

Teaching Social Justice in Counseling Psychology Ψ

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Abstract

Recent years have witnessed increased calls from counseling psychology to include social justice competencies in the training of future practitioners. Integration of social justice awareness, advocacy skills, and opportunities for social change action are needed extensions of the field's commitment to multicultural competency. Classroom teaching is a key component of transforming counseling psychology curricula and of developing students' awareness of the value of social justice perspectives, yet pedagogical applications are rarely present in the literature. This article provides a case example of the integration of social justice and multicultural consciousness across the curriculum of one counseling psychology program. It highlights examples of innovative pedagogical techniques within a variety of core courses. We present specific examples of readings and nontraditional teaching approaches to promote social justice consciousness, including experiential exercises, self-reflection opportunities, use of video and online discussions, and assignments.

Keywords

social justice, content, training, content, multiculturalism, content

A social justice-informed [counselor] seeks to transform the world, not just understand the world.

Vera and Speight (2003, p. 261)

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This special issue of *The Counseling Psychologist* on nontraditional teaching methods that promote social justice continues the profession's commitment to infusing social justice issues into counseling psychology training programs. We explore how social justice consciousness can be integrated innovatively across the curriculum. Recent years have seen a number of calls for the integration of social justice and advocacy into counseling and applied psychology training, research, and practice (Ali, Liu, Mahmood, & Arguello, 2008; Arthur, Collins, Marshall, & McMahan, 2013; Arthur, Collins, McMahan, & Marshall, 2009; Blustein, 2006; Blustein, McWhirter, & Perry, 2005; Blustein, Perry, Kenna, & DeWine, 2007; Burnes & Singh, 2010; Constantine, Hage, Kindaichi, & Bryant, 2007; Fouad, Gerstein, & Toporek, 2006; Fox, 2003; Goodman et al., 2004; Nilsson & Schmidt, 2005; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002; Singh et al., 2010; Speight & Vera, 2008; Toporek, Lewis, & Crethar, 2009; Toporek & McNally, 2006; Vera & Speight, 2003). These authors encourage clinical training programs to embrace a social justice approach, yet much of the literature is focused on philosophies of social justice, definitions, competencies, and theoretical frameworks within counseling psychology.

Sensitivity to injustice is only the beginning; the social justice work of counselors and psychologists involves being change agents, which is defined as "professional action designed to change societal values, structures, policies and practices, such that disadvantaged or marginalized groups gain increased access to tools of self-determination" (Goodman et al., 2004, p. 795). However, there has been little attention given to how social justice consciousness is actually integrated into training in doctoral and Master's level programs (Goodman et al., 2004; Singh et al., 2010). Only a few practical illustrations of social justice integration in counseling psychology programs exist, and often focus on service-learning opportunities, practicum experiences, or other ways that students interact with marginalized populations outside of the classroom (Ali et al., 2008; Burnes & Singh, 2010; Constantine et al., 2007; Goodman et al., 2004; Toporek & McNally, 2006).

The American Psychological Association (APA) formulated competency benchmarks for professional psychology (Fouad et al., 2009), with subsequent revisions (APA, 2012). Fouad and her colleagues (2009) presented behavioral anchors at developmentally different periods in training for evaluation of these competencies. In addition to multicultural training expectations (individual and cultural diversity awareness), social justice competencies have been included in the benchmarks. The central competency is advocacy, which is defined as empowerment and systems change at the client, institutional, and systems levels. These pre-practicum advocacy competencies include "awareness of social, political, economic and cultural factors that

impact individuals, institutions and systems” and understanding “the differences between individual and institutional level interventions and system level change” (Fouad et al., 2009, p. 17).

Ideally, training would be in line with these benchmarks, yet there is very little literature on pedagogical approaches to incorporating social justice awareness or competencies into courses across the curriculum. Even in an extended, excellent example of a counseling program transforming its mission to one focused on social justice issues (Talleyrand, Chung, & Bemak, 2006), the authors do not provide an in-depth examination of how the mission-driven curricula redesign was actually delivered in the classroom. Yet classroom teaching is a key component of transforming counseling psychology curricula and of developing students’ awareness of the value of social justice perspectives (Llera, Saleem, Roffman, & Dass-Brailsford, 2009). In this article, we discuss the integration of social justice and multicultural domains across the curriculum of a counseling psychology program. We highlight examples of innovative, nontraditional pedagogical techniques to promote social justice consciousness within a variety of core courses.

Social Justice and Counseling Psychology

In a previous special issue of *The Counseling Psychologist*, Vera and Speight (2003) argued that counseling psychology needed to include a commitment to social justice work along with its commitment to multiculturalism: “A social justice perspective emphasizes societal concerns, including issues of equity, self-determination, interdependence and social responsibility” (Vera & Speight, 2003, p. 254). They specifically called for training the next generation of counseling practitioners in the transformative power of social change. Multicultural and social justice consciousness and the tools for social change are inseparable and constitutive because “marginalization is the main process by which social injustice is maintained” (Vera & Speight, 2003, p. 260).

Counseling as a profession is indebted to early social justice advocates such as Clifford Beers, a promoter of humane care for mentally ill people, and Frank Parsons, who is regarded as the father of vocational counseling, through his efforts to assist immigrants with work issues (Fouad, 2006; Hartung & Blustein, 2002; Kiselica & Robinson, 2001; O’Brien, 2001; Toporek & Chope, 2006). Over time, the emphasis in the profession shifted from social justice approaches to a focus on the individual as the target of therapeutic attempts to relieve suffering and to the scientist–practitioner model in training. Influenced by constructivist, multicultural, and feminist approaches, leaders in counseling psychology have again shifted to

emphasizing the cultural and global context of individuals and to proposing a *scientist-practitioner-advocate* model (Fassinger & Gallor, 2006). This model is particularly suited to counseling psychology, due to the field's historic roots in (a) contextual and ecological understandings of individuals; (b) a strengths-based, prevention-focused, and developmental framework; and (c) a commitment to feminist and multicultural values (Arthur et al., 2013; Fouad et al., 2006; Goodman et al., 2004; Hage, 2003). Feminist influences include a focus on the gendered individual in a relational and cultural context, and an emphasis on development through mutuality and growth-producing relationships (Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker & Rosen, 2004). Thus, relational cultural theory provides a related framework for incorporating multicultural and social justice competencies (see Comstock et al., 2008).

Awareness, knowledge, and skills have been posited as the three essential components for service delivery models that provide culturally competent counseling (Sue, 2006). Multicultural training within professional programs has included strategies for integrating these three components into curriculum, pedagogy, and student evaluation (Jones, Sander, & Booker, 2013). Despite increasing calls for social justice training within the field and from professional associations, Jones et al. (2013) lamented the lack of published techniques for teaching advocacy within counseling and applied psychology programs. Training should assist future practitioners to develop awareness of the unique challenges, specific burdens, and systematic barriers or stressors that affect the mental health of disenfranchised or marginalized populations. This understanding is critical in developing and implementing socially just and culturally appropriate education, training, and treatment to serve the needs of these groups.

Counseling psychology practitioners are well suited to advocate and empower clients, yet often lack training and knowledge on socially just responses at institutional and systemic levels. Research studies of career counseling practitioners' social justice knowledge and competencies revealed a disconnect between the practitioners' knowledge and understanding of environmental or systemic barriers in their clients' lives, and their confidence in the skills needed to implement interventions, particularly at the systems level (Arthur et al., 2013; Arthur et al., 2009). This gap is expressed as the difference in practitioners' "*knowing what* and *knowing how*" (Arthur et al., 2013, p. 150). Arthur and her colleagues (2013) called for more intensive skill development in training and professional development for the roles of advocate, consultant, and community change agent. Toporek et al. (2009) stated, "to be effective, this training should be integrated throughout the curriculum and treated as part of [practitioners'] roles" (p. 265). Yet many master's and doctoral-level training programs remain grounded in frameworks

that do not fully integrate this content into the curriculum or pedagogical approaches. Most programs have a required multicultural counseling course, but beyond this are unlikely to fully integrate issues of power, privilege, and oppression, or social justice across the curriculum. Although more programs now integrate multicultural content across the curriculum (Jones et al., 2013; Toporek, Gerstein, Fouad, Roysircar, & Israel, 2006), it is unusual for social justice issues to be incorporated into the majority of coursework. Stand-alone social justice courses of any length are uncommon (e.g., see Talleyrand et al., 2006). In a survey of doctoral trainees, although all had taken a multicultural counseling course, 85% had not had a social justice oriented course (Singh et al., 2010). There is often even less emphasis on multiculturalism and social justice issues in content heavy and more scientifically oriented courses such as research methods, neuropsychology, or psychological assessment.

Valuable guidelines and models exist to integrate social justice perspectives into counseling psychology programs. These include the foundational knowledge areas of (a) interdisciplinary collaboration; (b) increased cultural competence; (c) complex, additional roles for the counselor (e.g., change agent, advocate, consultant); and (d) social justice resources (Toporek & Chope, 2006). As noted, Fouad et al. (2009) and APA (2012) provided benchmarks for professional psychology that include multicultural and advocacy competencies. Constantine et al. (2007) specified nine social justice competencies for counselors and counseling psychologists. The American Counseling Association's (ACA) revised code of ethics explicitly includes the value of promoting social justice, defined as "treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality" (2014, p. 3). The ACA has a 3 × 3 cube of advocacy competencies ranging from micro- to macro-level advocacy strategies for use both with the client and on behalf of the client (Lewis, Arnold, House, & Toporek, 2003; Toporek et al., 2009). Finally, Goodman and colleagues' (2004) guidelines, consisting of six themes drawn from the feminist and multicultural literature—ongoing self-examination, sharing power, giving voice, facilitating consciousness raising, building on strengths, and leaving clients (or students) with the tools for social change—are widely used within doctoral training programs (Ali et al., 2008; Singh et al., 2010). The question remains as to how to translate these themes and competencies to the classroom and to empower students in their learning of these competencies.

Program Framework and Case Example

We next present a case study of how one master's counseling psychology program at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has integrated

social justice awareness and advocacy competencies beyond the required multicultural counseling course, *Culture and Identity: Power, Privilege, and Oppression*. Several core faculty members present their views on how social justice consciousness and multicultural sensitivity are interwoven into multiple courses, including training areas such as clinical skills, psychological assessment, research methods, neuropsychology, and vocational development. Specific examples of creative teaching approaches are provided, including experiential exercises, self-reflection opportunities, and the incorporation of multicultural and social justice competencies into assignments.

The Division of Counseling and Psychology at Lesley University trains clinical mental health counselors and school counselors in a 60-credit license-eligible Master's program with specializations in clinical mental health counseling, school and community counseling, holistic counseling, and trauma studies. Our program philosophy is embodied in the phrase "self as instrument," which involves self-reflection and understanding of self and others in social and cultural contexts (Reinkraut, Motulsky, & Ritchie, 2009). The program is framed within our values and philosophies of critical psychology and liberation pedagogy—it is developmental, holistic, relational, feminist, multicultural, and highlights social justice/advocacy skills and consciousness. We believe in teaching to transform (Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994; Hoshmand, 2004; Martín-Baró, 1994) and that personal transformation is a necessary component of multicultural and social justice competence (Llera et al., 2009).

From questions about experiences of diversity, privilege, and oppression in our application essay and admission interview to the incorporation of students' self-reflection on their cultural identities in our orientation course, there is a consistent emphasis on multiculturalism, social justice awareness, and advocacy approaches. These competencies are presented as necessary in developing students' sense of self as an instrument in the therapeutic encounter. Teaching can promote social justice consciousness by engaging students' minds in the critical examination of subject matter related to the dominant structures and social injustices in our world. This requires creating a safe and self-reflective learning environment conducive to engaging in critical thinking and challenging one's socially constructed assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes (Jones et al., 2013; Llera et al., 2009). Through critical analysis, students can identify systemic institutional, social, and professional structures that perpetuate and maintain harmful practices. Awareness and understanding of social justice issues make it possible to challenge such practices and may lead trainees to become change agents in their professional roles.

Faculty Collaboration

Gaining faculty support for multicultural and social justice integration in training is difficult and requires significant effort toward professional development and education, collaborative leadership, and perseverance. There are many documented challenges related to faculty making a commitment to the curricular integration of social justice issues, which include enlisting faculty support (e.g., Ali et al., 2008; Goodman et al., 2004; Singh et al., 2010). At Lesley University, this effort has been a 20-year-long process and commitment on the part of our program's core faculty. Factors we believe have contributed to our successful collaboration include consistent attention and effort over time, shared concerns for the inequalities and marginalization of non-dominant groups, and a critical perspective on professional practice.

The core faculty periodically review how we are doing. For example, last year we had several faculty development meetings where we reflected on our own meanings of diversity, multiculturalism, and social justice. We discussed where we felt successful and where we felt challenged in integrating these topics into our classes. Although there is much to say about the challenges inherent in this process, we want to share some of the successes. Particularly, we apply theory to practice and discuss specific pedagogical examples of how we integrate social justice issues through readings, case studies, online exercises, journaling, paper-writing assignments, self-reflection, discussion, and experiential activities. Burnes and Singh (2010) suggested three effective teaching strategies: (a) examination of social justice issues in the literature and course readings, (b) self-examination and reflection exercises, and (c) experiential learning activities around systems. We agree. In what follows, we share some of our teaching strategies for developing students' social justice awareness and increasing their knowledge of advocacy competencies.

Social Justice Across the Curriculum

Professional associations and accrediting bodies' competencies for student evaluation generally include expectations regarding multicultural and advocacy standards. Some professors, including the first author, use a rubric for all assignments that includes an expectation of *social justice and cultural awareness and sensitivity*, which becomes part of the assigned grade. Many courses ask for at least one paper that examines students' own sociocultural position, family of origin influences, identity development, or emerging perspectives on suffering, helping, and advocacy, in addition to more conventional theory or research papers. Including multiculturalism and social justice consciousness and competencies as part of student evaluations helps students take these expectations seriously.

There are courses within the counseling psychology curriculum that lend themselves well to the integration of multiculturalism and social justice, such as theories of counseling and psychotherapy, developmental psychology, ethics, and counseling of particular populations such as veterans, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) clients, trauma survivors, and so forth. In addition to field experience/internship, several courses involve service-learning experiences, such as facilitating groups for urban schoolchildren or participating in empowerment activities for youth. Other courses involve “stepping out” experiences where students write a reflective response to attending a public event in a setting markedly different from their own experiences. For example, some non-Latino White, middle-class students may need to raise their awareness of diverse or marginalized groups. We therefore require that they visit places of worship such as a mosque or African American church or participate in an inner city event attended primarily by people of color. By contrast, an African American, urban male attended a polo match in an affluent, upscale bedroom community known for horse farms and fox hunting. These foundational experiences may begin to ignite genuine empathy for diverse others and raise consciousness of privilege and oppression.

One challenge to the full integration of innovative pedagogy to promote social justice perspectives in counseling psychology coursework is how to do it effectively in the content heavy and more technical, scientific courses, such as research methods and neuropsychology. Faculty may feel pressed for time in these courses without the additional effort of creatively integrating social justice issues, advocacy skills, or awareness of oppression or stereotyping of marginalized groups. In some training programs, we have noted that faculty from outside of the department teach research and neuropsychology courses. Even if the departments themselves promote a social justice perspective, in our experience, these courses often contain little of this content.

One of our accomplishments, in our view, is the way we interweave our mission into courses such as orientation to professional counseling and psychology, clinical skills, research methods, vocational development, psychological assessment, and neuropsychology/biological bases of behavior. These are the courses we will discuss in this article. Students are sometimes anxious about their performance in these courses and may expect some of them to be dry and boring. The nontraditional teaching and experiential exercises often surprise them. These exercises enhance the quality of their experience and demonstrate that every area of counseling psychology practice demands social justice awareness and self-reflection around social change. The next sections highlight pedagogical examples from these courses.

Orientation to Professional Counseling and Psychology

This highly experiential, first required course serves as an introduction to the roles and responsibilities of counselors as well as an orientation to program philosophies and teaching approaches. It is co-taught by the core faculty and begins the enculturation of students to the expectations of the “self-as-instrument model,” self-reflection, and reflective practitioner emphasis, and multicultural, feminist, and social justice principles (Llera et al., 2009; Reinkraut et al., 2009).

Social justice and multicultural issues appear in the readings, in the reflective paper and assignments, and in the diverse “client” role-plays and experiential class exercises. The online Discussion Board assignment asks students to respond to questions regarding cultural differences and social justice/advocacy roles described in the readings. The Wheel of Life exercise asks students to reflect on their identity development and family values in a sociocultural context through questions that stimulate thinking about racial and ethnic identity, gender identity and sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, and disability status. Faculty members model a conversation about these topics, acknowledging their vulnerability and demonstrating self-awareness of their own identity concerns or insights. Students journal in response to the questions, then meet in small groups with a faculty facilitator to share their understandings. Students are also asked to discuss their strengths, challenges, and learning around this exercise in their final paper. This content is often unexpected and sometimes challenging for new students, but it provides a clear message that the program expects students to develop awareness and competencies in multicultural and social justice arenas.

Clinical Skills

As in many training programs, students enroll in an experiential practice course, *Clinical Skills and the Counseling Process*. Rigorous practice with faculty observation and feedback is provided during and after six role-play sessions in which students (a) role-play an assigned clinical vignette, (b) “counsel” another student in a clinical vignette, and (c) observe and provide feedback on role-play encounters. In addition, therapeutic relational competence is evaluated to assess student readiness for internship in terms of understanding counselor roles and responsibilities and the assurance that the student will “do no harm.” These developmentally appropriate opportunities facilitate students’ counseling skills while challenging and expanding their worldview and ability to articulate social justice issues. Students are

encouraged to reflect on their personal histories as they relate to the clients in the role-play and the clients they counsel. They are asked to focus reflectively on their reactions to salient aspects of the client's identity such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, class background, sexual orientation, religion/spirituality, physical ability/challenge, and experiences of privilege and oppression. The experiential work is supported by readings and discussions. For example, the second author includes readings around topics such as working with people with disabilities (Olkin, 1999), counselor use of self-identity (Rubin, 2003), moral responsibility in counseling (Christopher, 1996), feminist psychotherapy and diversity (Hertzberg, 1990), therapist authenticity (Miller et al., 1999), being a Latina healer (Comas-Díaz, 2010), and perspectives of an Iranian clinician (Mirsalimi, 2010).

Debriefing in role-play triads and faculty feedback provide opportunities for discussion and inoculation against the shame of not knowing or making mistakes. The issue of safety from judgment and criticism in the classroom is discussed periodically, and the parallel to the counseling process is underscored. For example, an Asian American male student may acknowledge that he is both anxious and judgmental in "counseling" a married male client who is attracted to another man. Similarly, an African American student with little exposure to African social upheaval may struggle to empathize with the parents of her South African client when it is revealed that the parents sent the woman away to be raised by relatives during the Apartheid era. Unpacking the experiential exercise may allow the student access to understanding the conflict between familial and political demands in the South African context. In their final papers, students often demonstrate growing awareness of the complexity of social justice issues. By developing a consciousness of clients' life struggles, the students gain an understanding of structural barriers experienced by many clients. This may help deepen their commitment to social justice and advocacy work.

Research Methods

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods is an example of a course that often does not include a strong multicultural or social justice focus due to the nature of the material and the instructor's possible sense that there is not time for "extra" material. As taught by the first author, this course interweaves self-reflection and the examination of biases with qualitative and quantitative research methods, including an emphasis on participatory action research. The required readings and example research studies demonstrate the role of culture and social justice issues in research by featuring feminist, multicultural, and social justice advocates, such as Michelle Fine, Joseph

Ponterotto, Sue Morrow, Ruth Fassinger, Carol Gilligan, and Lyn Michel Brown. Students learn about evidence-based research and also read cultural critiques of it (Chang & Sue, 2005; LaRoche & Christopher, 2008; Whaley & Davis, 2007). Research articles often focus on diverse or marginalized populations not routinely seen in the research literature, such as older Black lesbians (Hall & Fine, 2005), Muslim American youth (Sirin & Fine, 2007), male sexual abuse survivors (Sorsoli, Kia-Keating, & Grossman, 2008), and homeless youth (Kidd, 2004, 2006).

The use of art, poetry, and self-reflective identity exercises might be surprising to students taking a research methods course, but these are some of the pedagogical techniques used to engage students in understanding their social locations and biases related to research. These exercises also demonstrate the power of qualitative and participatory action research to give voice to the silenced; to explore the lived experiences of misunderstood, stigmatized, or marginalized people; and to engender social change. For example, for the first assignment, students are asked for a visual representation of qualitative and quantitative research similarities and differences and their impact on research participants. The results include posters, photographs, poetry, collages, charts, Venn diagrams, and other creative expressions. After an assignment to do a quick write (like a journal entry) on course readings, one student wrote two haiku poems.

No. 1

Doing the reading

Impossible not to care

Numbers brought to life.

No. 2

Critical thought is

A curtain you can't re-close

Knowledge permeates.

Two nontraditional exercises and a reflective paper assignment are implemented to assist students in examining potential biases and exploring their cultural and social locations with regard to research. First, students are asked to write a list of 10 to 12 identity descriptors, and then to discuss in triads how these descriptors might influence their thoughts, assumptions, biases, or attitudes toward research. Another exercise invites students to compose a poem about their family history, upbringing, and geographic or cultural location that is based on George Ella Lyon's (n.d.) poem "Where I'm From." Using prompts that echo the lines of the poem, students fill in the blanks based on their own experiences, and are invited to read them aloud to the class. Students often remark on the creativity of this exercise their insights about how their cultural worldviews might influence their responses to research.

One of the paper assignments asks students to draw on these exercises and the readings to write a self-reflective essay regarding how their personal

assumptions, biases, social-cultural location, and philosophical orientations affect the design, implementation, and interpretation of research. One student, inspired by the use of poetry in class, wrote her own poem in her essay, where each stanza reflected some aspect of her identity. She stated,

The goal of the poem is to illustrate how one's biases can influence [responses to] a research study. I incorporated both targeted and non-targeted identities. . . . My preference for expressive modalities even shaped my decision to present the material in a poem format.

Another student wrote,

Morrow (2007) felt like a revelation to me, in her insistence that the social sciences can reconnect with their social purpose, and in her call to integrate theory and research with activism in service of social change. It's very exciting to imagine that a tool that I thought was only useful for documentation can also be used to generate transformation.

Another integration of multiculturalism and social justice consciousness is a midterm assignment to evaluate two research studies, one qualitative and one quantitative. Both studies examine gay and lesbian participants within a racial/cultural setting. Students not only critique the articles but also discuss how the cultural issues and the type of research contribute to their learning. The qualitative, participatory action research study (Graziano, 2004) focuses on the experiences of Black gays and lesbians in South Africa and is designed to empower participants and effect social change. Many students begin to understand the power of research for social change and client advocacy in a new way. An excerpt from a paper illustrates this perspective:

The qualitative study allowed me to step into the world of the Black LGB community in South Africa, and get a glimpse of their everyday lives, especially the enormous amount of suffering they experience due to sexual identity, race and class. I was personally impacted by their stories, not only of suffering, but also of strength.

Vocational Development and Career Counseling

Teaching vocational psychology/career counseling courses is synonymous with social justice approaches because work itself is a key arena for advocacy and equity struggles. The field of career counseling, starting with Frank Parsons' founding work (Hartung & Blustein, 2002; O'Brien, 2001), has long been associated with social justice efforts because "access to work was

viewed as a major vehicle to social equity” (Fouad et al., 2006, p. 3). Thus, counseling psychologists should be at the forefront of incorporating social justice and public policy issues into career courses and practice. Because career practitioners deal with work and education issues at all levels, they are well positioned to advocate for fair work policies and wages, to join with others to address poverty, unemployment, and underemployment, and to empower clients to take action for positive social change in the work arena.

The required career development course, taught by the first author, includes readings and group discussions on work and career concerns of marginalized or oppressed populations such as sexual minorities, immigrants, people with disabilities, ex-offenders, veterans, people living with HIV or AIDS, and domestic violence or trauma survivors. Fortunately, there is a significant body of work in vocational psychology with a social justice or advocacy emphasis, and many of these readings are included along with assignments that focus students’ attention on this critical topic. For example, Goodman et al.’s (2004) criteria are incorporated into a class exercise relating each social justice competency to career counseling.

Social justice and multicultural domains addressed within the course through readings, discussion, exercises, and assignments include the psychology of working perspective, which focuses on people with little work volition (e.g., Blustein, 2006; Blustein et al., 2005; Gainor, 2005; Juntunen, 2006); social class issues, welfare, and unemployment (e.g., Ali, Fall, & Hoffman, 2013; Blustein, Kozan, & Connors-Kellgren, 2013; Diemer & Ali, 2009; Fouad et al., 2012; Juntunen et al., 2006; Liu & Ali, 2005); gender or relational issues (e.g., Cook, Heppner, & O’Brien, 2002; Fassinger, 2008; Fassinger & Gallor, 2006; Motulsky, 2010; Richardson, 2012; Schultheiss, 2006, 2009); LGBTQ issues, especially the work barriers and needs of transgender individuals (e.g., Budge, Tebbe, & Howard, 2010; Levitt & Ippolito, 2014; O’Neil, McWhirter, & Cerezo, 2008; Parnell, Lease, & Green, 2012; Pepper & Lorah, 2008); and multicultural marginalization and barriers (e.g., Arthur & Collins, 2011; Byars-Winston, 2010; Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2006; Leong, 2010; Yakushko, Backhaus, Watson, Ngaruiya, & Gonzalez, 2008). Students typically have not been exposed to these topics and respond with enthusiasm and engagement. Because the application of material to cases is an effective teaching tool (Juntunen, 2006), case studies are frequently used in class and are also employed in the textbook (Swanson & Fouad, 2015). Personal stories of activism, a work- and education-focused social justice media presentation created by the instructor, and YouTube and other videos demonstrating work issues, such as those of agricultural workers’ rights, minimum wage campaigns, or the firing of the Hyatt 100 in Boston, are shared with the class through the Discussion Board forum.

This course has always focused on gender and multicultural topics related to work; however, the first author revised the assignments to be more explicitly inclusive of social justice concepts. For example, students are required to post responses to an online discussion board on at least two readings with social justice themes in career counseling that they found striking or thought provoking and then discuss how they might integrate these issues into practice. They then respond to classmates' postings with thoughtful, challenging, or expanded comments, resulting in truly in-depth discussions and reflective responses from students. To illustrate, here are a couple of sample responses:

Kathy Gainor (2005) brings one of my favorite authors to bear in supporting her thesis that vocational counseling must be practiced through the lens of social justice. Audre Lorde writes of the difficulties in changing one's perspective as a member of the "privileged class" (Lorde as cited in Gainor, 2005, p. 182). Despite one's desire to reach out to those who suffer from lack of privilege, change will not occur unless all who are part of the system of privilege participate in its undoing. As a counselor I seek to understand the system in which my client lives and works from his/her point of view, despite the fact that my first impulse may be to try to get the client to see things from mine. I now understand that foisting my belief system onto the client who has lived and worked in a different reality can be just as oppressive as denying them help.

Throughout this program we have repeatedly been urged to become aware of our own biases so that we then don't translate those biases onto our clients when working with them. I realized when doing the reading that while I have actively been looking into my own biases regarding race, gender and ethnicity, I never included vocation as one of the areas in which I needed to become aware of my biases. As a product of a family that operates under a strong Protestant work ethic, I realize that like Liu & Ali (2005) discuss, I might assume that all people are striving for upward mobility and in doing so invalidate the feelings and wishes of the client sitting in front of me.

The final paper in this course is a case study analysis. Students choose one of two cases written by the instructor (first author)—either Marcos, a 17-year-old high school Mexican American considering dropping out of school to help support his family as his father is out of work on disability, or Ariadne, a 29-year-old White, Greek American, lesbian transitioning out of an acting career that was her parents' dream for her but that included sexual discrimination and harassment. In addition to the sections addressing race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and sexual orientation, a question on social justice issues was added. It asks how a social justice perspective could be incorporated in

counseling with either Marcos or Ariadne, and specifically how this might move the trainee beyond the individual client to take action in the larger community or society. The responses to this one question in the paper have been creative and thoughtful—full of ideas to engage in social justice and advocacy efforts spurred by the issues facing the individual client, and effective in encouraging students toward articulating a systems perspective.

Psychological Assessment

Understanding the concept of structural violence and its impact is one component of the social justice teaching philosophy used in psychological assessments and psychopathology courses taught by the third author. The term *structural violence* was introduced by Galtung (1969) and refers to violence embedded in social and institutional structures resulting in harm to individuals' well-being. Structural violence is normalized by societal institutions and thus is frequently an invisible, insidious, and neglected form of violence that affects the mental health of marginalized and disenfranchised populations. But how does one address these issues in the teaching of subjects that focus on technical instruments, and can appear to students as objective, scientific, statistical, and unbiased, such as the *Psychological Assessment* course? In this course, students become familiar with commonly used psychological tests across various cognitive domains. One goal is helping students comprehend the purpose and usefulness of testing and its relevance in clinical work. This is balanced by a sociocultural critique that explains how test development, administration, and interpretation have been linked with institutionalized racism, classism, sexism, and other social injustices and systematic oppressions. In the classroom, it provides a healthy tension and a fertile ground to explore social justice and multicultural issues.

In this course, the instructor promotes an understanding of the historical role psychological assessment has played in institutionalizing racism by providing a seemingly scientific basis for it. Integrating a thoughtful critique of psychological testing engages students in exploring the limits and usefulness of assessments in helping their clients. This framework also highlights the importance of advocacy around the appropriate use of tests as well as challenging the inappropriate and unwarranted use of testing. Engaging students in critical thinking about the use of assessments allows them to better identify when testing can aid clients and how they may advocate for their clients. They are also able to understand the serious implications of inappropriate testing and decontextualized interpretations of test scores. This further aids students in discerning the social justice implications for policy and program development.

Facilitating students' opportunities to arrive at their own understanding can be effective in illuminating the problematic nature of measuring concepts such as "intelligence." In one exercise, students are invited to describe intelligence by reflecting on what they consider the qualities of individuals with intelligence. The many words generated are written on the board and include terms such as *knowledgeable* and *articulate*. Students then provide a critique of those words. For example, a foreign student might find that the word "articulate" inadequately reflects his or her personal sense of cognitive ability. Others may point out that "knowledge" is culturally bound. By the end of the exercise, there are often no words left on the board. This exercise generates discussion of how social constructs reflect societally agreed upon criteria and thus the difficulty in defining them across groups that may have different cultural and social norms. Given that psychology does use instruments that measure intelligence, among other things, the next issue is how these tests are interpreted and how the results are used or abused.

Students review materials that illustrate the ideological and political uses of IQ tests and their relationship to historical and cultural changes. Two thought-provoking examples used to demonstrate these changes over time are Herrnstein and Murray's (1994) *The Bell Curve* and a video that recounts the use of intelligence testing in the 1920s showing Blacks, Italians, and Jews as feeble-minded (Poor & Rather, 1975). Given that we live in a society where the definition of intelligence, the instruments created to measure intelligence, and the applications of the results, are biased, students are encouraged to think about their social justice responsibilities as counseling psychologists and clinical mental health counselors.

Biological Bases of Behavior

Biological Bases of Behavior is a required neuropsychology course whose central goal is helping trainees understand the relationship between the brain/nervous system and behavior. This is another course that some instructors feel neither lends itself to nor allows time for the integration of social justice issues. Trainees often begin with a high level of anxiety; our students typically are more relationally focused, and the hard science nature of this course can be intimidating. In addition, some students note that they do not see the relevance of the course to their work as clinicians; they want to talk to clients about their feelings and their families, not about their neurons and brains. With this mentality, students must be helped to see the relevance of the course to their training in counseling psychology. To that end, infusing themes of diversity, social justice, and advocacy into *Biological Bases of Behavior* enhances student learning and interest.

Several innovative teaching activities by the fourth author have helped students engage in the course material in deep and meaningful ways. One of the first activities in the course is designed to help students explore issues of biodiversity. It is impossible to teach a biopsychology course without touching on foundational research in neuroscience that involves animal research. Some of this research can be disturbing and by today's standards would be considered unethical. Animal research is still a controversial topic in scientific research. The strategy of a class debate regarding the use of animals as research subjects helps engage students in thinking about issues of power, privilege, and oppression. Students are randomly divided into two groups, with each group required to take an extreme position in the animal rights debate in scientific research: (a) animals *must* be used to find cures for diseases such as diabetes, cancer, Parkinson's disease, or Alzheimer's disease or (b) animals should *never* be used in scientific research. Students engage in heated, thoughtful debate about this topic; the group discussion often addresses issues of power, definitions of consent, and the role of the researcher. This early examination of the rights of animals lays the foundation for later discussions on social justice and ethical issues such as human trials for medications, stem cell research, and the role of the counselor or psychologist in advocating for people without a voice.

Another approach used in this course is to share information about the scientists involved in the research, to place the findings in historical and societal contexts, and encourage discussions about the role of social justice consciousness within science generally, and psychology in particular. The book *Even the Rat Was White* (Guthrie, 1976) highlights the racism inherent in all of our institutions, including science, in spite of its self-purported objective perspective. In many courses, almost all the researchers identified as significant contributors to the field are White males, with few references to women, people of color, or people from outside North America or Europe.

In this course, through readings and faculty–student discussion, diverse scientific contributors are presented. For example, when neurological issues of perception are presented, inclusion of Steele's (2011) work in stereotype threat helps students understand the ways in which our implicit memories and experiences affect our behavior and form the basis of prejudice and discrimination. The course also draws attention to the many examples of gender disparity in the sciences. For example, students are required to complete an online discussion board assignment that explores gender issues in neuroscience. They watch a brief video podcast about Brenda Milner, considered central in the foundation of clinical neuropsychology (McGill University, 2009). She states that she does not feel that her gender interfered with her career. At the same time, the report indicates how she often had to sit in the back of

lecture halls and conferences, with her male colleagues asking her questions for her. Following the online reflections, larger class discussions allow for a richer conversation about gender bias, feminism, and the experience of women in science. This knowledge of diverse contributions to neuroscience research reveals gender and multicultural inequities as social justice issues.

In another teaching exercise, students read the book *Born on a Blue Day: Inside the Extraordinary Mind of an Autistic Savant* (Tammet, 2006), also known as “Brain Man.” Tammet’s autobiography relates to his history of neurodevelopmental issues including seizure disorder, Asperger’s, synesthesia, and savant abilities. Students engage in small and large group discussions about this text and how it challenges the way they think about the use of diagnostic labels and the concepts of “normal” and “abnormal.” As part of the discussion, students often address issues of cultural differences in parenting, in treatment of mental health issues, and in sexuality.

Biological Bases of Behavior is taught from a clinical neuropsychology perspective, combined with activities that encourage students to reflect on issues of diversity, difference, social justice awareness, and advocacy. Infusing multicultural perspectives and social justice themes into the course enhances student learning, deepens their understanding of the material, and increases student satisfaction with the course.

Implications and Future Research

In this article, we hope to contribute to counseling psychology’s extension of its commitment to multiculturalism through the integration of social justice consciousness and competencies into counseling psychology programs. For training programs to promote social justice awareness and infuse advocacy skills successfully into courses across the curriculum, more research and models for pedagogical approaches that accomplish this goal are needed. We provide a case study example of one counseling psychology program that has worked to include nontraditional, innovative pedagogical and curricular changes that emphasize social justice issues. These approaches support social justice awareness and competencies to ameliorate the inequalities and barriers to the mental health of oppressed and marginalized people. This article presents pedagogical strategies we believe align with our social justice values, although there are challenges inherent in this endeavor as well. By providing specific examples of our teaching strategies in a variety of courses, including those that may not easily lend themselves to the inclusion of social justice perspectives, we hope to encourage other faculty and training directors in counseling psychology programs to work collaboratively toward implementing social justice goals. Cultural psychologist Anthony Marsella (2013) called

for social justice to be the core value in higher education and a central theme across all areas in the curriculum. Perhaps this discussion of pedagogical examples across our curriculum will provide inspiration to other programs. We also hope for more examples of actual programs' creation of and experiences with social justice–infused programs (e.g., Talleyrand et al., 2006).

A limitation of this article is in the realm of student evaluation as we focused primarily on pedagogical strategies for promoting social justice consciousness. In our program, we have not yet fully developed formal assessment and evaluation of students' social justice competencies. Some faculty have delineated course-based rubrics related to multicultural and social justice consciousness. Anecdotally, our faculty have seen evidence of the development of social justice awareness in students' reflections, comments, and assignments. Accreditation bodies and professional associations such as APA and ACA require multicultural and advocacy competencies; however, sufficient methods for assessing these competencies have yet to be fully developed and implemented. Trainee evaluation in these competencies is a rich area for future research.

In addition, more practical strategies are needed for enhancing program adoption of advocacy values, competencies, and benchmarks established by professional associations (ACA, 2014; APA, 2012; Fouad et al., 2009; Lewis et al., 2003). More outcome research is also needed on the efficacy of pedagogical techniques in the training of social justice advocates. Training future generations of counselors and counseling psychologists, in both master's and doctoral programs, to work on social justice initiatives is a critical need. The current call for integration of social justice competencies in counseling psychology will benefit most our trainees' future clients and the marginalized communities they serve.

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