativity entails a convergence of at least three binary opposites: "real" males and "real" females versus gender "deviants," "natural" sexuality versus "unnatural" sexuality, and "genuine" families versus "pseudo" families" (p. 144). The construction of binary opposites creates the illusion of an actual boundary between various genders and identities and privileges one side over the other. Gender, sexuality and family are intrinsically linked, and as Oswald et al. state: "Doing sexuality and doing family properly are inseparable from doing gender properly" (p. 144). All of the markers of adulthood--dating, marriage,

and parenting—are traditionally tied to heterosexuality. Adult competencies associated with heterosexuality are distributed on the basis of gender (Spaulding, 1999). Achieving mature adult status is most commonly measured by milestones that are linked to traditional heterosexual gender roles and behaviors.

The transformative use of gender as a verb is worth noting, as it was important in breaking down essentialist and binary assumptions about masculinity and femininity. Queer theorist Judith Butler (1990) introduced the notion of gender as an act or performance rather than a quality intrinsic to one's inherent nature. In this paradigm, gender is what you do at particular times, rather than a universal of who you are. Historically it was believed that people were 'inherently' male or female, gay or straight, and each of these was dichotomously opposed to its counterpart (Fausto-Sterling, 2000). This essentialist narrative of gender and sexuality continues to be a powerful and privileged narrative in our culture (Fausto-Sterling, 2000; Laird, 2003).

Sexual Minority Status

Dominant definitions of relationship and family have historically not included "sexual minorities." While gay men and lesbians are more visible in the family therapy literature, they still occupy the status of members in a minority group. Although it is not within the scope of this article to deal with all aspects of identity politics for LGBT families, certain facets of that politic are governed by heteronormative assumptions. The positioning of LGBT people as a minority group is one of the fixtures of heteronormative culture and thus merits further attention.

It is important to acknowledge the significant gains and scholarship in the field of marriage and family therapy regarding the inclusion of gay and lesbian couples and families in the literature. Since the publication of reviews that documented the omission of gay and lesbian issues in the marriage

and family therapy field (Allen & Demo, 1995; Clark & Serovich, 1997), there has been a growing body of work that depicts living outside of the bounds of heterosexuality (see, for example, Green, 2000; Green & Mitchell, 2008; Greenan & Tunnel 2003; Laird, 1999; Laird & Green, 1996; LaSala, 2000). In 2000, a special section of the *Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy* was devoted to lesbian, gay and bisexual issues in family therapy, and in 2006, an issue of the *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* was devoted exclusively to lesbian families. Lev (2004) documented the gender revolution that was underway; her work upended essentialist notions of gender and expanded possibilities about what could be understood as "normal" and "healthy." Despite this forward movement, however, the literature and training in the field of family therapy is still primarily situated in the paradigm that privileges heterosexuality.

Fortunately, we can begin to imagine a more expansive view of relational health not linked exclusively to heterosexuality and traditional gender roles. For example, Knudson-Martin and Laughlin (2005) call for the development of new models of health and normalcy that are based on relational equality rather than gender. Stone-Fish and Harvey (2005) urge family therapists to attempt to develop family environments that actually nurture queerness.

Queering Family Therapy

Critiques from postmodern and queer theory challenge the construction of sexualities in general (Foucault, 1981; Langdrige & Moon, 2008; McPhail, 2004; Seidman, 1996; Warner, 1993). They assert that by not challenging the gender binary, masculinity and femininity are reified and heterosexuality institutionalized. Queer theory suggests that the study of homosexuality should not be about the identity of a sexual minority group but rather about the need to question the social practices that "organize "society" as a whole by sexualizing – heterosexualizing or

homosexualizing – bodies, desires, acts, identities, social relations, knowledges, cultures, [and] institutions’ (Seidman, 1996, pp. 12-13). According to Stone-Fish and Harvey (2005), queer identity belongs to “anyone who violates the basic assumptions of heterosexuality” (p. 27). The field of family therapy has taken a stance of accommodating to or managing non-heterosexuality by helping families to “cope” with a LGBT member (Stone-Fish & Harvey, 2005). This approach is inherently pathologizing as it posits that any non-heterosexual or gender variant family member is something to be “managed.” By not questioning current language, false dichotomies and essentialist views, family therapy colludes with the discourses that, at worst, pathologize the natural variability of human nature, and, at a minimum, render variations invisible. According to Perlesz, Brown, Lindsay, McNair, deVaus and Pitts (2007), a lack of accepted and universally understood terms to describe non-heterosexual family relationships limits family narratives. The experiences of non-heterosexual parents are not included, invalidating both the parents’ relationship and the family as a whole.

How would our language change if we embraced the belief that variation is the norm? What would this render possible when working with families? A true second-order change would not only embrace diversity as normative, but would also uphold the value and beauty of non-heterosexual or gender-variant family members not *in spite of* their identity but because of it. This would be family therapy transformed. This would actually be breaking down the heterosexual core of the idea of “family.” How then might we understand what is unique about families created outside the bounds of heterosexuality, and as a result, how would this inform our work with all families?

“Doing Family:” Family Therapy Transformed

It is helpful to think about a shift in language

that allows family to be considered as a verb, thus enabling us to “do family” (Stiles, 2002). In the same way that Butler (1990) entertained the performative aspects of gender, “family” would be transformed to a more fluid, ambiguous entity that embraces diversity and variation as the norm. The performative aspect of “doing family” entails intentionally committing to add elements of responsibility and caretaking to the bonds of love, which usually embody roles traditionally assigned to kinship networks. Perlesz and colleagues (2006) point out that “doing family” is a counterpoint to the essentialist notions about “the family” as a discrete institution with particular boundaries. It creates possibilities for relating and parenting outside the bounds of heterosexual relationships.

In fact, because non-heterosexual couples and families are not limited to prescribed gender roles, their decisions about who does what in a relationship are often based on what each partner has skills in and /or enjoys, and are more likely to be egalitarian in household chores and childcare (Giammattei, 2007; Green, 2008; Patterson, 1995). Some research suggests that lesbians tend to navigate older age with more resilience, possibly as a result of learning to deal with adversity (Gabbay&Wahler, 2002). Children being raised by lesbian or gay couples are more likely to have two parents who are highly involved in their upbringing and care (Giammattei, 2007; Patterson, 2006). Lesbians and gay men have been found to be more satisfied with their relationships than heterosexual couples (Bigner, 2000; McPherson, 1993; Patterson, 1995). It could also be argued that gay men who have been able to stay together in long, happy relationships while successfully navigating non-monogamy may have something to teach others about surviving sexual encounters that occur outside the primary relationship (LaSala, 2004). As the result of heteronormativity and a lack of openness to any divergence from the heterosexual ideal, these possible advantages are

silenced and obscured, thereby making invisible factors that may actually help couples and families of all orientations and identities become more successful, satisfied, and happy.

Recently researchers have begun to ask questions about what is unique or interesting about non-heterosexual families in and of themselves. In studying the ways in which women allocate work and parenting, Dunne (2000) found that the mothering experiences which lesbian women construct are *qualitatively* different from those in heterosexual co-parenting. Mothering in a lesbian relationship is usually carried out in a context where both mothers receive a great deal of practical and emotional support from their partners, routine domestic responsibilities are shared, and there is a mutual recognition of a woman's right to an identity beyond the home. Without the prescriptive gender divisions of labor, both within and outside of the home, these lesbian co-mothers have greater latitude to operationalize their egalitarian ideals, particularly in relation to parenting. Dunne states:

In their everyday lives of nurturing, housework, and breadwinning, respondents provide viable alternative models for parenting beyond heterosexuality...Their positioning outside conventionality and the similarities they share as women enable and indeed insist upon the redefinition of the meaning and content of motherhood (p. 32).

Perlesz et al. (2007) found that lesbian-headed families often expand the notion of family by creating "families of choice" which might include both immediate and extended biological relatives and social and friendship networks. Thus if "family" is examined from the perspective provided by those who are finding new ways of "doing family," the opportunity will emerge to discover a more expansive way of relating while further deconstructing heteronormative ideas and practices. As Perlesz et al. explain, "Thinking of ourselves and our clients as doing family opens up a greater repertoire for

flexibility, negotiated meanings, fluidity and ambiguity. It acknowledges too that families are in a social time of transition and flux. The families in our study show us that it is not always comfortable living differently. Understanding the tension that arises in attempting to do family within and beyond a heteronormative frame provides a useful starting point for tackling the everyday vicissitudes of family life that bring lesbian, gay and straight families to therapy" (p. 197).

Shifting the Paradigm

We are only just beginning to understand the impact of heteronormative culture and the ways in which it has shaped conceptualizations of normalcy, health, and "legitimate" relationships. How can we begin to deconstruct family and disentangle it from the heteronormative paradigm?

Typically, instruction in family therapy includes the presentation of core theories, (such as structural, strategic, solution focused,) with some integration of the critiques emanating from feminist, postmodern, or social justice approaches. Even with these additional lenses, students of family therapy learn models that implicitly represent a particular kind of family structure: white, heterosexual, middle class, with "add on" components of ethnicity, gender, race, class, and sexual orientation in order to be more inclusive. In this approach, dominant cultural norms about family are the center from which theory and practice derive. One need only look at introductory family therapy texts to find evidence of this fact. The question we then raise is: How does the field move toward a paradigm that celebrates gender and sexual diversity as a norm? We offer some preliminary ideas.

1. Attend to the Use of Language and Name What has been Silenced.

Both the presumption of heterosexuality and the essentialist and binary assumptions about masculinity and femininity can be made much more

explicit in professional discourses. Students can be taught the importance of how language is used and the skill of noticing what goes unnamed. In this way, essentialist notions of gender and of heterosexuality can be removed from their current default positions. We attempt to consistently deconstruct binary notions of gender and do not presume that a “couple” or “family” is heterosexual. Together with students, we practice the simple but very powerful act of naming heterosexuality.

2. Understand the Impact of Heteronormative Culture on Research and Practice.

Many of the past studies of gay and lesbian parents were shaped and constrained by a heteronormative lens. Since lesbian and gay parents were often denied custody of their children on the basis of sexual orientation, the research mandate was set to dispel common myths and assumptions held by most judges. Although maladjustment in children of heterosexual parents would not be an indictment of heterosexuality, the assumption was implicit that symptoms could be attributed to the “harmful” environment of LGBT lesbian and gay family life. It was thus necessary to establish that there was no difference between children raised by lesbian and gay parents when compared to those raised by heterosexual parents (Patterson, 2006; Stacey & Biblarz, 2001; Tasker & Patterson, 2007).

This approach to the study of LGBT families has led to a “normalizing” discourse that has permeated the field. Children of gay and lesbian parents must look like children of heterosexual parents. Gay and lesbian families must be similar to heterosexual families. The discourses of “no difference” and “normalizing” are fundamentally defensive and apologetic. Yoshino (2006) described the mandate for all outsider groups to assimilate to the dominant norm as a “covering” demand, the expectation that how a person’s identity is expressed should conform. For example, one can *be* gay or lesbian, but must still *look*

and act according to the confines of heterosexual norms. According to Yoshino, “the contemporary resistance to gay marriage can be understood as a covering demand: “*Fine, be gay, but don’t shove it in our faces*” (p. 19). Covering, he believes, is the paramount civil rights issue of our time.

Another way to investigate the impact of heteronormativity is to utilize the concept of microaggressions – the brief, commonplace verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities experienced by non-heterosexual families and other marginalized groups. These microaggressions can manifest in a variety of ways that are subtle and unintentional, and can include invisibility, silence, intrusive questioning, and the limitations of language to describe relationship and familial bonds. Developing a clear description of the incidence and impacts of microaggressions could do much to sensitize students to the negative cumulative effects of heteronormativity on LGBT families.

3. Include an Examination of Heterosexual Privilege.

The privileges of a heterosexual lifestyle are vast and can operate in both an overt and covert fashion. For example, people of all sexual orientations have the right to talk about who they are without the necessity of discussing sexual behavior as the central component of their identity. The barrier that many heterosexual people describe as inhibiting their capacity for authentic intimate relationships with LGBT people is their assumption that sexuality will be central to conversation. Heterosexual youth are allowed to talk about their interests, beliefs and relationships without discussing sexual behavior, whereas sexual minority youth do not hold this privilege.

Hudak (2007) points out that the heterosexual part of marriage remains largely detached from any analysis of relationship in the marriage and family therapy literature. This has obfuscated the fact that gender oppression can coexist with heterosexual privilege. Although women may expe-

rience gender oppression within the context of heterosexual marriage, they are simultaneously conferred significant social status and a variety of economic and legal rights and protections based on their partnership with men. Incorporating heterosexual privilege into our analysis of relationship also would foster a deeper understanding of intersectionality. Those whose lives have been marginalized by their gender, race and/or class often fail to recognize their heterosexual privilege and may resist the use of civil rights as a framework for discussing LGBT exclusion. Students could gain the capacity to support conversations that examine the various and complex forms of subjugation and privilege that exist simultaneously and function to shape the lives of families.

Conclusion

We are only beginning to understand the ways in which heteronormativity, the practices and institutions that legitimize and privilege heterosexuality, shape cultural conceptions of health and normalcy. Decentering heteronormativity is a generative process; it creates possibilities for being in the world and in relationship outside the confines of heterosexuality and traditional gender roles. It transforms the notion of “family” as a static entity to a verb that enables us to “do family.” “Doing family” celebrates diversity and variation as the new norm, enhances research questions, and furthers scholarship and social justice.

To decenter heteronormativity, the rules of culture must be suspended – particularly the constraints attached to binary definitions of gender, family and sexual orientation. Indeed, the very ways that Western thought is organized “around a series of dualities, of operations of comparing and contrasting” (Hare-Mustin, 2004, p. 15) maintains the illusion of binaries - male/female, heterosexual/gay, - always subjugating one to the other. To abandon these discourses would mean articulating a challenge to “traditional” family values.

What is the definition of a marriage or a family? Who gets to decide, and for what purpose? Will non-heterosexual couples and families be included in considering current definitions? As family therapists, we are uniquely poised to transform the meanings attached to “marriage” and “family” – to focus on the *quality of relationship* rather than on the gender of a partner or the assumption of particular roles. We have attempted to take a step forward in grappling with these questions, beginning what we hope is a long and fruitful conversation.

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Abstracts

Training in Intersectionality Sensitivity: A Community-Based Collaborative Approach

DeShaunta Johnson, M. Phil., Alba Cabral, Ph.D., Brian Mueller, M. A., Leora Trub, M. Phil., Jason Kruk, M. Phil., Emily Upshur, M. Phil., Laura Elisa Diaz Alarcon, M.A., Letisha Marrero, Ph.D., Tanja Auf der Heyde, M.A., MT-BC, Nate Thoma, M.A., Errol Rodriguez, Ph.D., Gabrielle Cione, B.A., and Peter Fraenkel, Ph.D.

This article describes a community-based, collaborative approach to training in intersectionality sensitivity. In this approach, graduate students in mental health disciplines serve as research and program staff for one or more years in a community-based program for families living in homeless shelters, including a domestic violence shelter, or in a program for first-generation Latino families struggling with challenges following immigration. Through conducting and coding in-depth qualitative interviews, and co-leading multiple family groups, trainees obtain ongoing supervised opportunities for reflection on the impact of their particular social locations on their interactions with multi-stressed, marginalized families. Creating a “community of care” allows students and the supervisor to challenge, support, and learn from each other. The article’s co-authors provide short personal narratives that illustrate how participation in this program has enhanced sensitivity to their particular social locations.

Hearing Student Voices: Developing Diversity Sensitivity and Humility on a College Campus

Marsha Mirkin, Ph.D., Iván González, B.A., Mabel Valenzuela, B.S., Merryl Raubeson, B.S., Hafsa Lewis, B.S., and Marian Salama, B.A.

This article explores methods of teaching diversity on a college campus with an eye toward expanding diversity awareness to include cultural sensitivity and humility and to reach students and faculty who may not be taking or teaching topical courses about diversity. The example of teaching about the immigrant experience is utilized and three interconnected ways of teaching diversity are explored: Development of student panels comprised of immigrant students and children of immigrants who share stories about their own experience with college-wide audiences; utilization of culturally diverse research teams that further explore issues developed at the panels and help guide questions for future panels; and implementation of experiential and affectively-based teaching techniques that are developed for classes not designated as diversity/culture courses. The article demonstrates that story sharing and emotional resonance with personal stories provide opportunities to challenge one’s assumptions, increase self and other awareness and empower individuals and groups who have experienced marginalization.

Working with Affinity: The Journeys of White Students and Students of Color in Anti-racism Courses

Sarah Stearns, Ph.D., and Edith Fraser, Ph.D.

The development of coursework to encourage future clinicians in acquisition of “cultural competency” has raised critical issues about how best to provide an environment which is both supportive and challenging for complex experiential learning. This article reflects on the experiences of

an African-American professor (EF) and a white professor (SS) as they co-taught two parallel sections of a racism course, one for students from the dominant culture and the other for students of color. The authors overview the frameworks of each section, describe student differences in class participation and response to assignments, highlight thematic differences in classroom dialogues, and discuss implications for course design based on their observations. By revealing the importance of intra-cultural group work, based on the significantly different needs of each group, the authors hope to contribute to the discussion in the field on best practices in training clinical students.

Intersections of Social Privilege and Marginalization: A Visual Teaching Tool

Jodie Kliman, Ph.D.

This article introduces a visual tool to help students and professionals explore the influences of multiple, intersecting domains of social privilege and marginalization in relationships. This tool highlights overlooked or minimized differences in relative power and privilege in familial, therapeutic, and supervisory relationships, arousing curiosity about the relational effects of those differences. It can be used to inform students' clinical work and stimulate their thinking about how differentials in relative privilege affect their ability to understand and connect with client families and shape their responses to client families. Several examples illustrate applications of the matrix graphic in supervision and teaching.

Doing Family: Decentering Heteronormativity in "Marriage" and "Family" Therapy

Jacqueline Hudak, M.Ed., Ph.D., and Shawn V. Giammattei, Ph.D.

We offer this paper to further the discussion of the concept of heteronormativity, exploring the ways it has shaped our view of health, normalcy, and legitimate relationship. The use of language is attended to as well as what is silenced in the discourses around marriage and family. We deconstruct "the family" as a discrete institution, replacing it with the notion of "doing family." Queer theory is introduced as a lens through which to expand thinking about living outside the bounds of heterosexuality. Finally, we explore the question of how to shift from a heteronormative paradigm towards one that embraces gender and sexual diversity as the norm.