REFLECTIONS

NARRATIVES of PROFESSIONAL HELPING

General Submissions
Research Reflections
(Cover Art by Robin Richesson)

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REFLECTIONS
NARRATIVES of PROFESSIONAL HELPING

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Reflections from the Editors

Michael A. Dover

Abstract: This is the Reflections from the Editors for Volume 23, Number 1 (Winter 2016) of *Reflections*, and is published December 2017.

Keywords: narrative, poetry, relatedness, significant primary relationships, Reflectionsy, confidentiality, historical narratives, intersectionality

December 26, 2017

Can reading narratives change your life? The power of poetry and novels is well known. But non-fiction narratives are less well-known for their transformative tendencies.

Starting with the last issue, our 2017-2018 Graduate Assistant, Tara Peters, MA, MSW-Candidate, and I had to decide how to increase the font size of *Reflections*, so as to make it more readable. We realized that *Sun Magazine* (www.sunmagazine.org) uses a one column format, which is more compatible with larger font size. *Sun Magazine* publishes poetry, fiction, interviews and powerful non-fiction narrative.

As with *Reflections*, it is rare for an issue of *Sun Magazine* not to have narratives that have a profound impact on the reader. That is certainly the case for this issue, whose narratives are discussed below. But can reading a *Reflections* narrative really can change your life? I will provide two examples, one professional and one personal.

The professional example comes from assigning my undergraduate students to read the article, "Self-Reflections of a Gay Immigrant Social Worker," by Jonghyun Lee and Kate Willow Robinson (2014). Students read the article after having read an article on intersectionality by Patricia Hill Collins (2015). So they have already learned to think critically about intersectionality, and how to theorize about it, by writing a definition in their own words. But now they learn to apply the concept to understanding an individual narrative that is rich with awareness of intersectionality.

After reading the *Reflections* article, they next view videos provided by a local trauma recovery program. They apply human behavior theories to generalist practice relevant to these clients and the multiple communities of which they are a part. Last week, I corresponded with three seniors who took the course and are not social work majors. One had already planned to do so, but two others now plan to apply to our MSW program. Reading that narrative and the other materials apparently changed their plans!

For a personal example, in "Social Working for Social Justice," I shared my conversion to Judaism in 2000, after many years as a Unitarian-Universalist (Dover, 2010). But I didn't tell the whole story. I didn't tell of that Sunday morning when I left the church and walked across the street to Beth Israel Congregation, where my children Daniela and Mark were in Hebrew school. I went to the library and sat. You see, I was becoming more religious and I felt I needed

something. In my earlier narrative, I told the story of how I was intellectually convinced of the importance of ritual and religion by reading a book by an anthropologist with whom both I and my now wife Giselle had studied: Roy Rappaport's *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (1999).

But there was more to the story, which I did not share. In that library at Beth Israel, I found works by Abraham Heschel and others. This further convinced me, intellectually, to undergo a Conservative conversion to Judaism. But my earlier narrative didn't mention that it was a *Reflections* narrative, "Kaddish for Joe," by Kathleen H. Millstein (1998), which helped open my heart to my conversion. Her narrative was a poignant and moving story of the impact on the author of the life and death of her Jewish father-in-law. Kathleen, like I, was married to a Jew, but was not Jewish.

Many other potentially life changing narratives lie within the pages of this journal, and even this issue. If there is a *Reflections* narrative which had a powerful impact on your life, practice, teaching or activism, please write us at refections@csuohio.edu.

Upcoming Issues and New Leadership

This month and next, *Reflections* will publish four issues from V23(2017), and set the stage for a significant event for this journal. All authors with outstanding accepted manuscripts will be published in this time frame. This will bring the journal up to date in time to publish V24#1(Winter, 2018), the Special Issue on the Interconnections of Micro and Macro Practice, edited by Darlyne Bailey and Melissa Emmerson.

As our inside cover page has announced since V23#3, Darlyne Bailey, Ph.D., Dean Emeritus and Professor at Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, will be Editor-in-Chief beginning with V24#4 in September 2018.

In preparation for this role, a team of 2017-2018 Co-Editors is already involved in overseeing new manuscripts: Julie Cooper Altman (California State University Monterrey); Michael A. Dover (Cleveland State University); Priscilla Gibson (University of Minnesota); Arlene F. Reilly-Sandoval (Colorado State University Pueblo); Johanna Slivinske (Youngstown State University). We will be the editors from V23#3 to V24(#3) in Summer 2018.

Reflections readers will recognize these editors from our previous roles. Julie has been and remains Research Reflections Section Editor. Priscilla has been Associate Editor and co-edited the Relative Caregiving Special Issue (with Sandra Crewe) and the Dismantling Social and Racial Injustice Issue (with Sadye Logan). Arlene has been Co-editor and is now Editor of the Teaching and Learning section. She also served as Associate Editor for Issue Quality. Johanna served in that same position and also as Associate Editor for Review Quality. Perhaps most importantly, all of us are *Reflections* authors and reviewers.

As part of the transition, Associate Editor positions (with portfolio) were eliminated. We have only one 2017-2018 Associate Editor, Sarah Morton, of University College Dublin, who is a

dedicated reviewer and author of the compelling narrative, "Cold: A Meditation on Loss" (Morton, 2014). The cover art for the issue in which her narrative appeared, by Robin Richesson, was inspired by her article. A companion piece by Robin graces this issue's cover as well.

Also still serving are Section Editors Beth Lewis (Field Education, Bryn Mawr College) and Jon Christopher Hall (Historical Reflections, University of North Carolina Wilmington). To assist with the transition and also help solicit more content on a neglected area, aging, are two Special Editors on Aging: Priscilla D. Allen (Louisiana State University) and Erica Goldblatt Hyatt (Bryn Athyn College).

In addition to these editors, we have a solid group of several dozen Narrative Review Board members, whose work over the past few years should be acknowledged. Among the over 100 active reviewers, the Narrative Review Board is made up of the most active and high quality reviewers. It is refreshed annually. There are many others whose work in previous volumes was important, but who have now retired or cycled off the board. Their names can be seen on the inside cover of each full-issue PDF. The current Board includes:

> Margaret Ellen Adamek; Robin W. Allen; Priscilla D. Allen; Mari Lynn Alschuler; Jennifer Bellamy; Gary M. Bess; Sharon Bowland; Valerie Borum; Shane Ryan Brady; Kimberly A. Brisebois; Marcia Diane Calloway; Sandra Edmonds Crewe; Jennifer Davis-Berman; Diane De Anda; Sister Nancy M. Decesare; Vaughn Decoster; Mary Kate Dennis; Brenda Joy Eastman; Anthony Estreet; Catherine Faver; Dina A. Gamboni; Charles Garvin; Sheldon Gelman; Erlene Grise-Owens; Jane Gorman; Ruby M. Gourdine; Shanna Katz Kattari; Martin Kohn; Monica Leisey; Andre L. Lewis; Sadye Logan; Kim Lorber; Carl Mazza; Jane McPherson; Joshua L. Miller; Augustina Naami; Florence Ellen Nettting; Lynn Parker; Phu Phan; Alankaar Sharma; W. Patrick Sullivan; Lara Vanderhoof; N. Eugene Walls; Lillian C. Wichinsky; Jim Williams; Dianne Rush Woods

Several of the above were members of the original Editorial Board of *Reflections*: Charles Garvin, Jane Gorman, Sheldon Gelman, and Martin Kohn. One other member of that original board, John Kayser, resigned just last year. John was a very important source of advice to this new editor.

I look forward to the new captain of the *Reflections* ship, Darlyne Bailey. She and I share Columbia MSSW roots that reach back into the 1970s. We also share Cleveland ties; Darlyne was for many years affiliated with Case Western Reserve University, and served as Dean of the Jack, Joseph and Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. Both of us also share, I think it is safe to say, a deep concern for both the micro and the macro in our profession, as well as a respect for the interdisciplinary nature of practice, which is key to this journal.

To continue that maritime metaphor, I'll stay aboard ship, but in a new role as the steward and chief engineer of *Reflections*, at least until I'm properly relieved. Formally, my title will be publisher, but this in no way reflects any superordinate role. It involves overseeing fundraising, the website, the publishing platform, and the copy editing and proofreading. Basically, we

realized, I had been both publisher and editor since 2012, and these roles needed to be separated.

Just like the show must go on for actresses and actors, one never leaves a ship until properly relieved. Those of us who are currently involved with the journal are all pledged in this regard, as Darlyne comes aboard and is welcomed by the crew. As the good ship moves from port to port, the ship will pick up new crew and some of us will move on to new endeavors. But if there is one thing I've learned about program development and organizational survival, a basic principle is that once involved, always involved, in some capacity.

As the journal moves forward, having restored (with the editorship of Darlyne Bailey) the female leadership which this journal had at the start, and enjoyed from Sonia Leib Abels to Jillian Jimenez to Eileen Mayers Pasztor, some of us in *Reflections* may transition from editor to author, from reviewer to editor, from reader to author, or even from editor to reader. But I'm confident *Reflections* will still occupy a special place in our hearts.

More Professional Thanks

I would like to thank all of the above *Reflections* team members for their important roles since 2012 in helping to ensure the survival of this journal. It is a lonely job working on a journal like *Reflections*. It involves reading and reacting to manuscripts in which authors pour their hearts out and try to be true to what we see before us, around us, in us and in the lives of others. It can't be done alone.

Although they have been thanked in the past (and there are no doubt others I am forgetting to thank, and will try to do so in my final Reflections from the Editors in January), I must acknowledge the important role played by our Graduate Assistants: Josh Kanary, Stephen "Leo" Leopold, Alison Murphy, and Maureen O'Connor. Our dedicated student employees also made important contributions: Rachel Broa, Sean LaFleur, Kailie Johnson, and Elizabeth Weems.

Perhaps the most important factor in the survival of this journal was the continued service of Art Director Robin Richesson. Robin is Professor of Art at California State University Long Beach. She has provided the majority of the cover illustrations since 2010, and approves or selects every issue's art.

My own motivation for undertaking this project was gratitude for the mentorship I received from the generation of progressive social workers which included founding Editor Sonia Leib Abels and her husband Paul, who are now residing with a daughter in Los Angeles. Personally, I received such mentorship from Charles Garvin during my years at Michigan, and before that from the late Irving Miller at Columbia. It has been a pleasure to work with Irving's son, Narrative Review Board member Joshua Miller. However, I would not have agreed to undertake this project were it not for the vote of confidence received from another professor at Columbia, Alex Gitterman. Both Alex and Charles are longstanding friends of the Abels and have long been authors and reviewers for *Reflections.*

Nor would it have been possible without the decision of Murali Nair, our CSU director in 2012,

who said the magic words about our adopting the journal from California State University at Long Beach: "The sky is the limit!" His infectious optimism and the support of the next director, Lonnie Helton (a twice-published *Reflections* author), were key.

The gracious decision of the director at California State University Long Beach School of Social Work, Christian Molidor, to approve the transfer of the journal to Cleveland State University, and the advice of outgoing Editor Eileen Mayers Pasztor, made the transition possible.

I have served as Editor and Publisher at the pleasure of Director and Professor Cathleen Lewandowski, who in our effort to utilize a maritime metaphor, we call the admiral. Cathleen was herself was already involved in editing the Special Issue on Therapeutic Relationships with Service Members, Veterans, and their Families, before arriving at Cleveland State University School of Social Work in 2014. All along, Cathleen has ensured the sea lanes were clear and that vital resources were provided to the journal, including an annual course release to me and a graduate assistant. She has also given me the editorial freedom to find my own voice as Editor, and for this I will be long be grateful.

Our home port is the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, where the humanities, the social sciences and the professions all flourish. I'm grateful to our Dean Gregory Sadlek for recognizing and supporting the very special nature of this journal.

Personal Thanks and How to Propose a Special Themed Section

Personally, I started out as a reader and subscriber after meeting Sonia and Paul Abels at a conference of the International Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups, just after the journal was founded. A few years later, in 2000, I co-edited a Special Issue on Social Work and War in the Balkans (Dover, Garvin, Goodkind, Moch and Reisch, 2000), with Michael Reisch writing the introduction. In 2009, I tried my hand at an article about my own practice, based on process recordings and memories of my work in several settings (Dover, 2009).

Next, I thought it would be valuable to have a special issue about Work and the Workplace (Dover, 2010b). I invited Dan Molloy, the Director for many years of the Personal Services Unit of the National Maritime Union, to contribute a narrative of his work with merchant seafarers. Sheila Akabas, Director of the Workplace Center at Columbia University School of Social Work, also agreed to write a narrative. Paul Kurzman agreed to write the introduction. We were in business. Occupational social work was the field I worked in for over ten years. Sheila and my field instructor, Beth Silverman at District 65-UAW, had brought me into that field, and readied me for my first voyage.

That voyage was to New Orleans. I was aboard for five years. Dan Molloy assigned me to the port of New Orleans, where I got to know the sea salt of the earth: merchant seafarers. Perhaps once I'm no longer editor, I can write of those special times. Days when the Public Health Hospitals, founded in 1798, were closed as the first official act of President Ronald Reagan. Days when the HIV virus was brought back by seamen having sex with men and intravenous

drug-using seafarers sharing needles on ship and shore, in ports round the globe. We didn't know at first what had caused the death of the first one of our members to die of AIDS, at a Catholic hospital in New Orleans.

I am grateful for Sonia's early nudging, for Paul's later encouragement, and for the opportunity to work with my colleagues on these two special issues, without which I would not have been able to later serve as editor. At the time of the transition, the Abels also gave a thumbs up to Cleveland State University School of Social Work—where Sonia once served on the faculty—taking over the journal.

As this section shows, special sections (which have by and larger replaced special issues) are often the first *Reflections* point of contact for authors, reviewers and editors. To propose a special themed section of the journal (some of which later become special issues, but all of which involve a Call for Narratives, an introduction and manuscripts approved by the special editors, and often covert art), see the Announcements at www.rnoph.org for a copy of the Call for Proposals for Special Themed Sections.

Submit a Narrative to *Reflections* and Encourage Others to Do So

Again, this is a very special journal. This journal allows the editor to say things like how, without the love and support of Giselle and my immediate and extended family, without friends like Steve Seif, Jim Williams, Joan Dworkin, and Otrude Moyo, and without the many mentors and colleagues I am thanking today, I would not have been able to have undertaken the role of editor of this journal.

Let me give you still another example. Last week, I received a request to read a 3500 word draft of an MSW admissions essay from a mentee who is planning to apply to schools of social work. It was a very *Reflectionsy* essay. *Reflectionsy* means something is full of feeling, of sharing, of vulnerability, of showing, of telling; in other words, of narrative and exposition! She wanted feedback. What could I say? This essay was convincing her to change her life! Getting an MSW is, of course, a life changing experience. I gently suggested that she consider shortening the essay for the originally intended purpose .

But I also asked myself, would it be appropriate to say more? True, I have long complained that appropriateness is the number one unstated and perhaps overblown value of the profession of social work. My historical analysis suggests it goes back to the days when the wealthy pressured friendly visitors not to give too many alms to the poor. As a profession and individually, we've forever been pressed to behave appropriately. Just what does that word mean? After all, *Well-Behaved Women Seldom Make History* (Ulrich, 2007). Do we always have to be so darn appropriate? Are lawyers and doctors pressured to behavior appropriately, or just professionals from historically female professions?

I gave the matter some ethical consideration. In part, she was approaching me for feedback as one of her mentors, not just as a faculty member. I attended her wedding, for instance, like Sheila "Shelley" Akabas and Beth Silverman did ours. Writing for *Reflections* was something I

had talked with her about before. I decided to share with her that I felt her essay was full of the very show and tell that is the hallmark of a good *Reflections* narrative. I encouraged her to expand it into a fuller article she could submit to *Reflections*. I said another editor would assign the reviewers and make the editorial decision, under our conflict of interest policy.

Are student admissions essays be a great start to a *Reflections* narrative? I think so! Many students open up their hearts, and share of themselves and their practice, their volunteering and their activism, in such essays. Why not encourage students who have recently written admissions essays to BSW, MSW or doctoral programs to turn their essay into a narrative?

And why not talk to your own, friends, and mentors and ask: Could I write something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue, for *Reflections*? What should I write about? Where should I start? What moment should I focus on for my beginning? What historical event? What memorable client or community? What cause, crusade, or conundrum? Which of the things I mucked up or muddled through should I write about? We all have such moments. We all have voices which must be heard, and people to whom we want to give voice.

A Little Help from Our Friends and Publishing Partners

Each year around this time we try to issue a fund-raising appeal. Usually it is a bit late, as this year's appeal is. Students come first and it is hard to find the time to get the appeal written and an issue out until after grades are submitted. Thankfully, an author in this issue, Karen Myers, as well as Special Editor Erica Goldblatt Hyatt—also an author in this issue—agreed to proof read and copy edit this very issue. I entered the changes over the last weekend.

Today I copyedited and proofread the full issue myself. Any remaining errors are my responsibility. But as readers, authors, reviewers and editors, it is our responsibility to see to it that we can further professionalize the copy-editing and proofreading of this journal.

Time and time again, we have found that three sets of copyediting and proofreading will find three sets of necessary changes! The journal very much needs the resources to be able to ensure that one of the sets of eyes that sees each manuscript before it is published has the professional training to ensure the quality of the journal. This requires the journal be on a firmer financial footing.

We very much need funds to publish the journal and to do things like provide Art Director Robin Richesson—for the first time—with a healthy honorarium. This holiday season, we will be able to do so, in two installments, due to the generous gift of one person: Darlyne Bailey. Darlyne's leadership gift of $1000 has enabled Friends of *Reflections* to form a new category of givers: A Thousand Thanks!

For those who join *Friends of Reflections* in the Friends for Life or A Thousand Thanks categories, we are also willing to append (in honor of) or (in memory of) to your gift. We can do the same for current *Friends* who wish to give once again at a higher level of support, whether another $18 or $180 or $1800 dollars. Why not donate "in honor of Art Director Robin

Richesson?"

We are also open to a truly major gift or a bequeath. If you are interested in such a gift, Cathleen Lewandowski or I can put you in touch with the CSU foundation to make arrangements for a tax-deductible dedicated donation to the *Reflections* gift fund. Or you can contact the foundation directly through Constance Kopec, our College's Director of Advancement (c.kopec@csuohio.edu).

We have now consolidated on one page the names of our dozens of supporters and the means to join them! Please see our Announcements links at www.rnoph.org or visit here directly: https://tinyurl.com/yatt6ndp. Please download the *Friends of Reflections* PDF from that secure reflections@csuohio.edu-linked Dropbox folder (no sign-in is necessary) and use one of the links to make a donation.

I'll be honest however; it would be unwise to base a journal only on individual support. If you give individually, please know that your good money is not going to be a bad investment.

Institutional Friends and Publishing Partners

From the beginning, we were pleased to receive support from a number of Institutional Friends: California State University Long Beach School of Social Work; Boise State University School of Social Work; The Anne and Henry Zarrow School of Social Work, University of Oklahoma; University of Kansas School of Social Welfare; University of Michigan School of Social Work; Adelphi University School of Social Work; University of Minnesota School of Social Work; University of Buffalo School of Social Work. Organizations can continue to donate $250 (at the above link) on a one-time basis. This can alert your faculty, staff, field instructors and alumni of the opportunity to read and write for *Reflections*. We plan to make another wide appeal for such Institutional Friends in Spring 2018.

However, we are now in a position to be able to announce an initial group of four Publishing Partners of *Reflections*. Inspired by a similar arrangement long in place at the International Consortium on Social Development (http://www.socialdevelopment.net), the journal concluded that it is essential for the profession of social work and other helping professions to find a new way to reliably publish open access, double-blind peer-reviewed journals. It shouldn't be done on a shoe string. It should be done with a clear separation of the publishing side and the editorial side; one that continues to gives editorial independence and leadership to the editor (whose new title, Editor-in-Chief, will reflect that).

But the publication of the journal and its publishing policies require input from more than the formal publisher of the journal. Cleveland State University holds the copyrights to the current and past issues. So far, four schools of social work have agreed to support the journal in two special ways: annual generous contributions to the journal's budget and the appointment of a representative to serve on an Executive Committee of the journal. Although the Editor-in-Chief and Publisher will serve on that committee ex-officio, the Publishing Partners will advise the Director on publishing policy, budget and future editorial successions.

The journal is thankful for the decisions made in this regard by: Sandra Crewe, Dean, Howard University School of Social work; Ana Scheyett, Dean, University of Georgia School of Social Work; Robin Mama, Dean, Monmouth University School of Social Work, and Nancy Meyer-Adams, Director, California State University Monmouth School of Social Work. We are hoping that with this initial group to help us lead the way forward, we can build a group of Publishing Partners which can help cement the long-range success and growth of this journal.

Welcome Aboard: Going from Reader to Author to Reviewer to Editor and Back Again!

Become a *Reflections* author, and you can become a *Reflections* reviewer. We often recruit our reviewers from those who had to work hardest on revising and/or re-submitting manuscripts. If they accepted out help, we think, they can provide help to other authors.

Next, once having served as a reviewer, it becomes possible to play a more active role on the Narrative Review Board, as a co-editor of one of the special sections.

I highly recommend that readers and authors of this journal consider volunteering to become more involved, and see where it leads. We need emerging authors and reviewers who can help chart the way to the future of this journal. Please contact us at reflections@csuohio.edu. The 2017-2018 Co-Editors can be reached at: coeditors@reflectionsnarrativesofprofessionalhelping.org. Or, thinking ahead to next September, contact our Editor-in-Chief Designate, Darlyne Bailey, at dbailey01@brynmawr.edu. (Please be patient, she is on sabbatical.)

Articles in this Issue

What a privilege it was to see the articles in this issue come to fruition. I had earlier read all but the manuscript by Erica Goldblatt Hyatt (from Research Reflections, edited by Julie Altman). But seeing the final manuscripts in their near-final form was a real pleasure.

One of the goals of sections like this in Reflections from the Editors is to help the reader be selective about what to read. But it won't be easy, as the following renditions will hopefully show. I had written a version of these comments earlier, and now I'm going to amend them, to reflect the attention they deserve.

In "Our Immigrant Fathers: Reflecting on Caregiving," Laurens Van Sluytman and Halaevalu Vakalahi engage in what is classic *Reflections* narrative composition. In doing so, they reach deep into their respective personal roots and show how their cultural origins and those of their fathers affect their own caregiving. They place caregiving in the context of the immigrant experience. Each tells a story: one of a Guyanese dad, and one of a Tongan (Pacific Islander) dad. The authors then situate their stories in the context of an evolving literature on caregiving. They conclude with lessons for social work. Caregiving has long been an important source of *Reflections* narratives.

The entire Special Issue on Relative Caregiving (V20#3) is perhaps the best example. This

narrative, like the narrative by Bharati Sethi in this issue, makes important points about one of the most important issues facing our globe: immigration. The lessons learned from the author's reflections on the cultural context of their own caregiving are relevant to caregiving, but also to larger issues related to gender, nationality, race and their relationship to the quality of life of immigrant families.

Karen Myers' "Trapped in a Pipeline: The Plight of Too Many Children and Youth (Exposing the School-to-Prison Pipeline)," is one of a growing number of *Reflections* narratives (including two in this issue) which have utilized poetry as part of the narrative process. I would like to thank one of our Narrative Review Board members, Mari Lynn Alschuler, of Youngstown State University, who has herself written a *Reflections* narrative about poetry therapy, for advice along the way. This journal doesn't currently publish poetry per se, but who is to say that poetry isn't part of the narrative process of expression, introspection, and exposition? This is an issue I commented on in V22#4 as well (Dover, 2016). I invite readers to write the journal with their views on how to draw more on poetic content.

Myer's narrative has a poem at its center. Her goal is to humanize an issue which is often seen in abstract terms: the school-to-prison pipeline. Myers drew on her own experience working in the public schools for over twenty years. Again, as in classic *Reflections* practice, she drew on this experience to tell a story. Here, our abandonment of the two column form allows the poem to flow, unencumbered by unnecessary wrapping. Being an online journal, we don't have to worry about too many pages.

We should, however, worry about the lives of those caught up in this pipeline, or impacted by zero-tolerance policies, who are often in need of the services of social workers and of lawyers. Myers has played both roles. I don't want to characterize the impact of the poem. I encourage you to read it for yourself. However, I can share that Myers concludes there is hope, and that the concept of restorative justice is part of that hope.

Also using poetry in her narrative is Bharati Sethi, in her "Between Then and Now: My Coming, Being, and Staying in Urban/Rural Canada." A previously-published *Reflections* author, Sethi uses both poetry and non-poetic narrative to tell her story and to show us her experience in Ontario. As she did in her earlier work, she reflects on the question of encounters—as an immigrant—with both Toronto and the smaller communities in which she has lived and worked. Her appeal to finding a way to stop "othering" those we consider "strangers" was made more poignant by her use of poetry. Sethi's narrative involves her transition from Bharati to Jessica and back to Bharati. As with the previous narrative, reading this narrative produces feelings of both despair and hope. Perhaps it is such experiences which demand poetry as part of narrative.

In "It's Not All About The Behaviors: Identifying and Addressing Relational Neglect in Adolescence within the Familial Environment," Tawanda L. Hubbard portrays her work as an in-home therapist working with adolescents. She begins by discussing how it is often the case that work with adolescents often focuses on their "behavior." She discusses the facile solutions we often find, such as in-home placement. After generalizing, she gets very specific. She portrays the nature of some of the "cases" by providing vignettes which help us to see how teens

suffer from something she calls *relational neglect*. She defines this as "the absence of nourishing interactions of attunement and quality connection within the familial environment."

Based on her excellent literature review, Hubbard discusses this in terms of important concepts such as attunement, attachment, and familial environment. She stresses the centrality of family relationships as the focus of clinical social work in child welfare services. In self-determination theory terms, this would be called an unmet psychological need for a sense of relatedness (Ryan and Deci, 2017). Do they, also, perhaps suffer from the unmet human need for significant primary relationships (Gough, 2017), and from other unmet intermediate needs of the kind required for basic human needs for health and autonomy?

In her concluding reflections, Hubbard issues a call for action! But not without also encouraging others to write narratives of their practice! This narrative is one of the first produced by the growing numbers of students in clinical doctoral programs in social work, and will hopefully be followed by many more.

In "Supervisor and Intern Reflections on a Year of Research: Why It Worked," Erica Goldblatt Hyatt and Brandon D. Good contribute to the Research Reflections section edited by Julie Altman of California State University Monterrey. The order of narratives in this and other issues is dictated by the alphabetical order of the sections, from General Submissions through Research Reflections. While last, her narrative is not least. This is an excellent example of the power of narratives of the research process. As with most narratives, the focus in on relationship; in this case the relationship between faculty member and undergraduate research assistant. Most universities have programs which encourage faculty to engage undergraduates in summer research; this narrative is must reading for both faculty and research involved in such relationships! Perhaps most importantly, it situates the professional relationship within the framework of the important personal experiences of each participant.

Enjoy this issue!

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Our Immigrant Fathers: Reflecting on Caregiving

Laurens Van Sluytman and Halaevalu Vakalahi

Abstract: This article explores the experiences of two immigrant fathers. One is from Guyana, geographically in South America, but culturally in the Caribbean. One is from the Pacific, of Tongan ancestry but living in Hawai'i. Each father is an older adult with a chronic condition, who has been primarily cared for by their spouses. The story is told from the perspective of their two social work educator children, one male and one female, who provided support from a distance. Explored in this reflection are the complexities in the intersection of traditional cultural expectations, immigrant experience and cultural duality, and sustaining forces for the spousal caregivers and children who are social work professionals. Practice would benefit from tools that initiate narratives providing deeper awareness of environment and embeddedness within communities, both communities of origin and new communities and the implications for caregiving. Treatment planning must be inclusive of caregiving (shared with all parties) for older adults while striving to keep the family informed and respecting the resilience and lives deeply rooted in a higher.

Keywords: caregiving, immigration, cultural duality, community-based writing, autoethnography, cultural context

Many scholars of diverse communities tie their scholarship to their communities of origin and those communities' relationship to larger social structures. At times, these scholars find their research interests deeply intertwined in their personal biographies. In these cases, community-based writing offers an opportunity to add deeper rich context to the lives of communities being studied or with whom professionals seek to intervene. This raises epistemological, axiological questions and ethical concerns. For example, what are the nature, scope, and limits of the scholar's knowledge, indigenous and academic? What is the relationship of the scholar's presence and absence to the community functioning and the emergent data and interventions?

In the hands of scholars who are both emergent and embedded members of the community, community-based writing is a useful tool for building knowledge and describing the experience of a particular community. To add yet another layer to the richness of the research endeavor is the fact that the scholars' identities may span multiple communities whose boundaries may, in fact, overlap. For example, the scholar may belong to immigrant and first-generation communities. Community-based writings are often described as writing for the community, writing about the community, and writing with the community (Deans, 2000).

Community-based writing is also associated with student writing exercises; asking students to add richness to the classroom experience through participatory involvement in social change. While community-based writing for, about, and with the community provides critical information to assist us in answering important questions there is yet another position for community-based writing. Often overlooked in the taxonomy of community-based writing is writing from the community. It is here that the scholar may emerge from the numerous bearers

of the community stories (e.g., artist, poets, and dancers) and the evidence seeking (post) positivists. This paper offers an analytic autoethnography of two immigrant scholars' community-based writings of caregiving for older members of their communities, specifically their fathers. The scholars are social work educators, one male and one female, who provided support to two immigrant fathers. In both cases, the older adult lives with chronic health issues and the spouse is the primary caregiver.

The project offers an overt and reflexive self-observation and comprises five key features described by Anderson (2006): (1) complete member researcher (CMR) status, (2) analytic reflexivity, (3) narrative visibility of the researcher's self, (4) dialogue with informants beyond the self, and (5) commitment to theoretical analysis. Both scholars are members of the social world of immigrant families.

We express our necessary connection to this area of study—immigration and aging, and the reciprocity that exists between the researcher, the community setting, and its members. In accordance with the goal of reflexive ethnography described by Davies (1999), the project employs subjective experiences to fulfill the aims of discovery. As the authors worked together, discussion of their lives, as contrasted with each other, as well as the culture of their fathers and associated communities, established dialogue beyond the self thereby avoiding self-absorption (Rosaldo, 1993). The authors used the data to augment theoretical understanding of social phenomena by means of refinement, elaboration, extension, and revision (Anderson 2006). Thus, it is intended to identify the complexities and impact the intersection of immigrant experience and cultural duality, traditional cultural expectations on sustaining forces for the spousal caregivers and children through their community-based writings.

Caregiving and Immigrant Experience

Love, in essence, is at the core of caregiving, whether it is caring for a child, spouse, parent, grandparent, friend or relative. Although complex and often complicated in terms of processes, procedures, expectations, needs and responsibilities, caregiving is truly a labor of love (AARP, 2014). Western perspectives on caregiving suggest that it is an individual's responsibility, and that paid professionals, non-family caregivers, and nursing facilities are acceptable options. Although grandparents have become some of the most prominent caregivers of children and grandchildren in the U.S. and around the world, given the increased family and community disintegration (Hayslip, Emick, Henderson, & Elias, 2002; Ochiltree, 2006), limited thought and resources have been dedicated into caring for these grandparents and other older adults (Pastor, Makuc, Reuben, & Xia, 2002). An army of unsung heroes perform this labor of love daily so that older adults are able to remain at home and enjoy a somewhat normal life (AARP, 2014). Caregiving for an older adult in particular is culturally sanctioned as a collective responsibility in some cultures in the world; whereas in other places, it is an individual's choice and responsibility.

In 2010, immigrants to the U.S. from Central and South America and the Caribbean numbered about 21 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The U.S. Census includes Guyana in its count of South American immigrants. However, Guyana, named by indigenous people as land of many

waters, is also a land of many peoples. Guyana, a small nation located on the northern tip of South America, comprises a complex story of multiple traditions influenced by the descendants of numerous inhabitants: its indigenous tribes, Carib and Arawak among others; the descendants of East Indian indentured laborers and African slaves, and its European colonizers—the Dutch and British. Though geographically located in South America, historic ties to the British Empire bind Guyana to the Caribbean. McCabe (2011) reported that approximately 32 percent of those from the Caribbean are more likely to be age 55 and older. This figure suggests a need to re-examine the nature of caregiving in order to enhance an approach designed to reach older Caribbean immigrants and their caregivers.

Elders in Caribbean communities are key components of cultural and social capital. As with many poor communities, social wealth comprises the exchange of needed resources. This is reflected in the literature concerning caregiving in the Caribbean. In this regard, the research often focuses on the role of grandparents and specifically grandmothers. Multiple authors (Olwig, 1999; Plaza, 2000) have stated that the process of migration is often facilitated through active engagement of grandmothers. That is, migrating parents, seeking greater economic stability, often leave children behind with grandparents. More recently, due to transformed migration patterns in the Caribbean, grandmothers living in close proximity in the host country provide short-term care. The literature is clear in its assertion that in exchange for child care, and transmitting cultural norms and values, present and future economic support is offered to the older member of the community.

Less well examined are the processes of direct caregiving to older members of the community. For example the phenomenon “international flying grannies”—described by Plaza (2000) as Caribbean born grandmothers traveling during their retirement among kinship networks— is an example of intergenerational social exchanges. However, such travel would suggest that these individuals are in robust enough health to endure these pilgrimages. Furthermore, the matrifocal emphasis of the literature erases men from the discussion of the Caribbean family experience. Thus, the actual process of caregiving remains underexplored.

In 2010 about 1.2 million immigrants to the U.S. identified as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). The resulting duality in cultural identity among these immigrant elders and subsequent generations of American born children and grandchildren has offered opportunities for progress. But it has also been challenging, and this is reflected in under-education, disproportionate involvement in the criminal justice system, and health disparities (EPIC, 2014).

Caregiving, according to cultural protocols, also becomes a challenge. In indigenous Pacific Islander cultures, respect for elders and caring for older individuals is culturally sanctioned. Caring for elders is an inherent part of the Pacific Island culture and an expectation of children and grandchildren. But, caring for these elders is beyond providing for physical needs. The expectation to care for these elders is also about preserving a legacy. These elders are the links between generations, and the vehicle through which cultural and spiritual elements are introduced and preserved. In essence, while the aged symbolize the passage through time, they are the mechanism for preserving culture, given their unique gifts of vision of the future

(Kenney, 1976; Ritchie & Ritchie, 1979).

Our Immigrant Fathers

My Guyanese Dad

I insist that the Atlantic slave trade did not concern itself with the permanent residence of my ancestors. Disrupting families, the trade dispersed our ancestors from the north to the south of the United States and vice versa. The disruptions also included forced relocation from North America to the diaspora of African-descended populations living outside of continental Africa and vice versa. Thus, my ancestors in Guyana could have easily been my ancestors throughout South and Latin America, as well as North America. For these reasons, I identify as African American. The label generation .5, those who immigrated with parents at an early age and raised predominantly in the U.S., does not resonate with me. It gets in the way of building alliances with the next generation in my family. Those alliances are required to dismantle the negative representations of African Americans and to counter the divisive nature of the established hierarchy of people of color in the United States.

Though our parents paid what must have been considerable sums of money for our naturalization papers, my older brothers identify as Guyanese, and Guyanese American. My brothers are resolute in their ethnic and hyphenated identities. In my immediate family and generation, I am the only one who identifies as African American. In my estimation, there is no visible trace that informs the public that I am not African American. My height and weight are consistent with American standard of good nutrition and occasional over-indulgences. But the reasons for identifying as African American are more complicated than those mentioned. For example, my identity as a Guyanese man creates a window into a cultural space that situated itself between a present reality and a narrative understanding of where I am from. I use the term “narrative” because, in a way, much of what I know of being Guyanese is grounded in childhood memories and what I have been told in stories of the native home. That home became increasingly distant for both myself and the adults in my family as they aged.

For one who was born in Guyana, and immigrated to Brooklyn, New York, at the age of 7, memories of Georgetown, Guyana comprise big ticket events. They involve the arrival of the Queen of England or some royal dignitary to salute a “decolonized” nation. More importantly, one memory is one being forced to stand in the sun, waving small flags as a parade went by. Another memory consists of a small zoo with an even smaller enclosure that contained a river otter, obviously driven mad by an evidently too small confinement.

But the impact of being born Guyanese is important; it is a palimpsest. Over time, and through multiple instances of code shifting, mother tongue has given way to adopted tongue. There are moments of clipped verbal exchanges when an accent emerges. I often mispronounce the word intestines, accent on the last syllable—long *i*; instead of the second the short *e* of the second syllable. But such words are rarely said outside of a doctor's office. As with my accent, traditions have faded. Old Year's Night has been replaced with New Year's Eve. We no longer cover the mirrors of the house with the passing of a family member.

These traditions have faded—my parents emigrated to escape a growing Marxist revolutionary trend in the Caribbean. Holding firmly to colonial class-based identities, they removed themselves from subsequent waves of immigrating Guyanese Americans, attempting to escape violence and poverty. The fact that my parents are both the only children of their mothers, adds to the erasure. There is no extended family to maintain traditions.

My parents are both now 81 years old. They have been married 55 years. For all those years, they have depended on each other. They are pioneers, leaving their country of birth in their 30s to navigate a new world. Together, and alone, they faced the onslaught of progress in a country rapidly emerging from the industrial revolution heading towards adopting an economy driven by service and not production. They stepped into the shoes of previous generations of immigrants who performed the invisible work of lubricating the transition. They played by the rules of the times—enduring overt and discreet racism and sexism. They were determined to provide opportunities for the next generation. Asking for nothing from the larger society, my parents demanded discipline from their children. Most importantly, they taught us to be independent. The axiom, "never look back," pervaded the home where I was raised. Today, they ask for very little from us—President Obama's Biography, or a transistor radio. My father recently surprised me in requesting Gordon Rattray Taylor's *Sex in History*. It never occurred to me that there was an area in history, or about sex, that he would want to know more about. He has lived through, and been a part of, much of history.

Over the course of my adulthood, caregiving has taken the form of sending monthly food care packages, helping with the heavy items they are unable to lift into their cart at the super market, weekly visits from my older brother who lives 20 minutes away, listening to health updates, or engaging my father in some intellectual sparring, during my phone calls to them. Each of these things have distinctive roots and are associated with an assortment of emotional content. For example, sending a food care package monthly emerged from my father's hospitalization. While he was hospitalized, my mother, who does not drive, could not go to the supermarket. Going to the supermarket, which drove me to madness as a child, is my mother's weekly ritual—squeezing a melon for ripeness, shifting each egg in a crate to ensure that it was not broken. This ritual reminded me that decisions involving money, must be made carefully. It saddens me to think of the frugality of my childhood. Sending a package of food that I have never touched—I just ordered online—is a rejection of the ritual's care and frugality.

At some point Guyanese values and reliance on women as caregivers dictated that my sister would provide care for my parents as they age. This expectation collapsed upon my sister's death. Adding to the slow erasure and depleted family networks are the complications of our ever mobile lives. I live 216 miles, approximately 3 hours and 30 minutes, away. During the visit, prior to my father's bypass surgery, I was the one who made the decision to proceed with the procedure. He informed his doctor that I was also a doctor, omitting "of philosophy." His attempt to establish me as a force to be reckoned with, transformed me from his son to his social worker. He tells me to take care of my mother. She stepped into my shadow as the medical practice removes her voice.

Like good colonial subjects, my mother and I sit in silence with stiff upper lips. We waited for

my brother, another social worker, to arrive, before the surgery proceeded. During the surgery, we discussed the possibility of my father's death. My mother was resolute in that all will be in divine order, and she would persevere. As my father recovered from his surgery, she sat there all day, each day. I had no idea what she was thinking. My training, and American frankness, suggested that we talk. All that is Guyanese in me suggested that "silence is golden." My mom and I remained silent. The following day, I arrived after work. The attending health professionals informed me that my father had to be sedated after awakening from surgery. I could not understand. Wouldn't you want him as alert as possible? They stated that he was too "aggressive." Can an octogenarian be aggressive? They informed me that the sedation was for his own safety. Regardless, I did not want my father sedated. Despite my cultural humility that recognizes a lifetime of exposure to sexism and misogyny, seeing my father passively sedated would have contributed to his emasculation. My mother entered the room. I sit in the hall. She has seen sides of my father that I, as their son, have not.

Day three: I drive my mother to the hospital. My father is awake. He looks at me, but there is only silence. I can see he has been through a battle. We say nothing—preserving our "stiff upper lip" composure.

Day four: My father uses his incentive spirometer to exercise his breathing. His breathing is shallow. As the days progressed, my Guyanese father reemerged. Privileged in his masculine entitlement, he chides his predominantly female third world nursing staff. I ask him to refrain from terse language, if only for his present frail state. It is not the time to discuss entitlement or sexism. He blinks at me; my mother sits by his side. Each night I leave with my mother, I buy something to eat and drop her at home. She walks up the path alone, only to repeat the bedside watch the next day. Upon returning home, with professional assistance, she cared for my father. She is a frail older woman caring for a frailer older man.

Since the surgery, my parents have discussed their expectations for end-of-life. Having experienced this journey, I cannot help thinking the traditions of my elders are fading; all but the slightest of impressions remain on my person. I expect that one night I will have to brace myself in the darkness of I-95 and make the 3 ½ hour drive. That drive will bridge my .5 identity with my Guyanese identity. Perhaps on that visit, I will have to cover the mirrors, not knowing why, just driven by some corporeal imperative.

My Pacific Islander Dad

Hybrid… always an alternative… my dad, Moana (meaning deep sea) is a Pacific Islander American older adult of Tongan descent. He is an immigrant from Tonga, and a longtime resident of Hau'ula, Hawai'i. For more than 20 years in Tonga, he was a teacher and a middle school principal. In 1977, a scholarship he received as a middle school principal led him to migrate with his family to the U.S. to attend BYU-Hawaii. With great foresight, dad established Hawai'i as our new home and decided to remain in the U.S. in order to educate and provide better opportunities for his children. Mom was a nurse for about 20 years in Tonga. Since arrival in Hawai'i in 1977, both mom and dad worked at the Polynesian Cultural Center until they retired. They are bilingual, but more fluent in the Tongan language. As they have aged,

sometimes it appears that they do not understand what people are saying, but they are actually thinking deeply about it and after a few minutes they will respond. Actually, that is wisdom. However, they sometimes need people to speak slowly and clearly. They are very active physically and socially, which can be easier in Hawai'i, given the warm weather and the support of their families and friends.

Their journey to Utah in August 2013 was to hold the bi-annual Family Council with their children and grandchildren. On the second day of the 2013 Family Council, dad was admitted to the emergency room. It was a blessing to have three sons, one daughter and numerous grandchildren living in Utah, in order to provide family support while they were away from home. Nonetheless, it was very difficult for dad to accept that he would be in Utah for an extended period of time during recovery. Understandably, dad was upset at times with his inability to function in the hospital and in the rehabilitation facility. Both mom and dad were completely committed to rehabilitation, and that he will emerge healthier and more mobile. Mom was grounded in her belief that God will take care of dad.

During treatment on the mainland (Utah), dad and mom were somehow displaced because they were not at home in Hawai'i. Thus, the caregiving arrangements needed much thought and consideration. Physical proximity required considering caregiving alternatives that were not necessarily culturally acceptable. In retrospect, my professional background as a social worker, and living in the U.S. for the majority of my life, suggested some comfort with exploring a hybrid model of caregiving that would facilitate caring from a distance. For example, dad's primary caregiver has always been mom, which is culturally expected and acceptable given that they are both retired. The family and his children, myself included (a social work educator), agreed to serve as secondary distant caregivers by providing housing and supports.

Three siblings and I provided support to mom and dad from a distance, including financial support and through regular phone calls and visits. Mom and dad's iPhone facilitated FaceTime with the grandchildren. In similar situations, offering such support from a distance was not an issue for me because I have lived away from home for a number of years but was still able to provide. This time it was different; it was my dad. I had emotional investments beyond the tangible resources. As a daughter, the feelings of disconnect, guilt about not being able to be physically present to "talk stories" with him, help take his temperature, clean his room, run errands, and especially help out mom, was overwhelming. I felt conflicted as a social worker and with my career, which was the source of my ability to offer financial supports. I managed to rationalize my way to a point of semi-comfort. To somehow counter these feelings which were not exclusive to me but also applicable to my siblings, my youngest brother relocated his family to Hawai'i to assist in providing continued care for dad. My oldest sister and her children who also lived in Hawai'i partnered with our youngest brother in assisting dad and giving mom respite. Such alternatives offered the opportunity to navigate the integration of traditional collective cultural expectations and the realities of American life.

On the mainland, my dad's experience with facilities that provided treatment and care were not unique from experiences of other people of color. But, what were our options? Following surgery and removal of a tumor, my dad's functionality decreased to a level of his inability to

perform basic Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). With his functional limitations, doctors, nurses, and social workers contributed to the caregiving continuum, and all of the children and grandchildren took their rounds to ensure 24 hours, 7 days a week support for my dad, and most critically some relief for my mom who was the primary caregiver. Despite close attention to consistently good care, the treatment took a toll on dad's frail body-weight loss from the radiation, constant pain and pain medication/management, disorientation and confusion, and the psychological stress of going from total functionality to almost total dependence on others for basic ADLs.

Two days after discharge from the hospital, dad's situation worsened in terms of his health and well-being, and not being able to perform basic tasks such as feeding himself and attending to his personal hygiene. We needed professional physical therapy assistance. The decision to place my dad in a rehabilitation center took time and energy, given the cultural expectation of caring for our own versus the reality that we do not have the expertise to provide physical therapy. After a Sabbath gathering, where deep conversations were held about how to navigate the Pacific Islander and American aspects of our cultural identity, we generated multiple options. In the end, our option reflected a hybrid that exploited our need to remain embedded in our indigenous Pacific Islander culture yet engage our American lives and opportunities to provide excellent care while still honoring our culture origins. Each sibling and grandchild was tasked with contributing lots of love, visits and resources to mom and dad during this time. Living in the east coast, I flew once or twice a month, in and out of BWI Marshall with my seven-year-old son, hoping to arrive safely in Utah, spend several days with dad and mom, take care of paperwork and answer questions, make arrangements, check in with family to make sure we were on the same page, relieve mom for a few hours, do shopping if necessary, and return home to my family and work. I now have a greater appreciation for collective, hybrid caregiving.

Today, dad is currently walking, talking, eating, and functioning independently at home in Hawai'i with the love of his life by his side; and the meaning for his life, his family (his posterity), providing resources, emotional support, and a friendly voice on the phone. I did not expect a different outcome because my siblings and I were there, physically and emotionally, and mom was certain that God would heal him, period. Since indigenous Pacific Islander culture emphasizes "taking care of our own," placing an elder in any facility outside of the family's home is unacceptable. Challenging these cultural expectations is part of the multi-dimensional life of Pacific Islander Americans, who do not necessarily live in close proximity due to employment, schooling or other endeavors. Such challenges invoke the need to explore alternatives in a continuum from western acceptable to indigenous acceptable, or an integration of the two perspectives. Collective, hybrid models of caregiving offer options for immigrant parents and children.

Traditional Caregiving for Older Adults and Sustainability

Family caregiving solicits the help of spouse, children, grandchildren, relatives, and neighbors. However, older adult care recipients rely predominantly on their spouses and often children, who juggle multiple obligations of work and family (Jette, Tennstedt, & Branch, 1992; Kemper, 1988; Stone, Cafferata, & Sangl, 1987; U.S. Census Bureau, 2007; Wolff & Kasper, 2006).

Regardless of who is providing care, the demands of caregiving can be physically, emotionally and psychologically taxing. In a meta-analysis of 228 studies by Pinquart and Sorensen (2002) examining caregiver burden (George & Gwyther, 1986), which is defined as the impact of bio-psycho-social and financial demands of caregiving, findings indicated that the care recipient's physical impairments and problem behavior were strongly associated with the burden felt by a spouse caregiver. Lima, Allen, Goldscheider, & Intrator (2008) also found that the majority of participating middle-aged care recipients needing some help in ADLs were cared for by their spouses, which was challenging when the spouses were working and raising children. Even though they are cared for primarily by spouses, there are challenges as they continue to age and experience the decrease in federal/funding resources (Iezzoni, 2003; Pastor, Makuc, Reuben, & Xia, 2002; Steinmetz, 2006).

Furthermore, a study by Monin and Schulz (2009) concluded that being constantly exposed to the suffering of the care recipient negatively impacted the caregiver's interpersonal well-being placing him/her at risk for health and mental health problems. But, the impact of such exposure can be mediated by certain factors. For instance, in relation to gender, female caregivers experience more distress compared to their male counterparts (Lutzky & Knight, 1994; Yee & Schulz, 2000). Likewise, closeness between caregiver and care recipient can result in more intense suffering for the caregiver (Tower & Kasl, 1995, 1996), sometimes called compassion fatigue, which most often occurs when a caregiver is unable to regulate his/her emotions (Figley, 2002). In general, negative consequences for caregivers are well documented in the literature. However, studies have also affirmed the feelings of accomplishment, joy and positive effects of caregiving on a caregiver's life (Beach, Schulz, Yee & Jackson, 2000; Brown & Brown, 2006; Brown , Nesse, Vinokur, & Smith, 2003).

Although caregiving for an older adult is not necessarily an equitable enterprise (AARP, 2014), minimizing conflict in the family must be a goal. For instance, expectations of both older adult and potential caregivers must be considered in order to minimize guilt and disappointment. Consideration must also be given to geographic proximity, gender, and emotional closeness, as well as open communication, planning the caregiving arrangement ahead of time, tailoring the arrangement to meet the needs of every member, and focusing on the bottom line of providing good care. Addressing these issues will help avoid misunderstanding and resentments yet contribute to sustainable caregiving for the long haul (Jacobs, 2014).

Despite insufficient attention to caregiving for older adults, organizations such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) are at the forefront of advocating for this population through standards, resources, research, curriculum, and calls to action through the media and technological advancements. The NASW Standards for Social Work Practice with Family Caregivers of Older Adults (2010) speak to the socio-economic and political implications of the increased aging population for families, communities and professionals. These standards acknowledge the significant contribution of older adults to their families and communities, yet recognize the challenges of biopsychosocial dimensions of aging and the need for comprehensive high quality affordable care. The standards also emphasize the need to care for the caregivers who are the backbone for the care received by older adults today and recognize

that for many caregiving has taken a toll on their health, mental health, and financial well-being (Institute of Medicine, 2008, p. 241; National Alliance for Caregiving, 2009).

Some Lessons Learned for Social Work

Increasingly, health disparities among diverse immigrant older adults have become an integral part of social work, particularly as it relates to caregiving. Specifically, researchers have increasingly employed the language of intersectionality to discuss the direct and indirect impact of identities with the social environments. One such identity includes the immigrant. However, the use of identity as a marker for difference runs the risk of ignoring the dynamic exchanges within the environment that shape, and are shaped by, the individuals' interactions. In as much as the individual's identities are culturally bound (Bourdieu, 1990), the cultural context is shaped by multidirectional interactions between the individual and their environments. Among these interactions are individuals' movements between and within communities, which is common among immigrants. Accounts—migration narratives—that reveal these paths, describe forces that include cognitive and historical trends impelling individuals to leave and return to social and geographic communities of origin and host communities (Binnie 2004; Fortier, 2001; Gorman-Murray, 2007, Waitt & Gorman-Murray, 2011; Wotherspoon, 1991). These paths also reveal the network affiliation the individual immigrant engages to adapt to a transforming biopsychosocial environment. Chief among these transformations are aging and increased infirmity and the burden they impose on caregivers within communities, including immigrant communities that are often marginalized.

As social work strives to more deeply understand the lives of older immigrant Americans and their caregivers, it must also recognize that belief and actions within diverse immigrant communities are driven by history, culture and social positioning, which are sometimes at odds with existing morays. Moving beyond straight line approaches to caregiving assessment and intervention, when working with diverse aging populations, we need to ensure we reduce the risk of stripping the contextual milieu from their experiences. Context adds dimension to complex real-world phenomena, and can inform effective interventions that improve quality of life (QOL) and functioning.

Social work must challenge our role in reinforcing a prevailing social order (Dean & Fenby, 1989) that privileges specific methods of intervening with caregiving for elders, and removes the individual from the midst of their communities. Thus, work with diverse immigrant elders eschews specialty driven work. Members of the elder's network of caregiving may span multiple developmental levels from childhood to adulthood or the aged. Accordingly, practice would benefit from tools that initiate narratives providing deeper awareness of environment and embeddedness within communities, both communities of origin and new communities, and the implications for caregiving.

Furthermore, practice that refrains from coercive methods recognizes the importance of rituals, and power and ideologies in shaping the context of all immigrant elders, without privileging what is hegemonic. To achieve just practice with diverse immigrant older adults, social workers must make greater use of participatory engagement with consumer networks across the life

span—beyond presenting and precipitating issues. Rigid adherence to protocols, increasingly demanded by funding and regulatory agencies (Lefton & Rosengren, 1966; Savage, 1987) may reduce risk. However, they may also resist culturally bound methods of addressing issues including caregiving, reifying stereotypic responses that may prove to be less effective, clashing with the cultural expectations and increasing cost for both individuals and their communities. Consequently, best practices with diverse immigrant older adults requires recognition of the intersecting stakeholder needs and reflexive dialogue in conceptualizing social work interventions designed to enhance QOL among immigrant older adults and their caregivers.

From our experiences as immigrant children of immigrant parents, social work educators, providing caregiving supports from a distance, we have learned the art of navigating our multiple cultural and professional identities, which has resulted in hybrid integrated strategies of interaction and caregiving. Our social work backgrounds showed up strong when called upon to make decisions and offer insight in family matters such as caregiving. We also learned that the historic values of our families may be challenged by the lived reality of migration patterns that disperses family members across great distances. Traditional values may also be at odds with prevailing American values. The opportunities our elders sought for us, as hyphenated Americans, often counter American ideologies that place emphasis on affirming individualism and self-determination in place of the collectivism of our motherlands. Further, the structural determinants of the culture, such as gender roles, may at times conflict with highly prized values of professional social work and nursing staff providing primary care for our fathers.

Finally, we learned that our dads' generation of immigrants may be subject to retaliation or mistreatment whenever the system is being questioned. We learned firsthand that health service disparities for ethnic minorities and older adults are realities requiring cultural competency training. We advocate for the critical need for a comprehensive treatment plan inclusive of caregiving (shared with all parties) for older adults, especially those with a terminal illness. We learned the significance of keeping the family informed at all times. We learned that resilience and a life deeply rooted in a higher power are the narratives of our mothers and fathers.

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Trapped in a Pipeline:
The Plight of Too Many Children and Youth
(Exposing the School-to-Prison Pipeline)

Karen Myers

Abstract: The poem that is central to this piece was written to humanize the abstraction of the school-to-prison pipeline. The author, who has worked in public schools over the past two decades, remains troubled by the vulnerable children and youth in our public school systems who increasingly face discriminatory and exclusionary practices, which funnel too many of them into the school-to-prison pipeline. The poem is preceded by a brief overview of the author's experiences and followed by observations and reflections about the young people hurtling through the pipeline. Hope is found in the possibilities presented by more restorative policies and practices.

Keywords: school-to-prison pipeline, restorative justice, narrative poetry, elementary schools, LGBTQ students, zero tolerance

The poem central to this piece is a narrative story to give voice to those whose voices often go unheard. I specifically chose a poetic representation to move readers beyond the words of the narrative, paying attention to the "mutual importance of how something is said along with what is said" (Madison, 2012, p. 239). This narrative poem follows a trajectory from the child in the womb capturing an inner dialogue with his pregnant mother to the subsequent life of the child entering and engaging a punitive public school system.

According to Winterson (2013), "[a] tough life needs a tough language—and that is what poetry is" (p. 40). The following poem is presented as a single story. It represents themes from many untold stories I learned as I worked with children and youth in our public school systems over the past two decades, first, as the director of a learning center at a homeless shelter, then as a lawyer and, finally, for 14 years as a school social worker. During this time, I became increasingly distressed by the discriminatory and exclusionary practices I witnessed, which funnel too many vulnerable students into the school-to-prison-pipeline. The students most often found within the pipeline are students of color, LGBTQ students, students with disabilities, and students of low socioeconomic status. While the school-to-prison-pipeline is not a physical construct like the Dakota Access Pipeline, its trappings are no less intrusive and devastating for those young people who find themselves caught within it.

I remember well the first time I felt its pull on a young African-American elementary school student I was working with. Like the student in the poem, there were many risk factors present long before he started school. I met him in the homeless shelter where he lived with his mother and younger siblings after they left an abusive home environment. I was establishing an on-site learning center at the shelter and his mother brought him for after-school tutoring because he was struggling academically. She forewarned me that he was likely to "act up" and "be disrespectful" when presented with schoolwork but she wanted him to receive the help he

needed and she did not have the skills to help him herself. It did not take long for me to discover that her son was a bright, resourceful child who responded well to nurture, structure and incentives. I had been working with him every day after school for a little over three weeks when he was suspended from school. His mother asked me to attend the suspension meeting with her. During the brief meeting, I was taken aback by the lack of interest in what might be going on with this young student and his family. As the conversation quickly moved to what needed to change with his behavior when he returned to school, I attempted to bring up some of the simple things I had found to be successful in working with him but I was summarily dismissed because the teacher "did not have time to cater to each individual student." I was completely disheartened leaving that meeting and was deeply saddened but not surprised when he was suspended again.

Sadly, there are many, many other stories echoing within the walls of the school-to-prison pipeline. Yet, the marginalization created by the pipeline misrepresents the problem as individual rather than societal so readers are invited to see faces of multiple mamas and sons as they enter the pipeline poem. I wrote it in an effort to put down the narrative that is so often missing in school records, disciplinary meeting minutes, and case summaries. I wanted to find a way to give voice to the untold stories of too many of the young people I have worked with. I chose to craft these lines into a poem because I believe, along with Bell (2010), that "the arts provide a way to engage body, heart and mind to open up learning and develop a critical perspective" (p. 17). The read will not be easy but the lives of children trapped in the school-to-prison pipeline are not easy either as they face the soul-sucking struggle against systemic oppression. As you read the poem, try to imagine what it must feel like to live this. What would it be like to be this child? What would it be like to be his parent?

Humanizing the Pipeline Through Poetry

Mama:
As soon as I was sure I was pregnant
I started trying to buy healthy food
But the good stuff is just too expensive
When Ramen is under five dollars a week
I want this baby to be strong though
He's going to have enough to deal with
Without being sickly and weak too

Son:
I'm not even born
And I already know hunger

Mama:
I know it's a he
Which I worry about
Because boys are hard
I know my brother is
Always getting into trouble

Although I guess some folks would say
This baby is trouble
I won't think of him that way though
I figure enough other folks will

Son:
I love when my mama
Holds me through the
Layers of her own skin
I may not have been planned
But I can tell she loves me

Mama:
I know I gotta be ready to talk to him
My cousin in college
Says a lot of our people
Start out with a word deficit
I know my own mama probably found it hard
To decide between words and food
We could have words if she didn't have
To work so hard to put food on the table
But people never seem to want
To talk about that
It's always what we ain't doing
And not what we are

Son:
I love the sound of
My mama's voice
I hear it all the time
Being inside of her

Mama:
I'm trying to get ready for this baby
But every time I get something saved
There's another bill that takes the little I got away
Choices often don't feel like choices
I wish for a way out sometimes
But I feel so trapped
People don't seem to really see me
When I finally got to the clinic
They didn't even care enough to lecture me
About not coming sooner
I was trying to get my Medicaid
Straightened out

But no one even bothered to ask
It just would have been nice
To believe someone
Anyone
Cared about me and this baby
Who is going to be here
Any day now

Son:
I know those pokes aren't
My mama's hands
Because I've learned her touch
I know her voice too
Today she sounds sad

Mama:
He's here
My sweet baby boy
Who I fell in love with
The minute he arrived

Son:
I'm a sweet baby boy
My mama tells me so
I now clap my hands
Whenever I hear her voice
She talks to me all the time
I lean into her words
Like I do her affection
But time is precious
And there is never enough
With her

Mama:
He started walking
While I was working
I cried and cried to have missed it

Son:
I smacked her wet cheeks
With my chubby baby hands
She smiled at me
Through her tears
She always has a smile for me
Her sweet baby boy

Mama:
Now I get hit
With big man hands
My boyfriend
I step in
Before he hits my boy
I want him to go away
But he provides money
And I'm pregnant
With a new baby
So choices don't feel like choices
Right now

Son:
I want to grow big
So I can help my mama
I could be a doctor
Or a fireman
Or own a store

Mama:
My boy starts school tomorrow
I tell him he can be
Anything he wants to be
I didn't graduate
But I want him to
So he has choices
And isn't stuck like me

Son:
School starts tomorrow
I can't wait
I get to go first
So I can teach
Everything I learn to my sister

Mama:
How can a child
Who was that excited
About starting school
Dislike it so quickly

Son:
I wish I didn't
Have to go to school

I'm always getting into trouble
With my teacher
She never asks what happened
She just gives me that look
And sends me to the corner
Or the hall
Or the principal's office

Mama:
Every time the principal calls
For me to come and get him
I have to take off from work
And lose the little money I'm making

Son:
I wish someone would see
That I'm not bad
I don't like people picking on me
Or saying mean things about
My mama
Or my free lunch
Or my too small clothes
Plus it's hard to sit still
Doing worksheets for so long
I like the experiments we do
Because then I can see it
No matter what we do
I try hard
Because everything I know
I can teach my baby sister

Mama:
My baby girl is getting a head start
Through her brother
He loves to show her letters
And numbers
He's so good with her
He plays with her quietly for hours
So I can get my rest
To work another double shift

Son:
I don't want to teach my sister
Everything I'm learning
As the years pass I learn

More about how "stupid" and
"hyperactive" and
"impulsive" and
"defiant" I am
Than anything else
It gets harder and harder
To keep trying
When no one really sees me

Mama:
Now I'm going to have to figure out
What to do with him
For a whole week
It's getting harder and harder
To be able to take any time off
Because there's always someone else
Ready to take my job

Son:
No one ever asked me
What happened
When I got suspended
For a whole week
I was so tired of
Just taking the shoves
That I shoved back
I didn't mean for him to get hurt
Just to leave me alone
But he hit the edge of a locker
And cut his head
So "violent" was added to
The words used to describe me
The list
Just keeps getting longer
And longer

Mama:
"Violent?!" I say
He may be many things
But I can't see violent
You should see the way he plays
With his sister
Never a more tender moment

Son:
Now the word they are using is
Expulsion
I never intended to use it
I just wanted them to
Leave me alone
I tried "managing my anger"
By talking to a teacher
Or a guidance counselor
But their investigation
Only made things worse
I thought I could just show it
And they would know
Not to mess with me
Or my little sister anymore
Well someone told the principal
I had a knife
And now I'm hearing words
Like zero tolerance
For bringing a weapon to school
I wish they had zero tolerance
For me and my sister
Being picked on all the time
I feel so trapped
And instead of helping out
My mama
I've just made things worse

Mama:
Some lady called me up
And said I could ask for an evaluation
To see if he needed
Special education services
If he does
They might not be able
To expel him
I know he doesn't have a disability
But I don't want him expelled
What will he do all day
While I'm working
I don't want him to end up
Like my brother
Dropped out and in "juvie"
So I might just ask for one
Because I don't know what else to do

And no one ever asks me
What I need

Son:
I can't believe it's come to this
I can learn
If you teach me
I remember not so long ago
When I wanted to learn
Everything I could
To teach my little sister
I wanted to learn
Everything I could
So I could go to college
And get a good job
To make my mama proud
And help her with her bills
Now I just make things worse
I'm starting to believe
What they say about me
Maybe I deserve "juvie"
Like my uncle got
Even though I can't say
I've ever wanted to
Hurt someone
I just want to be left alone
So I can learn
But no one ever asks me
What I want

How the School-to-Prison Pipeline is Created

If you finished the poem feeling despondent, then your feelings mirror those I had while writing it. What else did you feel? Where did those feelings stem from? How do you imagine feeling if you were this young boy or his mother? What could have been different for this family? Every time I reread this poem, I am heartbroken anew at how many junctures there are where things could have gone differently.

I was driven to write this poem out of the desperation I feel having worked both as a lawyer and a social worker with countless young people who are bruised and battered from hitting the interior sides of the pipeline. There are multiple places in the poem where the mama and son expressed a desire to have their needs and wants heard but no one was listening to them. Years ago, I worked with an African-American elementary school student, who had been placed in kinship foster care with a loving, devoted grandmother. She attended every school meeting I ever participated in, and there were many, regarding her grandson. She and I both asked

frequently during those disciplinary meetings if there were any identified triggers that seemed to be causing his negative behaviors as well as anything positive that could be shared about him. Responses ranged from eye-rolling to snorts to "it's impossible to focus on anything positive when he keeps disrupting class." At home, he was kind and caring towards his younger siblings and cousins, most of whom were also in the care of his grandmother, so she was perplexed by his negative behavior at school. More than half of his elementary school career passed before he broke down and told his grandmother about the persistent, aggressive bullying he faced at school. His "outbursts" in class, which were being punished with increasing penalties, were his attempts to protect himself, including leaping out of his chair with a yelp when a lighter was being flicked against the back of his neck. When she asked him why he had waited so long to tell her, his muffled response from within her affectionate embrace broke her heart, "I didn't want to make trouble for you. I did try to tell my teachers but they never did anything and then those kids just treated me worse and worse."

More recently, I worked with a very similarly situated middle school student, who also reported telling his teachers and school administrators about being bullied. He did not dress or play sports or have the same interests as many of the other male students in his middle school. He was a talented dancer but faced constant taunting for his involvement in dance and the clothes he wore. He was given detention and suspended multiple times for self-protective reactions, which were typically last resorts as he did everything he could to avoid his tormenters. His angry grandmother alienated school personnel as she zealously advocated for her grandson. I found myself feeling the same anger as I heard excuses made for the bullying coupled with strict adherence to discipline policies which penalized the tormented student.

As a school social worker, I participated in many discipline-related meetings where my purported role was to share issues that I uncovered during home visits that directly influenced student behavior. However, the school system's zero tolerance policies often mandated the student's removal, regardless of the issues I found and my advocacy for alternative solutions. Students and parents were invited to these meetings where they were simply informed of the student's suspension or expulsion. I found the same to be true when I was involved as a lawyer representing students in school discipline cases. One of my most memorable involved a mandatory expulsion for a high school student who was accused of bringing a weapon to school. The weapon, discovered when the student walked through a metal detector at the entrance of his school, turned out to be a razor that was embedded in a CD opener the student had received on a school-sponsored field trip. I found myself incredulous as the facts unfolded and were presented to a school administrator, who was unwilling to budge on zero tolerance policies that "were put in place to protect students." How was the student I was representing a risk to other students? He didn't even know he had a razor in the plastic CD opener he picked up at the table of an advertising sponsor at the electronics fair he attended with his class. What about the protections he deserved?

Often when the school-to-prison pipeline is discussed, school policies, like zero tolerance, are brought up because they tend to punish and exclude certain students, which leads to a premature exit from school and entrance into the juvenile justice system. Many school districts hold onto these policies in spite of the fact that studies have found they do not improve school safety but

rather have negative effects on student behaviors and increase the likelihood for further disciplinary problems (Teasley, 2014; American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008). "In general, punishment serves to restrain a child temporarily but does little to teach self-discipline directly" (Amstutz & Mullet, 2005, p. 11). Furthermore, I have found that children and youth typically act out behaviorally to meet an unmet need. If we are so busy punishing them and sending them further along the school-to-prison pipeline, we lose the opportunity to uncover that underlying need and address it directly.

The Pervasive Nature of the Pipeline

Even when zero tolerance policies were not in place or triggered by an event, the responses to students' difficulties were often mind boggling. Not only were they illogical but they served to funnel students faster through the pipeline. I could never wrap my mind around suspending students, even more so, sending them to juvenile detention, for truancy. Is punishing students by suspending them the best we can do to encourage school attendance? In the majority of attendance-related meetings I attended over the years, truancy was rarely the problem but rather a symptom of a greater need, like escaping harassment and bullying and/or needing to help provide financial support to the student's struggling family. I will never forget the truancy meeting where we learned that a 16-year-old Latino student was working full-time, including closing for a local fast food restaurant, because his mother had lost her job and he was the only one in the family bringing in any income. He was late to school because when he got home around 2 a.m. each morning he was trying to do his homework before falling into bed. He had multiple alarms set in his room but often slept through them and arrived to school late. He was suspended for his heroic efforts.

The trend towards suspending students for "typical adolescent developmental behaviors as well as low-level type misdemeanors: acting out in class, truancy, fighting, and other similar offenses" has occurred across school systems but particularly, in those that are overburdened and underfinanced (Mallet, 2016a). My experiences also suggest that the pipeline is widening and lengthening, and some children, like the son in the poem, are born on the inside as opposed to entering from the outside. "The injustice of inequality actually precedes birth as its corrosive effects are at work already in the womb" (Komlos, 2015). Komlos, a professor emeritus of economics and economics history, describes many of the factors this mother experiences in the poem—stress, anxiety, poor nutrition, abuse, and infrequent doctor visits or no visits at all, as having a deleterious impact on a child's life long before he enters school. If a child is lucky enough to be born healthy, chronic stress in early childhood impacts cognitive development, making it harder for him to concentrate, control impulses, and follow directions (Snellman, 2015). These behaviors often lead to problems as soon as the child starts school. According to the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, disparities in the children receiving out of school suspensions start as early as preschool with black children receiving more school suspensions than their white peers (U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2014). Additional studies of school exclusion report evidence of disproportionate punishment, particularly based on race, sexual orientation, and ability (Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Mallett, 2014; Snapp, Hoenig, Fields, & Russell, 2015; Wilson, 2013).

Restorative Justice as a Dismantling Tool

It is easy to feel hopeless when confronted with the realities of the school-to-prison-pipeline; however, increasing evidence is finding that school discipline codes, including zero tolerance policies, can be modified to include alternatives, which actually improve school environments and make schools safer for all students (Mallett, 2016b). Restorative justice is a promising philosophy and set of principles, which can disrupt and dismantle the pipeline when it is embraced whole-heartedly and implemented effectively. It can have many different applications but it is based on an alternative paradigm of justice that focuses on healing and relationship building rather than punishing (Zehr, 2002; van Wormer, 2004). Several school districts have successfully implemented restorative justice programs, including ones in California and Illinois (Skinner, Silverman, & Frampton, 2010; Ashley and Burke, 2009). A restorative justice approach can be used with a specific incident but it is even more transformative as a proactive measure to bring people together as a way of building community and strengthening relationships before problems arise (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012).

For the son in the poem, a restorative justice circle convening would have given him a chance to be heard. He would have been asked to identify his needs as well as his responsibilities. The restorative justice process is about seeking solutions together. It is not about pointing fingers at the student misbehaving or the administrator suspending but giving both the chance to identify their needs and responsibilities and then creating accountability to each other, which builds relationships rather than reinforcing anger and isolation.

I have witnessed firsthand the marked difference in demeanor of a student sitting in a meeting where he is being punished versus a restorative justice process where he is being asked to participate in finding a solution. The student leaving the disciplinary meeting was suspended and angrily left the building escorted by school security. The student leaving the restorative justice process was committed to taking responsibility for his behavior while receiving support and resources to meet his identified needs. As he left, he shook hands and made eye contact with all participants before heading to a room where he was given time to write and reflect on the process. The student who was suspended possibly learned a school rule and the consequence for breaking it; the student who participated in the restorative justice process had the opportunity to develop important life skills, like empathic listening, collaboration, creative problem-solving, responsibility, and self-awareness.

Uniting to Pull the Pipeline Apart

Societal factors and institutional practices that lead to inequities, marginalization, and oppression can be identified all along the pipeline. It seems to me we cannot expect vulnerable young people to willingly participate in restorative responses to disciplinary incidents if we are unwilling to employ those restorative approaches to address the systemic marginalization and oppression that impacts their daily lives. Resiliency is evident in the continued efforts of vulnerable children and youth to resist the pipeline but too often hope wanes as efforts prove useless. As the poem progresses, you can hear the despair and defeat creep into the son's voice.

What might have been different for the family in the poem if there had been more resources and support available early on? What might have been different for them if the principal had offered a restorative justice process as soon as the son started "getting into trouble" instead of sending him home to an empty house or a parent who was in danger of losing her job by missing work to be there? How can we ensure that our school environments foster open, inclusive communities as opposed to rigid, oppressive pipelines? In an educational setting, should we not view every incident as an opportunity to provide our children and youth with valuable life skills?

I believe we must create spaces for voices, like those of the mama and son in this poem, to be heard and their needs considered in order to interrupt the pipeline, and hopefully, ultimately dismantle it. We also need more research on how restorative practices benefit students and school communities as opposed to exclusionary practices, like zero tolerance policies. When the pipeline is reinforced and stream-lined, it not only negatively impacts our vulnerable children and youth, it threatens us all.

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Between Then and Now: My Coming, Being, and Staying in Urban/Rural Canada

Bharati Sethi

Abstract: This article uses narrative and poetry to describe the author's experiences of coming, being and staying in an urban-rural region in Ontario, Canada. Such rare reflective insider narratives are vital to understand newcomer integration in the milieu of immigrant dispersion from large urban centres (such as Toronto) to smaller communities. Immigrant integration requires genuine collaboration between academics, service providers and policy makers. It is only when we stop Othering those we consider 'strangers' that we can then create safe spaces where white, brown, black, and not-so-white bodies can live together in harmony, creating vibrant and inclusive communities.

Keywords: rural, immigration, visible minority, community-based participatory research, poetry

Between Then and Now: My Coming, Being, and Staying in Urban/Rural Canada

I hugged my oversized 'made in Nepal' coat tighter as I made my way to a local restaurant in a mid-sized urban-rural region of Southwestern Ontario. My feet were so cold that I could barely feel them through the 'made in Nepal' shoes, seeped in icy wet slush. My body still remembers the warmth of my first winter jacket and winter shoes bought from a local thrift store. I slept in them for the first night of purchase, sweating in my heated bachelor apartment. As I made my way to the restaurant, the shopkeeper looked at my young thin brown body with distrust. I clung tightly to dollar bills; my shoes torn and dirty and my oversized jacket covering my petite frame. Oh! Those harsh and lonely seven years as a foreign worker. My precarious immigration status marginalized me repeatedly. I was trapped. I could not quit my job. The employer's words/actions could have me deported. I could not offend him. I was a slave in multicultural Canada. I could not change jobs as no one wanted to take upon them the burden of foreign worker sponsorship. Someday, I promised myself…. Someday, I would attain my freedom from the shackles of immigration. I could smell my freedom in the wet earth. I could see my freedom in the raindrops. I could hear my freedom in the thunder. For now, I had to accept the unacceptable.

From the moment I stepped into this whites-only-town, I was exposed to the white stare. "What was it this time?" "What was it about me that consumed all their attention?" I wondered. Was it my brown body? Was it my dress? Was it my accent? Was it my black hair? "Did they know about my precarious immigration status?" I wondered. Perhaps it was merely the curiosity and/or fascination with the Other. At first, I could not pin down the reason. But always I sensed its hostility. Or was it abhorrence? Every time my gaze met the white stare my body stiffened. My nails would pierce deep into my skin drawing blood. One day in the mall a mother grabbed her wandering child, eyeing me with suspicion. I knew then, from the fear in that mother's eyes, that I was a stranger in this town.

Danger lurked at every corner. They wanted to get rid of me. I, the stranger was not welcomed in this town. I did not belong here. I was the outsider. My brown skin posed danger to the "purified space of the community, the purified life of the good citizen, and the purified body of "the child" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 33). Walking home from work, I was always afraid of my own shadow. The complex intersections of multiple racialized identities (such as my youth, gender, class, ethnicity, and foreignness) made me an easy target of white men waiting to shame me. I still tremble when I hear the words "Paki" or "Indian Slut" or "GO HOME."

Even though I am now a citizen of Canada I wake up with flashbacks, tremble with fever and reach out for my pills to save me whenever I recall that black night. It was 2 a.m. I was walking home from work. Cabs were expensive. I needed every penny to secure my freedom. I stuck to the main roads, avoiding the park that would have reduced my travel time by at least 15 minutes. My aching feet yearned to go home. I noticed a car following me. I tried to walk fast. Faster. Run. Run. I wished I had my rescued Newfoundland dog with me. The car moved faster. Suddenly its wheels were crawling by my side. Large arms reached out to touch me. Their breath made me sick. Beer and cheap cigar smell spread like rotten weed in the air. I looked around for help. Back then, the downtown was a ghost town, with the streets lined with abandoned businesses. If I screamed, no one would hear me. Even if they did hear me, no one would come to rescue a minority brown woman. People do not feel safe around strangers. Barely breathing, I sprinted as fast as I could. The adrenaline carried my legs faster than the wheels of the car. I ran across the railway tracks screaming as the freight train driver blew the horn so loudly that it woke up the city. I almost died. But my trembling youth was safe. Physically, there were only a few scratches on my body. Emotionally and mentally I was forever scarred.

As I half-walked and half-ran to my apartment, I saw police lights flashing. The officer was approaching a red Toyota. My legs were aching. My heart was beating so fast that I thought the policeman would know I was so close by. I took a longer route home. I needed to stay in Canada. NO! I could not go back home even though it was clear that I was not welcome here. The patriarchal Canadian immigration policies made me vulnerable to employer exploitation. I was an easy target of immigrant officials who did not want to burn the midnight lamp at work. I worked 80 hours a week for seven days for food and shelter. I never saw a pay cheque for seven and a half years.

For a young single brown woman alone in the world there seemed to be no safe place. Canadian streets were as frightening as Mumbai streets. In Mumbai, at least I knew my way around. There, at least I had a legal status. Every time I served a customer at the restaurant I worked at I wondered if he was an immigration official. I get chills every time I recall the faces of my two Mexican colleagues being dragged by undercover federal officials from the restaurant. I had run away from Mumbai. I was not safe at home. In Canada, I was still running. I worked like a slave. I was at my employer's beck and call. My payment was his powerful signature on my immigration visa. I endured it all: the employer abuse, the racialization, and my marginalization at the unique intersections of gender, race, immigrant status, and nationality. Being homeless I longed for HOME. I longed for the taste of curried vegetables and lentils, the sweet fragrance of incense, and samosas and spicy chutney. I ached to belong. I wanted to be free. Bloodied and bruised, I dreamed of flying to safety.

I still remember the dawn of my freedom. The sun shone brightly, melting the frost that had settled on the window of my bachelor apartment. I arrived in Buffalo, New York, United States of America, to a room full of nervous bodies—brown, black, and white—some, not so brown, not so black and not so white. Regardless of our country of origin we were here for one reason alone. We wanted to prove to the Canadian government that we were a worthy investment. We hoped to walk out of Buffalo with a permanent immigration status. I had dreamed of this day for so long. In my dreams, I had held the immigration document close to my bosom. Finally, that day that promised my freedom had arrived. I had found a Jones New York blue suit at a local thrift store. It fitted me like a glove. I wasn't used to the high heels, the lipstick or the hair spray. I needed to look my best. I needed to prove that I was good enough to be here, in Canada where I had spent the long seven years in employer slavery.

I yearned to be free from the bonds of slavery. After four hours of painful waiting a Chinese woman with whom I had been conversing tapped me on my shoulder, "I think they are calling you." My trembling legs carried me to the interview room. "Gazing outside I wondered how difficult it would be to hurl my body through the glass window and end my misery" (Sethi, 2012, p. 88). I worried that my heavy breathing would annoy the officer, a white middle-aged woman with an English accent. Leaving me alone with my agony and fears, she paraded in and out of the room in great urgency. Outside the door, I could hear whispering. I think they were talking about me. As I had not applied for residency through the normal immigration channels, such as Family Class Sponsorship Policy, Skilled Migration or Refugee Status, it made me a unique case (Sethi, 2012). The local Member of Parliament had recommended my case to the Canadian government.

After what seemed an eternity, she heaved a large sigh and lowering her glasses she asked me, "Miss, are you ready to land today?" (Sethi, 2012, p.88). I walked to the waiting room clinging to my immigration documents and barely noticing the apprehensive face of the Chinese woman. Shock had frozen my tears. Nonchalantly, I picked up the public phone and informed my lawyer, "I am here to stay in the land of Oh Canada. Thank you!" His congratulatory screams seemed so far away. I was finally free of employment slavery.

I came to Canada. I stayed in Canada. My tragedies prepared me for a deeper intimacy with life. It made me emotionally resilient. I found the process of beingness and becoming continual and fragile. It's required compassion for self and for other sentient beings. Love that does not discriminate: "she is black," "she is white," "she is Canadian," "she is an immigrant," etcetera, et cetera, etcetera, and considers human bodies of all colours as human beings. As a newcomer to Canada, I often experienced in the white stare a loathing directed towards me as if I was not even human. Theoretically, all pervading love sounds beautiful. Experientially, I have found that even after obtaining my landed immigrant status my brown body continued to be subjected to discrimination. For example, when I was looking for work I was advised by the guidance counsellor to make an appointment with several human resource specialists and get critical feedback on my resume. My first interview with the human resource specialist seemed very much like the immigration interview. I wore the same suit I had worn at the interview. I was nervous but confident of the skills I was bringing to the interview. I was excited to hear about the range of possibilities awaiting me now that I had Canadian education. A woman with a

plastered smile and a cold handshake invited me to her luxurious office. Politely she advised, "You must change your name. Your name is too difficult to pronounce. You will never find a job with a name such as yours."

What has my name got to do with my education, experience and skills? Change my name? Did she know about the holy naming ceremony in India when babies are given their name? This was my identity. B-h-a-r-a-t-i was named after Mother India, B-h-a-r-a-t. I was a landed immigrant. I sang *Oh Canada*. Yet I did not belong here. Now to survive, I needed to rip my beingness apart. All over again I was thrown violently in the stranger box. I changed my name to Jessica. The next four years I spent as Jessica. I needed to eat. I needed to pay my bills. I hated Jessica infringing upon my skin. My skin was broken. I was not J-e-s-s-i-c-a. I was B-h-a-r-a-t-i. Jessica was like an ulcer on my skin reminding me that I still did not belong here. My authentic beingness that connects my humanness with another was not honored. I was still a foreigner. I was a stranger.

Yet, I stayed. I was free of the bureaucratic nightmare of immigration. I needed to reclaim my name. The wind was slowly changing direction. Amidst white stares peeked a frightened brown face. Over time these faces grew. I saw myself in their shadows. I felt their pain of nothingness. Being nothing. Being invisible. Their voiceless voices wept for beingness. They wept for belonging. I had been through it all. I needed to stay. For them. For me. After all, with freedom comes responsibility: responsibility towards self, towards the community and towards the nation. There was no time for rest. My new immigration status gave me power. I was determined to use this power for advocacy of brown bodies and racialized skins. I could use my lived experiences to help newcomers from non-European nations to re-settle here. To do that, I had to break into white circles. Making positive change in a dangerous world, I had to learn to stare back. And I did stare back. First with defiance and anger. Then with compassion. The journey to reclaiming my name was filled with a purpose. I envisioned this region transformed to a place where the voiceless voices would be heard, a place where the invisible bodies become visible, and a place where white, brown, black, and not so black bodies lived in wholeness—human wholeness.

As days turned into nights and months into years, the heavy suffocating air gave way to a gentle wind. It was a great time to make change. The sustainability of large metropolitan areas was being threatened due to most newcomers wanting to settle in urban areas. Canadian rural regions were losing young people to out migration for employment purposes. Federal governments' geographical dispersion policies were expected to solve both these problems by moving immigrants and refugees from large centres to smaller towns and rural regions. To foster newcomer integration this region received large funding from the government. I joined hands with local stakeholders—social workers, health care providers, policy makers, employers, and immigrants. We were united in our convictions to make this community inclusive for newcomers of all colours, ability and orientation. It did not matter that we were from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Bodies of all colours, including white, yearned to identify with and humanize those recognized as 'strangers.' We shattered the doors behind which the white supremacist ideologies flourished. We risked our lives for the future of this community and this nation by exposing ourselves to the press. We organized peace marches, peace rallies and community gatherings for all.

At last, the powerful and not so powerful took notice of my (our) ruptured skin(s). White stares diminished. The voiceless could speak. Their voices were heard at every corner of the city. The invisible bodies were not lost any more. They found their path under the dazzling sun. The seeds of change flourished in determination, collaboration and patience. Beyond the love for international cuisine, the exotic ethnic dresses, and the provocative dances, there is now appreciation of human beingness and belongingness. Today, this is a place where black, brown, gay, straight, and other bodies can blossom into wholeness.

And finally, I shouted aloud. I am B-h-a-r-a-t-I. I reclaimed me. I belong. Period. There is a dignified space for my brown body in this community. I am at home when I walk downtown—as an activist, scholar, teacher, and a citizen of Canada. I am valued. With belonging came being and becoming who I am today. My words have the power to foster change. J-e-s-s-i-c-a belonged to my past. Every now and then I notice her in a newcomer, a lesbian, a visible minority, a person with a disability, a refugee… trying to belong. I loathed J-e-s-s-i-c-a. I am now aware that without Jessica I may not have persevered for my freedom, our freedom. In my work as an educator I draw upon the experiences of Jessica and Bharati. I look through both their lenses. Each provided me with new insights into life's meaning. Students that I engage with have entered social work to make a positive change in the world. They have lofty goals. Their youth is restless. The older students are also in a hurry. They have been through the dark side. They want to see the light in their work. Somewhere in the journey the young and the old get tired of the problems in the world. When they are feeling hopeless, I tell them that the night will not last forever. They have the power to light a candle and help someone get through the night. Until that moment it never dawned on them that in helping ONE person, they can help change the course of the community.

My personal narrative is both ontological and public (see Somers, 1993, 1994) at the same time. Ontological, as this narrative helped me locate my place in my new world, Canada. Public, because my narrative is "attached to cultural and institutional formations larger than the single individual, to intersubjective networks or institutions, however local or grand" (Somers, 1994, p. 619). I hope that my narrative inspires others to write their narrative. In our individual and collective narratives, there is potential for creating a new world here in Canada and globally—a world that is inclusive and celebrates diversity.

Below, through poetry, I express my coming, being, and staying in this urban-rural region…

(I)

Intense nervous tension
Is all around me

My home
My work
My neighbourhood.

People are walking
Running
Trying to get somewhere

All the while staring at me
My brown skin.

They are not really talking to me
They are not really listening to me
I am tired of their repeated questions
'Where is this accent from?"
"Where are you really from?"

I do not belong in this small whites-only-town.
I do not see another brown or black body.
I feel alone
I am homeless
Uprooted from my beingness.
I am placeless
I am voiceless
I do not belong…. here.
I am an immigrant visible minority woman
Living in an urban/rural white Canada.
With all my courage
I pause
I smile
I stretch out my brown hand
To white bodies
At work

In my neighbourhood.
Some touch me
from a distance
Others ignore my friendly gestures.
Very few come close enough to start a conversation,
"Where is that accent from?"
"Where are you really from?"
I feel alone.
Oh! So alone
Uprooted
Homeless
Placeless
Voiceless
In an urban/rural white Canada
Unused to black and brown bodies
Immigrants and refugees.
There are…
No Hindu temples
No ethnic stores

No Asian restaurants
No Settlement Services.
I want to run away
        To Toronto, Vancouver…
Somewhere I can be home.
That was then,
My experiences in an urban/rural community in Canada
In the 1990's.

(II)

Now, decades later
This urban-rural community is my home
        MY home.
No longer a newcomer.
I have joined hands
With settlement workers, service providers, social workers, and policy makers
To bring forth empowering change…
We are dedicated
To newcomer resettlement in this urban-rural region in Canada.
Japanese, Mexican, Chinese, Thai, and Mediterranean cuisine
Have flooded the market.
To meet the demands of
Black
        Brown
                and not-so white bodies.
Even white bodies
Are expanding their palate
By trying something new.

There is a mosque
A Gurudwara
And a non-denominational church.
Fierce efforts are being made
To help new immigrants make this region their home
They do not want them to make a life here
In this once whites-only-town.
.

(III)

Nervous tension is still around me
But it's less intense
People still ask me,
                "Where is that accent from?"
                                "Where are you really from?"
Alas!
The tension has shifted

From me
To other newcomers…
Post-911
Islamophobia has spread in some corners of this region
White and non-white heterosexual gaze is on Gays and Lesbians
Marching proudly on gay pride day.
I strain my eyes and cannot find
Many black, brown, and not so white bodies
In the march
In the crowd.
Race
Sexual Orientation
Gender
Immigration status
Geography
Ethnicity, Class, and/or Ability intersect
To marginalize the marginalized
In a white urban/rural heterosexual town.
For sure! More work is needed to foster newcomer resettlement
…accessible healthcare
...improved transportation infrastructure
…professional jobs
…culturally and affordable childcare.
Together
WE need to address the white stare
The gaze
That Others
That dehumanizes visible minority bodies.

(IV)

I have hope.
I see promise.
The sun is shining brightly in this not-so-white urban-rural community.
Between 'then' and 'now' I have come to realise that
'Place'-urban or rural-- is not just a geographic setting
How I experience place is closely connected to my identity.
My beingness.
My sense of belonging.
This white urban/rural community is now my 'home'
In a land where I arrived as a stranger
A foreign worker with no voice.
A stranger.
I have found my voice.
I have found belonging here.
I am no longer homeless.

I am no longer placeless.
I am home
I have a voice
I have a place
In this non-so white urban/rural community in Canada.
Nervous tension will always be around me
There will always be someone who will ask,
"Where is that accent from?"
"Where are you really from?"

Conclusions

It has been 20 years since I came to Canada. I have lived here longer than in India. Oh! I was so excited when I was successful in my Canadian citizenship exam. I had worked all night and received a perfect score. Tearfully, I swore allegiance to the Queen. Proudly I walked out into the streets as Bharati. I could finally leave Jessica behind. Oh! No. That white stare again. I was shocked. I was still a stranger. I thought when I would successfully obtain my Canadian citizenship I would then inhabit the Canadian body. At the very least not be so visible to remain a stranger. I have lost count of how many times I have been asked, "Where are you really from?" I am Ahmed's (2000) unassimilable stranger. My continuous defiance of "multicultural hospitality" (Ahmed, 2000, p. 113) by challenging the politics of integration has permanently branded my body with the word "stranger."

Looking back on my life, I realise that often I had allowed myself to be seduced by the mirage of multiculturalism and integration. However, I have no regrets. After all, it is in Canada that I found solace from abuse. In becoming and being the other in a foreign country, I made friends with the multiple and fluid narratives of my identity. Today, I am comfortable in my discomfort to inhabit a vulnerable space somewhere between being recognized as a stranger again (Ahmed, 2000) and my care for the well-being of Canadian lives. The promise of my social, economic, cultural, and political integration is individually and collectively linked to other voices and identities, each trying to find a space in multicultural societies. In my efforts to nurture my ontological centre, I extend my hand to white, not-so white, brown, and black bodies. As I delve deeper into Bharati passing as Jessica, I realise that I/we need to know more about Jessica and her struggles if I/we want to make Canada and other multicultural societies a welcome space for newcomers. In sum, without honoring the experiences of the stranger within I cannot engage in an open and honest dialogue about Us (natives of Canada) versus Them (strangers to Canada).

Then, my racialized body in a white-only-town was perceived as a stranger. Fear and danger and race and space were stuck together like glue to make me the Other, the Outsider. Now, as I look outside the window of my small cottage home I wave to my neighbour, a white old man. He smiles and waves back. I look at the sky and see a rainbow. My world is transformed. I am glad that I came, I became, and I stayed. Not so far away, a young refugee enters the city gates wearing an oversized coat, dreams in his pocket, and eyes glittering with hope. An old woman with trembling hands and suspicious eyes taps his shoulders "Young man, where are you from?" I shut my window. Oh! To be a stranger in multicultural Canada.

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It's Not All About The Behaviors: Identifying and Addressing Relational Neglect in Adolescence within the Familial Environment

Tawanda L. Hubbard

Abstract: As an in-home therapist working with adolescents, the presenting problem in most of my referrals focuses on the adolescent's behaviors and the negative impact on his or her family and community. The most common solution is to place the youth in an out-of-home placement. Here, I share some of my most poignant cases, in order to illustrate how some adolescents, labeled the problem, suffer from what I call relational neglect. It is a phenomenon I define as the absence of nourishing interactions of attunement and quality connection within the familial environment. The two adolescents in this paper were described as the problem at home because they demonstrated oppositional behaviors and poor attitudes. Caregivers were under the illusion the adolescents' behaviors were created in isolation. I will utilize the cases of Mike and Michelle to join the debate on neglect, to challenge negative notions of adolescence, and to address relational neglect in adolescence. I will make a call to action for all clinical social workers working with families with adolescents to assess and treat relational neglect, which requires a focus on quality connections and the adolescents' lived experiences, habits, and attunement with caregivers.

Keywords: neglect, relational neglect, adolescence, parent-adolescent relationship, in-home therapy, child welfare, parenting, oppositional behaviors in adolescence, clinical practice with adolescents.

I am an in-home therapist working with cases where "in-home" means that I work with clients in their biological family's home, shelters, juvenile detention facilities, foster homes, and non-traditional family settings. Regardless of where the therapy takes place—and taking into consideration that my therapeutic venues can change during the course of treatment because of my clients' unstable family lives—every time I get a referral from someone seeking my expertise in adolescence, I hear the same thing: the adolescent is entitled, only wants to do what he or she wants to do, and it's all about his or her behaviors and the perceived negative impact on his or her family and community.

Here, I will share two of my most poignant cases to demonstrate that adolescents who get the worst rap often suffer from what I call relational neglect. For example, there was Mike[1], a 14-year-old Black male who was referred to me by CMO[2] because he constantly broke curfew,

[1] All the client names in this case study were changed and the case material disguised for confidentiality purposes.

[2] CMO stands for Care Management Organization, which "are agencies that provide a full range of treatment and support services to children with the most complex needs. They work with child-family teams to develop individualized service plans. The CMO's goals are to keep children in their homes, their schools and their

failed some classes in school, and stole from a local store. I worked with him in four different settings—at home with his father, in a shelter, in juvenile detention, and with his paternal grandparents after he was discharged from running away from his group home placement—over a three year period. Then there is Michelle, a 16-year-old Puerto Rican and Black female, who was referred to me by Mobile Response[3] due to promiscuous behaviors, sneaking out at night, and a "bad attitude"—labels thrust upon her without mention of her mother's mental illness or her mother's desire to have Michelle removed from the home. I worked with her for 8 months until she was accepted into Job Corps out-of-state. Both adolescents were described as the problem at home because they demonstrated oppositional behaviors and poor attitudes. Caretakers were under the illusion that their behaviors were created in isolation—separate from the parent-child relationship, familial environment, and community.

My point is that children do not exist outside of their familial relations. According to Abbey and Keynes (2008), "we can only know ourselves and develop through connection with others" (p. 92). Russon (2003) argues, "in our day-to-day dealings we rely heavily upon habits we have developed for coping with the most familiar situation" (p. 16). The parent-child relationship, family system, and community are core agents of the socialization process of children—creating the context and experiences in which children develop the habits and skills that will help them flourish or cripple them. As Vygotsky states, "an interpersonal process is transformed into an intrapersonal one" (1978, p. 57), and over time habits form from interactions within the familial environment and community—the "familiar situation."

But what is brought to the clinical social worker's attention is what is visible—the adolescent's behaviors, implying that the problem is located solely in the adolescent. Thus, it is the clinical social worker's job to make the "invisible visible"—to look not at the adolescent alone, but the adolescent-in-environment. This is challenging when caregivers and authority figures in relationships with adolescents insist that the adolescent needs to change, must comply, and do what he or she is told without protest and without curiosity about what is driving the oppositional behaviors and poor attitudes. They are ignorant of their part in the problematic interactions.

A question I always ask myself is, what are the oppositional behaviors saying; they're not just a reflection of the adolescent, but the parent-child relationship and what is in operation in the familial environment that this is the primary mode of communication being used? Often we ask

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communities." The CMOs are a part of New Jersey's DCF's Children's System of Care (CSOC), "formerly the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services serves children and adolescents with emotional and behavioral health care challenges and their families; children with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families; and, children with substance use challenges and their families. CSOC is committed to providing services based on the needs of the child and family in a family-centered, community-based environment." http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/csc/

[3] "Mobile Response and Stabilization Services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to help children and youth who are experiencing emotional or behavioral crises. The services are designed to defuse an immediate crisis, keep children and their families safe, and maintain the children in their own homes or current living situation (such as a foster home, treatment home or group home) in the community." http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/families/csc/

questions that focus on the family history, parenting style, the parents' relationship, substance abuse, criminality, mental illness, interpersonal and community violence, child abuse—the list goes on and on—trying to get a picture of the family and environment—forgetting the person of the adolescent in all of this. That's what got me thinking: could it be neglect and if so, what type of neglect?

Today, neglect is mainly defined as omission of care. Neglect is generally overshadowed and treated as an appendage to abuse, even though it is the most prevalent form of child maltreatment (Wolock & Horowitz, 1984; Wilson & Horner, 2005; McSherry, 2006; Children's Bureau, 2013; Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2013). There are known subtypes of neglect: physical, emotional, self, medical, educational and environmental, which are emphasized variously based on state laws and professions (Buckley, 2000; Erickson, 2002). Historically, the debate on neglect has focused on the various causes of neglect: poverty, bad mothering, parental failure and dysfunction, and society's economic shortcomings to alleviate poverty (Wolock & Horowitz, 1984; Swift, 1995; Scourfield, 2000; McSherry, 2004; & Dubowitz, 2007).

Primary legislation continues to target the family as the primary locus of problems. Child Protective Services (CPS) concentrates on "basic needs" (housing, food, clothing, employment, and supervision) being met when investigating neglect cases. According to the Children's Bureau (2012), the "difficulties in creating specific definitions of neglect contribute to the lack of consistency in research on neglect as well as CPS responses to neglect" (p. 3). This lack of consistency in research on neglect and a primary definition of neglect that focuses on basic needs don't just impact CPS response, but also the clinical social worker's treatment of the adolescent and their family. Having the subtype of "relational neglect"—the absence of nourishing interactions of attunement and quality connection within the familial environment—can assist clinical social workers to assess and address the gap in adolescent treatment related to the interdependent relationship between the adolescent and her familial environment. Relational neglect is different from emotional neglect: "isolating the child; not providing affection or emotional support; exposing the child to domestic violence or substance abuse" (Children's Bureau, 2012, p. 3). Addressing relational neglect will bring a focus on how the relationship is developed and experienced by youth. It requires examining the adolescents' lived experiences, habits, attachments, and attunement with significant caregivers. This entails having a clear picture of a quality connection, which Maureen Walker (2004) describes:

> To experience connection is to participate in a relationship that invites exposure, curiosity, and openness to possibility. Simply put, connection provides safety from contempt and humiliation; however, it does not promise comfort. Indeed, connection may be—and often is—a portal to increase conflict, because safety in relationship allows important differences to surface. How those differences are treated is a telling indicator of the quality of connection—that is, the extent to which an interaction embodies an increase sense of self-worth, clarity, zest, and desire for more of the relationship (p. 9).

Having this clear picture of a quality connection equips the clinical social worker in addressing and treating relational neglect and teaching the caregiver and adolescent about the need and utility for quality connections for the adolescents in the familial environment and community.

Why It Matters

Thinking about relational neglect in adolescence brings attention to the relationship between the adolescent and their caregivers, the possibility that neglect could exist, and the importance of the relationship in today's society. This is countercultural to a society that values success, independence, and emphasizes adolescents going through the maturation process of separation and autonomy (Verhaeghe, 2014). The idea of valuing the relationship between the parent and adolescent and fostering interdependence is imperative with so many demands on the family. In timelines of family development, adolescence has become "a period in which young people are more susceptible than in the past to risky behaviors, mental health problem, and difficulties in making a successful transition to adulthood" (Steinberg, 2014, p. 15). The relationship the family cultivates with the adolescent is the means used to teach, support, guide, and mentor the adolescent through this vulnerable period.

The two adolescents I introduced at the beginning of the paper are just a sample of the many youth I work with who are treated as the problem, with no accountability on the part of the caregiver and community in how the adolescent's behaviors and poor attitudes came into existence and maintained. The adults in the youth's life take the position of blameless bystander; they see themselves as victims of the adolescent's behaviors, mindless about the quality of relationship they forged between them and the adolescent. I am concerned about this group of adolescents who get labeled the problem in the family and community, and placed outside of the home and community to be "fixed" with zero-to-limited involvement from the family.

The problem was created in the familial environment through relationship and should be solved in the familial environment through relationship. Yet a myth persists with some parents and families who feel that when a child reaches adolescence, he is mature and should do the right thing in spite of the parent-child relationship, experiences of the youth, and what the adolescent was exposed to in the familial environment and community. Steinberg (2014) argues, "Adolescence is a confusing time, but it's not the people in the midst of it who are confused, indeed adults are far more bewildered by adolescence than are young people themselves" (p. 1). Adults must think of adolescents as persons embedded within a community of others—communities the adults create and co-inhabit with adolescents—in order to promote interdependence, not independence. This idea challenges parents, families, and communities to look at the experiences they are creating for and with the adolescent.

Neglect of Neglect: The Challenge and Opportunity of Defining Neglect

The phrase *neglect of neglect* is well known in the literature on neglect. The phrase was coined by Wolock and Horowitz (1984), who draw attention to the need to view neglect from a social problem framework. They cite the challenge to assign effective measures and actions to solve the problem, and they question how to do so when the problem's definition is ambiguous, vague, and lacks consensus. Wolock and Horowitz (1984) define child neglect as "the failure of the child's parent or caretaker, who has the material resources to do so, to provide minimally adequate care in the areas of health, nutrition, shelter, education, supervision, affection or attention, and protection" (p. 531). But supervision, affection or attention, and protection do not

quite focus on the relationship—the connection and attunement between the child and the parent—which is the true social problem. Moreover, Wolock and Horowitz stress that "we have divided America's children into 'theirs' and 'ours'; stating we don't want to spend 'our' money on 'their' children—though we never openly admit it" (p. 540). The "theirs and ours" is the very idea of the subject-object split which is an illusion; we exist in subject-object pairs according to Russon (2003), which is countercultural. We are all human beings apart of society, therefore we all have a shared responsibility to one another to nurture and support the adolescent and their relationships with the adults in their lives no matter the race and socioeconomic status—there is no *theirs and ours*; the children belong to all of us because we makeup one society—we are connected and interdependent persons. Our survival and well-being depends on it.

McSherry (2007) agrees with Wolock and Horowitz on the challenges of the different definitions varying from state to state and how they complicate identifying and treating neglect. McSherry (2007) points out how "cases of neglect rarely contain enough visual impact for social services to consider these children as being in serious harm or to be very needy" (p. 609). McSherry (2007) proposes that to "address the neglect of neglect" we must define child neglect in clear and concise terms; understand social time, political landscape, and how culture plays into defining neglect; create a database for practitioners to better understand neglect, perhaps of case studies; train staff dealing with neglect cases; and create a time scale for when neglect cases can be established—not failing to address neglect because harm is not imminent or some much time has passed (p. 612).

The Adolescent Can Be Neglected

The research on children and neglect tends to focus on infants and children of a young age (Swift, 1995; Scourfield, 2000; Farrell-Erickson & Egeland, 2002; Wilson & Horner, 2005; Katrius, 2008; Mizrahi & Davis, 2008; McSherry, 2004 &2007). We hear stories of neglected children whose material and basic needs go unmet as described by Katrius (2008), in the book *What is Neglect?* The accounts of small children being neglected paint an image in our minds of what neglect is. Defining neglect mostly in terms of material resources reinforces its association primarily with poverty. We see the subtypes of physical, emotional, and educational neglect; however, the relationship between the child and parent—"the working model a child builds… based on the child's real-life experiences of day-to-day interactions with his or her parents" (Bowlby, J., 1988, p. 130)—if cultivated as a priority, could make the emotional, physical, educational, and social needs of the child better seen and attended to by the parent. With infants and young children, there is a lot of research on coordination (attunement), interactions, and attachments (Bowlby, 1988; Tronick & Cohn, 1989; Schore & Schore, 2010; Harder, Knorth, Kalverbor, 2013). This research stresses the importance of connection between mother and infant and the impact of the quality of that connection, which is carried into adulthood. But in adolescence, relationship building requires better and new assessment.

There is not much research on adolescents and neglect; according to Fisher and Berdie (1978), there is a widely held notion that as a child gets older, the risk of abuse and neglect lessens. This notion still exists today. The adolescent is poorly perceived as mature, separate, and autonomous. Fisher and Berdie argue that the images of child abuse and neglect paint the

perpetrators as bigger and more powerful than the victims. The victims' needs are thought to be appropriate and the perpetrator inappropriate. The victim is under the perpetrator's control, and is isolated (Fisher & Berdie, 1978, p. 180). Fisher and Berdie write, "These images…are not...descriptive of adolescent-adult relationships…the primary difference is that the adolescent does not fit the image of victim" (p. 180). Physically, most adolescents today look like adults, but psychologically, emotionally, relationally and socially are still developing. Mike and Michelle's stories demonstrate that they still need their caregivers to attend to the relationships with them.

Mike: Yearning for a Relationship with His Father

Mike, his father, paternal grandmother, and step-grandfather provided the family's history: Mike's mother was pregnant with him when his father was arrested and incarcerated for the first 7 years of Mike's life. Mike's father and grandmother shared how Mike's paternal grandfather's family was heavily involved in gang and criminal activities. She tried to keep her two sons away from that life by moving from city to city. After moving north, she married a "responsible man," who has been there for her sons and now her grandchildren.

Father: (with excitement) Every male on my side of the family has been to prison, but I am proud to say: not my son. When I was in prison, I was told through "acquaintances" that my son was in the street all times of night, cursing, and throwing up gang signs. But it was because Mike's mother abused alcohol. So, when I got out of prison I petitioned the courts for full custody with the help of my mother. I got full custody of Mike when he was in the 2nd grade; he was in danger of repeating due to missing so many days of school.

As Mike's father spoke, his story felt familiar, a story of hope for his son not to encounter some of the harsh realities he had to deal with and the lessons he had to learn.

Grandmother: (with positive pride) After my son got custody, they both lived with us until my son had my granddaughter. My son got an apartment with his daughter's mother and at that time Mike only stayed with us on the weekends and at his father's home on the weekdays to attend school.

The father and grandmother discussed behaviors Mike struggled with when he came to live with them and how about two years prior to seeking treatment some of the oppositional attitudes and behaviors re-emerged. The grandmother discussed how Mike was behaving in a similar manner to the males on the paternal side of the family. I probed further about the living situation and asked about any major changes.

Mike: (with a complaining tone of voice) I have my own room at my grandparents' house but sleep on the couch at my dad's apartment. My dad has been promising me for more than two years how the extra room was supposed to be made into my room at the apartment.

Father: (with a frustrating tone of voice) A year and half ago, I started to date a woman who lives in South Jersey, and I spend a lot of time there during the week; between work and

traveling back and forth to South Jersey I have not had the time.

I could feel Mike's father's frustration as he spoke and described the struggle to support his family—two households and stress at work. I could only imagine, the struggle this father has endured. He shared how difficult it was for him to obtain his job due to serving time for committing a felony. He discussed with me concerns he had and a promotion that may be taken away because he was in prison, even though he has been a great employee.

Me: (directed to Mike's father) Can you tell me about Mike's relationships with the other adults in his life?

Father: My daughter's mother has no power to make decisions with my son. When I am not around my mom makes the decisions, even when Mike is at the apartment. And my lady would like to develop a closer relationship with Mike, but I spend a lot of time on the road and working.

I wondered how I will help Mike and his father both feel supported in therapy while advocating for Mike's need for relationship and connection with his father.

What is happening in Mike's familial environment? Mike was initially referred to me because of his behaviors, which I saw as a symptom of his familiar situation. Based on the information presented to me by the family, I saw where Mike was being shuttled between two different homes. He had limited contact with his biological mother. He was left most of the time with a woman whom father and son did not fully respect. Parenting Mike did not seem like a priority on the father's agenda. He was trying to provide; and he had no interest or time to nurture the relationship or have a quality connection. Mike could not put into words why he was angry over the unfinished room in the apartment. I saw the unfinished room, the father not having time, and the way Mike behaved all as signs of relational neglect. With Mike, I felt his pain, loneliness and lack of attunement. Recalling some of my own adolescent experiences, some adults have the wrong idea about adolescents outgrowing the need to be attuned too and connected to their caregivers. Adolescents still need to feel from their caregivers, "I am here for you and you matter."

My therapeutic approach included interventions to address the relational neglect I saw taking place in Mike's familial environment. The work with Mike and his father focused on encouraging the two of them to spend positive time together and cultivating positive interactions between them that did not focus on problematic behaviors—learning to enjoy one another's company (i.e. car rides to pick up dinner and listening to one another's day). I modeled for Mike's father in joint sessions with Mike and his father, how to attune and nurture the connection with between them. One session, we all played the Apples to Apples game together. They had a good time with one another, evident by their smiles and laughs. This was a new experience for Mike and his father—they had never played board games before.

Other interventions consisted of educating the father about Mike's need for relationship with his father and taking on the role of the nurturer—explaining the importance of attachment, family

culture, and ways of being in the world passed down to Mike. Stressing how attachment is biological, the need for it never lessens, and benefits of quality attachment experiences to primary caregivers facilitates regulation of emotions and manages mental states (Van der Kolk, 2014; Shore &Shore, 2010; Fongay, Gergely, Jurist, & Target, 2002).

I advocated with the father to make the time to change the familial environment in order for Mike to feel secure and so that the problematic behaviors would decrease. According to Flanagan (2011), "… all human beings need an empathetic matrix within which to grow and that only an empathetic environment can provide the psychological nutrient and sustenance essential for mental health" (p. 165).

Mike's behaviors were screaming for this "empathetic matrix." Treatment focus also included the step-grandfather. I encouraged both men, father and step-grandfather, to share who they are today, exposing Mike to this part of their identities. Mike was relating to the world based on the scripts of the male identities he felt connected to, identities tied to the streets—his last connected "empathetic matrix." As Russon (2003) argued, "as our familiar others, our family members become people from whom we are incapable of separating our own identities… so do our familial others define for us the specific forms that our involvement in interpersonal life will take" (p. 66).

The change was going to happen for Mike. He was introduced and exposed to new scripts and ways of relating and being in the world by men in the "familiar situation" he felt connected with. Throughout the years of treatment, I took the approach of treating the relational neglect with Mike, his father, and others in his familial environment, while simultaneously working with Mike alone. We worked on how Mike was negotiating his development and relationships within the familial environment, while defining what type of man he wanted to be in the future. My experience working with Mike and his father consisted of joys and frustrations. I found patience to be a friend, and my belief in the love Mike and his father had for one another was helpful and energizing in those moments when Mike and his father fell back into old ways of relating to one another—focusing on the problem and disconnecting from one another. Healing relational neglect and learning to change the dance of attunement is not a quick fix. I was glad Mike and his father found the approach I utilized helpful and continued to seek out my services. Each time I worked with Mike and his father, their dance of attunement got sharper. But what happens when the clinical social worker does not work with the family on a consistent basis, over an extended period of time, and out-of-home placement is seen as the only option?

Michelle: Pushed Out of the Relationship

Initially, the treatment took place in the home with Michelle and her mother. In the beginning, the mother stressed how Michelle needed to control herself:

Mom: (stated with frustration) I just can't live with the child if she cannot change her ways! I'm so confused. I'm so hurt. The way she is behaving is not how I raised her. She sneaks out to be with boys, and you won't believe it, but I caught her masturbating with my dildo! No wonder she can't focus on school. I wish she would graduate, because I had to drop out at 15 years old

because I was pregnant.

Me: Michelle's graduating is important. She is almost 17, no children, and doing well in school. Do you think it's normal for her to be interested in boys now? The mother looked away, shaking her head in a no fashion, not verbally answering my question. Michelle worries, thinking you're overly anxious about this situation. She says she is not looking or doing anything to get pregnant and she wants to graduate from high school.

Mom: You know, my oldest daughter had a baby at 15 years old—but at least she got her GED. I don't know how to make the focus of this family about education for girls. We all have the same problem: looking for some guy to take care of us. She needs to just leave those boys alone!

As Michelle's mother shared her feelings—some of her life experiences and worries for her daughter—I was able to feel the mother's desire for Michelle to have a different experience—a life without the struggles the mother encountered. I could empathize with her because I am a parent. I struggled with how I would help this mother and daughter understand one another. I wondered—how will I help this mother see her daughter is already having a different experience?

What is happening between Michelle and her mother is relational neglect. The mother is so focused on her own issues repeating that she could not see how she was pushing her daughter away—misattunement. My interventions in the beginning focused on listening to the family share their stories, educating them about adolescence and the importance of their connection, encouraging them to spend positive time with one another—creating space and modeling effective ways for both of them to be heard and understood—the "empathetic matrix." I worked hard with Michelle's mother trying to create the environment where Michelle would not need to sneak around to see her boyfriend and the mother trusting her more, believing her daughter could graduate without becoming pregnant. As Siegel (2012) points out, "attunement is a dance of connection" (p. 23-4). Michelle and her mother were in the midst of this dance. I joined Michelle and her mother, feeling the tension and struggle with them.

The situation was improving somewhat when another incident occurred: Michelle left school early to be with her boyfriend, and her mother insisted her daughter go before the judge. The mother struggled hard to keep Michelle in mind (Hill, 2015), only focusing on her fear of Michelle becoming pregnant and not finishing high school. The case manager informed me that the mother painted a picture in court of Michelle as out-of-control for years, and the mother did not know what to do, fearing for Michelle's safety. The judge placed Michelle into the shelter and ordered co-current planning: therapy for the mother and Michelle to continue seeking an out-of-home placement. I felt saddened and angered when I got this news. I was worried for Michelle, placed in the shelter, and saddened because Michelle's mother thought sending her daughter to a shelter was doing what was best for her. I was frustrated with the system coming to this decision without consulting the clinical social worker working with the family. This was not the time to separate Michelle and her mother. Their relationship was strained and they both felt disconnected from each another.

Michelle was placed in the shelter; only 8 weeks had passed since I started working with the family. The sessions were now conjoined due to the mother reporting she was not able to travel to the shelter. I worked with the mother in her home and Michelle separately in the shelter. I became the bridge between them—feeling helpless and challenged at times, wondering how I could address the relational neglect between them. The treatment continued to focus on addressing the disconnection between the mother and Michelle. I saw the behaviors Michelle demonstrated as a symptom of the familiar situation, the messages and habits that Michelle learned from watching the females in her family. The mother struggled with low tolerance and anger at her interpretation of the mirror image being reflected back to her in Michelle's actions about her life choices, and acting out the family script. It was hard for the mother; Michelle seemed to be her last hope.

As a result, the mother withdrew from her relationship with Michelle further. She was more inaccessible and unavailable to Michelle—disconnection and misattunement were still in action. The work with Michelle's mother over the course of treatment focused on raising awareness about the habits and patterns of relating passed down in the family and separating out her reactions and disappointments about her experiences from Michelle's experiences. I also encouraged the mother to keep up with her appointments with her therapist. I was concerned that Michelle's mother was not practicing good self-care and I wanted her to have all the support she needed. The work with Michelle focused on raising her awareness of her family's patterns, her relationship with her mother, and her habits and her reactions. I did similar work with her mother; however, with Michelle we also worked on identifying which familial habits she practiced and if they were in line with the type of woman she wanted to be. We discussed different female role models within her family, community, and society and how she can align her thinking and behaving with those qualities she admired in those women, cultivating new habits—respecting and utilizing the connections that already exist.

In the course of treatment, I saw how the relationship between Michelle and her mother was still strained and the impact it had on Michelle. After working with the family for 6 months, the mother talked of Michelle being 17 years old and needing to function as an adult because of turning 18 within that year. The mother continued to resort to seeing herself as separate from the situation and problem, therefore not a part of the solution. My hands felt tied, unable to get them in the same room, unable to address the relational neglect between them. I came to see how the way clinical social workers' value "person-in-environment" and work with the relationship as "the vehicle of change" is so important to addressing relational neglect. This perspective and value of the relationship needs to be passed on to the caregivers of adolescents in their familial environment. It is not just the vehicle of change, but where the problem originates and solutions emerge and take root. But this is hard to do with the option on the table of out-of-home placement.

Conclusion: The Call to Action

Through the stories of Michelle and Mike I join a long-standing debate on neglect, and I introduce relational neglect—a phenomenon I have been seeing while working with some of the adolescents who are labeled as the problem in their families and communities. Throughout the

research on neglect, parents are blamed and that is not the purpose of this paper. I am holding parents responsible because they have the dominant position and power in the parent-child relationship. I am raising awareness of relational neglect—the absence of nourishing interactions of attunement and quality connection within the familial environment of the adolescent, which is essential to aid our children during their adolescent phase of life to enter adulthood with healthy mental states and habits.

The cases of Mike and Michelle illustrate how complicated it is to identify and address relational neglect, mainly because it is countercultural to focus on interdependence with adolescents in a society that values success and believes adolescents should strive for separation and autonomy. Both Mike's and Michelle's parents shared hopes for their adolescents to take a better and different path than the one they took in their adolescence, but to do that they will need their parents to be there for them in nurturing ways. Parents must learn instinctual parenting does not work in today's complex society. We educate ourselves on every other job we hold in society; thus, parenting and cultivating healthy environments and relationships should be no different (Ross, 1993).

I challenge the notion that an adolescent exists outside of the familial environment and that treatment should focus just on the behaviors and attitudes of the adolescent without intervening at the relational level. As you saw with Mike, if I would have just focused on the behaviors, the relationship—the quality of connection and attunement—between him and his father would have continued to be neglected and the symptoms and the behaviors would have continued to persist.

According to Bowbly (1988), "…attachment must be seen as an ongoing human need rather than a childlike dependency that we outgrow as we grow" (p. 13). Adolescents need security and safety: a consistent loving and positive relationship with themselves, peers, family, and their communities who do not give up or quit on them when the adult feels challenged by the adolescent's behaviors and attitudes. They need caregivers willing to look at themselves, work on their own issues—understanding that we all have "stuff" from childhood and adolescence we bring into adulthood that needs to be worked through in order not to pass on or project onto our children.

Caregivers need to stay connected to the adolescent: teaching, guiding, and supporting them through this developmental stage into adulthood. Michelle's mother struggled in this area—it was hard for her to focus on her part in the problem and solution—when dealing with her own unaddressed mental health needs. What we do not deal with, we will take out on others whether we are aware or not. Michael's father struggled with consistently staying in a positive relationship with Michael without support. Adolescents and their parents need the community and providers to stand with them and focus interventions on repairing and strengthening the adolescent's relationships within their familial environment versus out-of-home placements as the quick fix—holding parents, families, and communities accountable to the adolescent. I call to action all clinical social workers working with families with adolescents to assess for relational neglect and devise interventions that focus on the relationship. I shared some of my interventions, approaches and struggles; each social worker has his or her own style and approach. I encouraged others to publish your experiences assessing and treating relational

neglect in families with adolescents, thus adding to the literature on mental and behavioral health practitioners called for by McSherry (2004, 2007).

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Supervisor and Intern Reflections on a Year of Research: Why It Worked

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Abstract: Explorations on the relationship between undergraduate research assistants and their supervisors have yielded often conflicting results, sometimes indicating that these relationships are highly rewarding and beneficial to both parties while, at other times, suggesting that undergraduate assistants do little more than drain faculty time with few relevant contributions to the actual projects (Potter, Abrams, Townson, & Williams, 2000). This article focuses on a narrative of both supervisor and research assistant experiences working in an internship setting over the course of one academic year, and on perceptions regarding why the relationship was productive and enhanced the teaching and learning of both parties involved.

Keywords: research, research internship, undergraduate supervision, research narrative

Supervisor's Reflections

Background

"*You don't want him in your class*." I knew about Brandon before we worked together, and before he became a psychology major: some of my colleagues warned me that teaching Brandon meant that I should expect to be questioned regularly, and that if Brandon didn't like my answers, he would push me to provide a rationale for them. I didn't see why that was a problem, and I wasn't intimidated. As a former social work clinician and administrator, I am drawn to the "difficult" cases as challenges. The more disengaged or combative a student appears, the more I try to convert them to love what they're learning. In my classroom, students are personally responsible for their behavior. I hope to create an environment that beckons them to study further for their own sense of satisfaction. I relish the opportunity to open a student's mind, especially if he or she is skeptical. To ensure that students maintain an interest, I include role-plays and discuss composite case vignettes drawn from my years in clinical practice. I looked forward to teaching Brandon if he was so challenging, because, if nothing else, he would keep other students on their toes, watching the action.

I also knew about Brandon because he boldly revealed his sexual orientation on a Facebook thread, coming out as gay in a discussion about the importance of marriage being between a man and a woman, as advocated by one of the most conservative ministers within the religious society we live in. I monitored the thread with empathy, respecting his choice to go public, but also feeling a sense of kinship as an "outsider."

Only two years prior to reading Brandon's post, I had ended a much-wanted pregnancy at twenty weeks' gestation, due to our fetus being diagnosed with a deadly and incurable syndrome. I had only recently learned, nearly four years later, that a few community members had called my husband and I "baby killers." The resentment, confusion, and anger I began to harbor toward

those who played at the pageantry of care while secretly condemning me was still fresh. During our initial period of bereavement, meals were sympathetically delivered to our doorsteps wrapped in checkered cloths with notes and bible passages tucked gingerly between the covers. As time passed, the well-wishes and kind check-ins slowed to a trickle and were replaced by acrid words of criticism. I couldn't help but wonder how many Facebook commenters who claimed that they, and God, still loved Brandon despite his "choice," would end up abandoning him.

By the time Brandon and I connected academically, it was the fall of his junior year. I was teaching him for the first time in my social psychology course, and had already been pleased by his engagement with the class. As expected, he was a frequent participator and stimulated heated discussions among his peers, but I recognized within him a love of learning and critical thinking, and was heartened by his engagement with the sometimes-difficult topics we discussed.

That fall, Brandon began stopping by my door after class, during office hours, and in between. As I had just begun to promote my research agenda at our traditionally teaching-based institution, I was usually quite busy and preferred that students make appointments. Sometimes, Brandon walked right in and presumptuously sat down at my desk. Other times, he leaned in by the door and asked if I had a moment, or if I had time for lunch. It was always refreshing to see him, but I had little time to spare. My term was tightly scheduled between teaching classes, research, advising, and department chair responsibilities.

We scheduled an hour in which to discuss his reasons for wanting to connect. When we sat down, Brandon told me about his "existential crisis" in the psychology major. He feared he was pursuing the wrong field, and that, aside from my social psychology course, he wasn't feeling particularly challenged or inspired. He was considering transferring to a larger institution with a variety of programs that might appeal to him more from a social perspective as well: he was feeling claustrophobic attending college in the same community where he went to high school. He was surrounded by the same friends and, yes, nosy locals who had grown accustomed to asking entitled personal questions about his life.

Our school is small, hovering at an enrollment of approximately 250 students, and while our psychology major is one of the largest, my "big" courses hit caps of 30. It's one of our hallmarks, appealing to potential students with promises of small student-to-faculty ratios, but I can also appreciate how the environment can be stifling for homegrown locals looking to spread their wings beyond what's often referred to as the "Bubble": here, children are safe, protected, and sheltered throughout their maturity from the frightening realities of the city that lies just a few miles south.

Ramirez (2012) noted that undergraduate students are "simultaneously developing competence in the interpersonal arena" (p. A57) while navigating the pre-professional skills that will assist them once they graduate. Brandon's situation was reflective of this to me. I saw an opportunity to help him grow as an intelligent, capable young person in both academic and interpersonal contexts. As Ramirez expressed, "Oftentimes the mentor may be most influential for a young adult who is in the throes of an emotional maelstrom by simply modeling how an emotionally balanced adult behave" (p. A57).

I didn't want Brandon to leave our college, and thought about ways to keep him here. As I had been intending to offer internship opportunities to qualified psychology majors, I asked him if he might like to be the first of these to work on my upcoming research study exploring the final words of the dying. I told him that this would be quite challenging, since psychology majors aren't required to take introductory research methods until their senior capstone experience, and that I would expect him to put in many self-directed hours combing the relevant academic literature for research in support of my hypothesis.

Upon offering him the opportunity, Brandon's eyes lit up. I expected him to ask, "Really? You think I could do that?" Instead, he got straight to the point.

"I've been wanting to do some type of research while I'm here and I think maybe that's the type of psychology I'd be interested in. How many hours could I do?" he asked.

I explained to him the nuts and bolts of credit hours and learning outcomes for the internship, and he pulled out a notebook. "So, 50 hours of work is one credit? Maybe I should start at that. I have trouble staying on-task when I have to work by myself. I think that's going to be a big challenge for me."

"I know how you feel," I said. "I can be a big procrastinator but there's a pretty strict timeline to this research. We need a literature review complete by the end of the term, and goals and outcomes for the research along with that. So this isn't the kind of internship where you can wait to do everything last minute and succeed. If you're anything like me, you've become good at that type of work. But research is methodical, and sometimes even circuitous. Just when you think you've found something to support your hypothesis, other citations spring up refuting it. You need to be intentional and mindful, and not give up when you become frustrated. Do you think you can do that?"

"Will we be meeting a lot to talk about my progress and what I'm finding?" he asked. His eyebrows furrowed into a familiar scrunch. The subtext of this expression, to me, read as follows: I might need extra help. Usually so confident in his academic abilities, Brandon appeared nervous. I wanted to challenge him but not push him too far.

"Absolutely. I'll be relying on you to help me get my work done, and trusting that you know what you're doing. We'll need to spend some time going over how to critique research articles, and I'm going to have to give you an accelerated tutorial, but I think you have the capacity to get it done."

I felt confident that Brandon would learn quickly, but I wondered if he would lose interest after looking through a few articles. The language of peer-reviewed publication is, in itself, a completely different way to communicate. Those unfamiliar with it, especially at the undergraduate level, find it dry and too tentative. My students have always expressed frustration at my often-repeated statement that "studies suggest, they never show." When students want to do an impression of me, they usually repeat this all in unison, but they betray me with eyes rolling back into their heads.

The Internship Process

In the initial weeks of the internship, Brandon did struggle. He often felt, in his own words, "floundery" trying to critique research, and was insecure in the conclusions he drew. He huffed. He paced my office as if there were concrete answers hidden behind my bookshelf. Our initial meetings consisted of much centering and redirection, and my repeated reassurance that he was on the right path. I reinforced his critiques of the limitations of research studies he found and how they helped support or invalidate my (soon to become "our") hypothesis for my own study was valuable.

Within weeks, I began looking forward to our meetings more and more, and felt I was helping something grow. As the mother of two young children, I often have these moments of pride, when I can step back and appreciate that mastery has occurred: it happened when my daughter grasped a fork for the first time with her chubby fingers and speared the center of a piece of macaroni, then plunged it into her gap-toothed mouth and applauded herself. It happened when my son pumped his stick-thin legs on a "big boy swing" for the first time, reaching his toes forward to kick my hands at the crest of every upswing. And it happened when Brandon began to find articles on his own, reading more than just the abstracts and presenting me with piles of dog-eared printouts every Tuesday and Thursday morning when we met.

He created flow charts and Venn diagrams of the major themes we were studying and we began to engage in deeper dialogue about the purpose of my research. We argued about the benefits of qualitative versus quantitative reasoning: Brandon's analytic perspective appreciates numbers because they are distinct, reliable, and can be manipulated with the right formulas. I, in turn, passionately explained the shortcomings of utilizing solely statistical analyses of survey questionnaires, especially for my study, in which I aimed to recruit a small sample size. I devotedly explained the benefit of narrative, rich troves of data a researcher can submerge herself in, inductively building themes and supporting them with powerful participant disclosures. We settled on an agreement that generalizability is important and that large-scale studies with high power analyses build strong mountains upon which smaller N studies, populated by engaging participant stories, provide a compellingly beautiful landscape.

To date, we have waded through much unknown territory together and have experienced many teachable moments. When we discovered that the research question I was considering had already been explored extensively, Brandon told me, "I feel like this was a waste of time. Doing all this work for nothing. Finding out we need to start from the very beginning." My perspective was different. I explained, "This is exciting! Now we know the literature far better than we did at the beginning! And we know the gaps, limitations, and questions that remain unanswered. This is part of the process. Now we just need a new question based on what we've found." As a result, the research changed direction, onto a much more unique path in which I have been able to make good use of Brandon's contributions.

It appears that a relationship like ours has been documented in existing studies on undergraduate research experiences. I find myself relating to a respondent in Potter et al.'s (2000) survey of faculty mentoring undergraduate research assistants, who said: "It is wonderful to get to know students and be part of their being able to 'do' science. It is like Christmas, watching them

unwrap the process of science and how that experience changes them—and I get to see it!" (p. 25). Even in the process of writing this article together, I've watched Brandon unwrap a new gift of dissemination: he's beginning to understand the power of using his own voice as the multifaceted person he is: he can rely on research to reinforce his own understanding of our relationship, but use his own narrative to frame it. He does it in his own unique, sometimes dramatic, but always deeply concentrated way, and I enjoy shaping and guiding the process.

Houser, Lemons, and Cahill (2013) have applied Lewin et al.'s (1939) management styles to the undergraduate research relationship as a way to understand mentors' management of their students. I relate most to the democratic model, in which a mentor "consults with the undergraduate students, listens, and considers their research ideas...." (p. 299). Recently, Brandon and I were working on a literature review manuscript advocating a need for research into the experiences of formal direct care providers working with underserved minority populations on hospice. I was struggling to find a novel way to present a summary of why minorities may be less inclined to pursue end of life care, as there is a trove of research on the topic. One day, about a half an hour before we were scheduled to meet, Brandon texted me the following:

> It seems there's two sections: barriers due to white culture (suppression and racism), and barriers due to minority culture (reaction). Perhaps that perspective frames our caregivers perfectly as they are trying to bridge the gap. Also, just as that clicked in my head, I'm listening to Jurassic Park, and it got super epic.

These are the moments that arouse my passion for teaching and researching, and make me laugh. He may be inexperienced, but Brandon's fresh eyes are useful and helpful tools in my practice, and the language he uses to share his ideas is always engaging. I agreed with his analysis of barriers to access, and we began working in the direction he suggested, which also helped to organize our ideas and structure of the paper. On projects such as these, the 12-year age gap between us feels irrelevant, and it is almost like working with a peer. Brandon never fails to remind me of my authority in our relationship, however. Yesterday I received the following text message:

> Tomorrow let's set a game plan and strategize for the rest of summer—my independent work is falling, and I'm beginning to eat myself over it mentally. I'm going to miss you very personally and professionally this summer, especially when it comes to work motivation!

My response? "I'll miss you a lot too...so get on assignment and find me some articles for the paper, and look for a specific journal to target as publisher for it!"

Indeed, in my six years of working as a professor, this relationship with my research intern has been one of the most enriching highlights. I look forward to building more mountains with him, and filling in the scenery as we go.

Intern Perspective

Background

"Who's getting smoothies today?" - 10:01 am

"If you order them, I'll pick them up on my way." - 10:02 am

"Okay! Chai too?" - 10:02 am

"Yes of course!" - 10:03 am

"Sweet. See you at 10:40!" - 10:05 am

My supervisor loves fruit smoothies. They have to be blended enough though; chunks are unacceptable. Chai lattes are also deeply loved, especially poured over ice with a shot of espresso. But the most coveted items from the café we frequent are the chocolate chip scones.

I could summarize my relationship with the renowned Dr. E in a traditional narrative with the classic descriptions of an apprentice who finds a mentor and through this relationship finds his place in the world. I could tell you of a young, energetic, student looking for a guiding force to make meaning out of the academic sea of nonsense into which he was proverbially born. But instead, I'm going to tell you a tale of Star Wars and smoothies.

What turns an average, run-of-the-mill puree of fruit into a flavorful, yet nutritious, quintessential drink of the Gods? The perfect recipe? The perfect fruit? Extensive blending? In fact, as I have learned from Dr. E, it is a combination of innumerable factors.

Attending a small liberal arts college is cliche these days. But when I tell you my school is small, you must understand: I mean SMALL. The enrollment usually hovers right around 250 students. Total. Oh, did I mention the college is perfectly nestled within the iron-clad walls of a town that ideologically transports the visitor back a few centuries?

Our town lies within a community founded on a deep pseudo-Christian faith. The community is reminiscent of small-town America in the early 20th century. On a walk around town, it is hard to spot unfamiliar faces. Most people in the community are related to each other: my grandparents were second cousins. The morality and ethics of the community center around the idea of an ultimate married love elaborated upon by the 18th century scientist-turned-mystic upon whose works the religion was founded.

It was into this world that on a mid-February day in 2014 I disclosed some ground-breaking news; news that was unheard of within our town's ideological boundaries. In a Facebook post, and in words far more eloquent than I will relay now, I stated that I was, in fact, gay. The polarization this act created was astounding and comprehensive: suddenly, everyone had to pick sides. Before, people could hang their heads low and keep their mouths shut when LGBTQ issues were brought into discussion.

For a time, I felt a bit like a political figure-head: to some I was a modern day example of the oppressed speaking out against the majority rule; to others, I was the antichrist.

A year and a half later, I was in the midst of an existential crisis. Growing up surrounded by religion in our community, it was no easy task to accept my sexuality. As a young teenager, and as I started to develop feelings for my male friends, I suppressed every sexual urge starting a chain-reaction of obsessive compulsive tendencies leading to the development of major depressive disorder by the time I began my freshman year of college. By the time I was 18, I had, in part, accepted the fact that I was gay, but my depression had reached a climax. I began engaging in self-injurious behaviors, and came within a stone's throw of taking my life.

It was then that I first met Dr. E. Two of my closest confidants were so worried about my emotional state that they asked Dr. E to assess me for suicidality. I remember in that interview that I immediately felt a strong draw towards her. I felt safe and comfortable: I didn't have to censor what I said. She asked all of the right questions and instilled in me a sense of hope that things would get better. It was soon after this event that I began to discover my passion for psychology. I wanted to help other people who were enduring similar hardships, and understanding the human mind seemed the best way to do so.

The only way I can describe Dr. E is to make an analogical parallel. Imagine for a moment that we are living in the universe of Star Wars during the second and third episodes. Obi Wan Kenobi and Anakin Skywalker are battling the dark side of the force as they form a deep-seeded brotherly relationship. Anakin is a young, yet extremely intelligent and powerful Padawan, or apprentice, who must be guided with a firm, yet cunning, hand. Obi Wan is the perfect Jedi master for Anakin, as he guides him on the path to becoming the most powerful Jedi in history (Forget for a moment that Anakin turns to the dark side and kills Obi Wan at the end of episode III.)

Dr. E and Obi Wan Kenobi are essentially interchangeable. They both embody wisdom while exuding energetic intelligence and wit. Both are phenomenal mentors to their respective students. Differences are clear, although they exist mainly at the surface level: where Obi Wan wields a light saber in the classic Jedi garb of floor length white robes, Dr. E swings the psychological and academic equivalent of a light saber underneath a hipster haircut that changes color on the regular.

As for me, I take on the role of Anakin Skywalker. The rash, energetic student to the wise even-keeled master. Like Anakin, I often need to be reined in as my intellectual arrogance and impulsiveness have the potential to lead me down a dark road. This is where the analogy begins to break down however, as I do not plan on turning to the dark side.

The scene is now set for the epic that is the story of Dr. E (the Master) and Brandon (the Padawan). Indeed, we often used the above analogy as we developed our professional and personal relationship. The story officially begins with a meeting in Dr. E's office in the midst of my existential crisis in the fall of 2015. At this time, I had been entertaining a passion for psychology for almost a year, and I was afraid my affection for the subject was beginning to dwindle. Dr. E was quick to point out that the classes I was enrolled in that fall were not

challenging me and the lack of motivation I was experiencing was quite natural. She then proposed that I begin working on a research internship looking into the final words of the dying under her guidance. Due to the potential merit I would gain from becoming a published co-author, I accepted the offer, despite the fear that I would be completely unmotivated, and so, would be adding a major stressor to my life as I struggled to maintain an adequate level of work.

Themes of Mentor Relationships

In order to generalize my experiences, I will turn to a study regarding the nature of mentor relationships. Smith, Paretti, Hession, and Krometis (2014) identified several important themes that defined relationships including: autonomy, project clarity, challenging assignments, mentor contact, role modeling, feedback, and assistance. I apply these themes to our relationship in the following section. This example can be used as an anecdote for successful relationships for future mentors.

Autonomy. The independent nature of research was daunting at first. During the first week of the internship, I procrastinated starting my work until the last moment. I sat down on Sunday afternoon with my computer and began running searches on various databases, looking for any research on death and dying. I felt drained and restless after the first half hour and had to exercise intense self-control to continue working. I emailed Dr. E a lot during this time, trying to find a way to stay on-task. I think Dr. E realized while working on my own, I needed a sense of structure. She trained me up more and more in the language of research. We began spending more time working together with me bringing her reviews of articles. This helped me maintain focus and engagement. Sometimes we work in the same environment on our laptops together on our respective tasks. It helps knowing she's staying on-task, too.

Project Clarity. During the first month of my research internship, my fears of floundering were seemingly realized: I felt as though I had no idea how to conduct research and was simply wasting time. As I began reading articles, I had no idea what to look for and frustration ensued. Dr. E explained that this was an expected reaction since it was my first time doing research. I felt like Dr. E just threw me into cold, unfamiliar, deep water. I must have drained at least three blue highlighters, which, I guess, are as close as I'll get to a light saber right now. I asked for help and Dr. E didn't take it personally. She offered more and more guidance on the specific nature of the research process and what she was looking for, and it wasn't long until I felt comfortable enough to fully apply myself.

Challenging Assignments. I read countless articles on the experiences of dying individuals and I became a mini-expert on deathbed experiences. Reviewing articles was challenging because I had to be sure I read the articles comprehensively while honing my ability to speed-read. The challenge did not seem insurmountable once I found my footing, yet it provided enough stretch to keep me engaged. Soon, I was able to take what I had found and present it to Dr. E: it turned out that the initial research question had already been answered in the literature. While I felt a bit like I had single-handedly killed Dr. E's research project, I knew it was inevitable: if I didn't find the research, someone else would have. And all was not lost. Dr. E adjusted the research question to focus on the experience of caregivers of the dying instead of on the dying themselves. Soon, we began researching once more. This project progressed through the next

term and by the summer, we had a study outlined and were in position to launch as soon as we received external funding.

Mentor Contact. The research process has been the most educational and rewarding part of my college experience. But what has changed my life has been the relationship with Dr. E. Effective mentorship does not stop at the door of higher learning, but extends to all facets of the mentee's life. As Dr. E and I became more efficient in our academic endeavors, we became closer as kindred spirits who share similar passions for life. Through our time together, we have found that our minds share many features. A common utterance of Dr. E is "you remind me so much of a young me." These words are one of the greatest honors I have ever received. The relationship we have developed is unique for a number of reasons. First and foremost, we are both willing to expend tremendous effort when we care about a subject or person. This has meant that despite extremely demanding and differing schedules, we have carved out time to work together.

The best example of this took place on an early summer night in June. In order to work around our schedules, we found ourselves beginning to work at 8:00 pm on a Friday, pizza in hand. While certainly unconventional, this type of atmosphere has allowed me to grow into my role as a student and intern in a way unachievable in the classroom.

The relaxed nature of our relationship has meant that text messaging has become our primary means of communication. The speed and ease of texting has allowed us to have a slow running dialogue for the last several months. Entertaining internet memes, humorous jokes, and questions and comments on the nature of life and reality often make their way into our text conversations. The comfort and safety I feel from the knowledge that Dr. E is so easily reachable has enhanced my life immensely.

Role Modeling. What began as a simple relationship between a professor and student has morphed into something far more powerful. I don't see Dr. E simply as a teacher. That is part of it, to be sure, but I see her as a friend, a guide, a sensei, a master of her trade and someone who has conquered her greatest fears and is now helping me to do the same. I have gained so many amazing opportunities from my work with Dr. E. I accompanied her to the state capitol as she delivered a powerful speech on access to abortion. At her side, I went to the Ivy League college where she's an alum and met the dean of the doctoral program in clinical social work. Together, we delivered a talk on our research to the faculty of our college (and I ensured that we wore complementary colors). For all of this, I am grateful.

Feedback. While I am generally confident in my intellectual abilities, I need a certain level of affirmation to maintain my confidence. Dr. E is swift to praise when appropriate, and to gently push me beyond my perceived abilities when needed. While I have had many falls throughout the course of this internship, Dr. E always offers guidance on how to succeed the next time.

Assistance. I don't know where I would be today had I declined when Dr. E approached me about a research internship. Our work has given me an identity that serves as a compass for my life, keeping me on course when I begin to falter. It has given me a safe space where I can exercise my intellect, leading me to new perspectives and paradigms. Beyond that, I have been given a mentor who guides me with compassion and care while consistently making me laugh

and reaffirm my love for psychology and humanity.

Conclusion

In the words of one participant from Potter et al.'s (2009) study, "Mentoring [research] is an excellent way of relating to your students and productively challenging them. It allows them to explore their own potential, discovering both their abilities and limits" (p. 25). We both find this statement to be true: the past year has been an educational and enriching year for us both, allowing us to connect more deeply to the field of psychology with renewed investment in the interpersonal relationships at our college that help faculty and students flourish.

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Call for General Submissions and Call for Narratives on Field Education, Historical Reflections, Teaching Reflections, and Research Reflections

Updated December 2017

Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping is a double-blind peer reviewed open-access interdisciplinary journal that has been published since 1995. We are also carried online by both Proquest Research Library and EBSCO SocIndex. Our readership is growing quickly since going open access in January 2016, with over 300,000 confirmed PDF downloads of article or full-issues since that time. We are a respected and beloved journal in the helping professions.

This is an open call for narratives as well as for submissions to our sections on Field Education, Teaching Reflections, Historical Reflections, and Research Reflections. Reflections narratives convey interpersonal interactions, witnessed events, and felt experiences. Rooted in the rich portrayal of key moments, this narrative content is conveyed via vignettes. This narrative content is placed within the context of a well-told story (exposition) that helps readers discover new ways of thinking about the personal, the professional, and the political in our lives. Authors then often reflect on that story and share conclusions. Often, however, the narrative stands alone, which in a way is powerful.

General submissions to Reflections use this narrative method to present narratives of professional helping – broadly construed to include work with clients and communities and activism by helping professionals engaged in social justice work. Such articles are valuable for education for practice. They also contribute to empirical knowledge about the nature of practice in the helping professions. Finally, they often make important conceptual contributions via reflections that address unresolved theoretical problems. To inquire about submitting a narrative as a general submission, write reflections@csuohio.edu and put general submission in the subject line. Betweeen December 2017 and August 2018, the manuscript will be assigned to one of the 2017-2018 Co-Editors: Julie Cooper Altman (California State University Monterrey); Michael A. Dover (Cleveland State University); Priscilla Gibson (University of Minnesota); Arlene F. Reilly-Sandoval (Colorado State University Pueblo); Johanna Slivinske (Youngstown State University).

In addition the above general call for narratives, Reflections has established fully peer-reviewed special sections. Articles published in these sections still employ the narrative method, but often do not include content on professional practice with clients and communities per se. When choosing to submit an article, authors should consider whether they should make a general submission or submit to one of the following sections. The journal reserves the right to notify an author that their article has been assigned to one of these sections. Please feel free to consult the section editor prior to submission:

Field Education Section (Dr. Beth Lewis, Editor, blewis1@brynmawr.edu): The process of field advisement and field instruction, as well as the experience of being a student can stimulate valuable narratives.

Historical Reflections Section (Dr. Jon Chrisopher Hall, Editor, halljc@uncw.edu): This section publishes narratives that reflect historically on people and events. Such articles are by or about helping professionals who have been engaged in micro or macro practice or social justice activism. The section will also continue the journal's tradition of publishing narrative interviews.

Research Reflections (Dr. Julie Altman, Editor, jaltman@csumb.edu): Although Reflections does not publish research results or literature reviews, the journal has a long history of publishing narratives of the interpersonal aspects of the research process. This section will be devoted to such narratives.

Teaching Reflections (Dr. Arlene Reilly-Sandoval, Editor, a.reillysandoval@csupueblo.edu): The notion of teaching practice, in other words of teaching as a form of practice, has long roots in social work. Also, the very first book on social work education, by Bertha Reynolds, was titled Teaching and Learning in the Practice of Social Work. This section will collect manuscripts by teachers and students that reflect on the process of teaching and learning, broadly construed. This section continues the journal's practice of publishing narrative accounts of classroom experiences, teaching innovations, civic engagement work, university-community partnerships, etc.

Please write a narrative in a style which makes sense to you, and submit it to Reflections. For feedback, even on an early idea for a narrative, please contact one of the editors. Submissions of any length – from short narratives focused on a single vignette to longer stories with multiple portrayals of interaction and references to the literature – are welcome (within the range of 1200-8000 words). For more information on submitting narratives, please feel free to contact the journal at reflections@csuohio.edu.

To Submit: We are currently having registration difficulties. Please email reflections@csuohoi.edu if the following doesn't work. Typically, many people receive messages saying they can't pass the spam test after doing the I'm Not a Robot step. Visit www.rnoph.org, and choose Register at upper right. Fill in the required fields. Ignore the this is not secure message; it is! Do not check the willing to review submissions box without contacting the editors. You should see a I'm not a robot button at the bottom. If you don't, please use a different browser. Once you have registered, login and choose your roles, specifically author. Then you will be able to see the Submissions link on left and the New Submission table on right.

REFLECTIONS

NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING
An Interdisciplinary Peer-Reviewed Online Journal
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Special Issue Call for Narratives: REFLECTIONS ON DISASTER: 2017 HURRICANES, FLOODS, AND FIRE
Stories of Widespread Destruction and Unparalleled Human Resilience and Response
Submissions due: Date February 1, 2018

Hurricane season struck with a vengeance at the end of the summer of 2017. Harvey devastated the fourth largest US city. Irma destroyed parts of Florida in a path that was anticipated, but then determined its own horrific dance. Hurricane Harvey will be forever remembered as the Category 4 hurricane turned Tropical Storm that devastated Houston, Beaumont, and the Texas Coastal Bend, with wind gust reaching 132 MPH and rainfall in excess of 50 inches. Harvey took more than 70 lives and left mass flooding and destruction of homes, neighborhoods, businesses and personal property estimated to reach in the billions of dollars. With Irma, people heeded warnings to evacuate. Fortunately, there was a lower death count, but Irma left significant statewide destruction, the likes of which hadn't been seen since the hurricane which struck Galveston in 1900, killing 8,000 people, and since Katrina in 2005, killing 1833 people.

Just when we thought the hurricane season might be waning, Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands were gutted by Hurricane Maria. Relief has been slow, painful, and reminiscent of Katrina, but worse in many respects, given the uneven political response in this highest populated US territory. Those most vulnerable were hardest hit, yet hurricanes and flooding can impact all races, classes, and communities. Hurricanes with the force of Harvey, Irma, Maria, and earlier in this century, Katrina and Sandy, produce catastrophes that are increasingly familiar, costly, and deadly. In the last 12 years, many people have been exposed to multiple environmental catastrophes and have experienced trauma as well as triumph. The cohesion and capacity of people can be profound, but complex. This is a call for narratives about the preparation, experience, and aftermath of these catastrophes. Entries are encouraged from people who experienced or responded to these disasters, and who were charged with putting pieces together for themselves and those directly affected. Welcome are both narratives of educational praxis and narratives of practice involving promoting and empowering clients, students, families, and ourselves. Narratives should use the power of storytelling to convey the lessons and the impact arising from the process of helping and healing in the wake of these disasters. As this call was finalized, California experienced unprecedented numbers of wildfires, with far reaching and tragic consequences.

Aim and Scope of Special Issue

The guest editors seek diverse narratives on the 2017 Hurricanes and the California wildfires from individuals or groups who either endured or were instrumental in responding to these disastrous events and which can chronicle a single or sequence of critical events personally experienced, observed or documented. This special issue will document natural disasters of epic proportion bringing to life heartbreaking stories of human despair and fear contrasted by unfathomable acts courage and compassion. Given the unique and broad expressions of disaster, submissions may be of any length, from short narratives focused on a single vignette to longer stories with multiple portrayals of interactions and references to the literature – are welcome (within an overall range of 1200-8000 – maximum words).

The editors are interested in stories from flood, hurricane, and fire survivors and their families and relatives of lost victims, first responders and rescue team members; volunteer neighborhood responders; health and human service direct providers, students and educators, and religious, government, political, and media personnel with direct experience in rescue efforts along with on-going work to restore communities and lives shattered by hurricanes, floods and fire.

Submission Directions and Guest Editors

To inquire, please email hurricanseason2017@reflectionsnarrativesofprofessionalhelping.org in order to reach the guest editors, or contact any one of them directly: Dr. Ruby M. Gourdine (rgourdine@howard.edu); Dr. Sandra Crewe (secrewe@howard.edu); Dr. Steven Applewhite (sapplew@central.uh.edu); Dr. Priscilla Allen (pallen2@lsu.edu); or Dr. Priscilla Gibson (pgibson@umn.edu). To Submit a Manuscript, please write reflections@csuohio.edu with Hurricane in the subject and request assistance in author registration.

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