P 619: Culture, Gender and Sexuality

Christian Theological Seminary
Fall 2003

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Credit Hours: 3 (Wednesday evenings, 6pm – 8:45pm)

Learning Objectives

1. Examine and critically evaluate the theory and practice of the field of marriage and family therapy through the contextual lenses of culture, gender, sexuality, race, class and spirituality

2. Acknowledge and appreciate the contribution of your own unique contextual experience and how this has contributed to your worldview

3. Increase your ability to acknowledge and appreciate multiple perspectives and worldviews other than your own

4. Review current trends in the field of sex therapy

5. Tolerate our anxiety and fear about this journey into new territory

Course Requirements

Required Texts:


Recommended Texts:


Description of Assignments

**Constructing the Cultural Genogram:** 15 points


This article describes the process of constructing the cultural genogram as a way to increase both cultural awareness and sensitivity – key elements in the development of multicultural competency. This assignment will consist of two parts: 1) constructing a cultural genogram and 2) a synthesis of its meaning and application to clinical/professional practice. The first part of this assignment is due at the beginning of the 6th class (8 October), and the second part is due during the 10th class (12 November).

The construction of the cultural genogram involves the following elements:

1. Begin by defining your culture of origin (refer to page 229)
2. Identify the major organizing principles of each group that comprise your culture of origin
3. Identify pride/shame issues for each group associated with your culture of origin
4. Create symbols to represent these constructs that include the use of color to identify different groups, and to depict how each group contributes to the cultural identity of each individual
5. Identify intercultural marriages (or “unions”). Explore how divergent cultural issues were/are negotiated in these relationships, and trace the intergenerational consequences of intercultural unions.
6. Create a cultural framework chart
7. Construct at least a 3-generation cultural genogram
8. Address questions 1-20 in Table 1 (page 232).

This first part of the Cultural Genogram Project is due by the beginning of the 6th session (8 Oct.). Late papers will receive partial credit.
Cultural Genogram Synthesis Paper: 10 points

This assignment is designed to foster reflection, exploration and integration of the entire cultural genogram construction process. You are asked to analyze your cultural background, highlighting the ways in which it shapes your cultural identity and impacts your role as a therapist (professional). In writing this paper, please refer to Table 2 (page 234) and address questions 1-5 in your essay. Integrate relevant course material into this discussion as well.

This second part of the Cultural Genogram Project is due by the beginning of the 10th session (12 Nov.). Late papers will receive partial credit.

Reaction Papers 10 points each (total of 40 points)

As therapists training in a mental health profession, we have an ethical and moral obligation to stay in touch with our own processes (particularly when entering into unfamiliar and sometimes uncomfortable areas). During this course, you are asked to write four reaction papers focusing on how you are feeling, thinking and reacting to the course material. You will be given a format to follow for each reaction paper. Papers are due by the beginning of the specified class meeting. In order to earn the full 10 points for each reaction paper, the following criteria must be met:

1. Papers must be turned in by the beginning of class on the designated due date (5 points will automatically be deducted if papers are turned in late. Late papers will not be accepted for partial credit after the end of the following class meeting – i.e., 1 week grace period for late papers)
2. All parts of the question must be answered in full.
3. Papers must include integration of course readings.

You may also use this format to provide class feedback, discuss ways you are integrating course material into your professional work or personal life, or anything else you feel is important that you would like to share. The content of your reaction papers will only be viewed by the instructor (unless your permission is given for any additional use), and returned to you with comments, questions, feedback & musings. This assignment is an invitation to “dialogue” about important contextual issues in the field. (recommended page length: 3-4 double-spaced, typed pages per reaction paper).

“Sex on the Internet” Assignment: 5 points

No, I’m not suggesting an experiential activity for educational purposes! But in this age of computer technology, there is a considerable amount of information available on the internet related to sexual behavior and treatment. For this assignment, you are asked to access some resource(s) of your choice on the internet related to human sexuality, sexual dysfunction, or sex therapy. Write a short summary of what you found (including the name of the resource and the e-mail address), and briefly critique the accuracy of the information based upon what you are learning in class (total of 2-3 pages). Also, please turn in a copy of one page you have downloaded and printed out from your investigation.
“BNIF” Interviews: 15 points

You will have the opportunity to join a group of your choosing and become a “BNIF” (Big Name in the Field) and be interviewed by the instructor with your group in front of the class for 20-25 minutes. You will be asked the following questions:

- Tell me something about your background.
- What are some of your core beliefs about families, therapy and change?
- What in your life experience has influenced your clinical work?
- What legacy would you like to leave the field of marriage and family therapy?

Prior to the interview, you may wish to give the instructor additional questions to ask your group. In order to make things more lively, I’ll probably ask you from time to time, to comment (as your BNIF might comment) on course content throughout the semester! The goal is not to put you on the spot, but to have fun, spark spontaneous discussions, and to provide you with an opportunity to go beyond intellectual understanding and “get inside the skin” of key people in the marriage and family therapy field relating to culture, gender or sexuality.

Here is a list of BNIF’s you can choose from:

1. Monica McGoldrick
2. Ken Hardy
3. Nancy Boyd-Franklin
4. The Women’s Project (Marianne Walters, Betty Carter, Peggy Papp, Olga Silverstein)
5. Harry Aponte
6. Other (make me an offer)

Be ready by the second class period to sign up for your BNIF Group.

Final Project: 15 points

This is an opportunity to unleash your creativity and reflect on what you’ve learned this semester in a “right-brained”, nontraditional way! Draw from your talents & passions to create a symbolic expression of what you learned from this class. For example, you could write a poem, paint a picture, compose a song, or cook a special dish. For the more practical-minded, you could develop a clinical tool or therapeutic intervention, etc….

This project is due during the last class meeting (10 December 2003).

Grading and Attendance

Grades will be determined by the number of points accumulated out of a total of 100 possible points.

- A: 93 - 100 points
- A-: 90 - 92 points
- B+: 87 - 89 points
- B: 83 – 86 points
- B-: 80 – 82 points
- C+: 77 – 79 points
- C: 73 –76 points
- C-: 70 - 72 points
- D+: 67 – 69 points
- D: 63 – 66 points
- D-: 60 – 62 points
- F: below 60 points

According to Seminary policy, students are required to notify the course instructor of any absences. No student may receive credit for a course if they miss more than ¼ of the class sessions.
Course Schedule

3 September (Session 1): Orientation and Organization: Syllabus Overview

10 September (Session 2): It’s All About Context!

Readings:

17 September (Session 3): Sexism, Racism, Classism: Stereotypes, Prejudices – Power and Privilege

Readings:


24 September (Session 4): Contextual Issues and Cultural Groups

BNIF Interview: Ken Hardy

Reaction Paper #1 due

Readings:


1 October (Session 5): Application and Intervention

BNIF Interview: Nancy Boyd-Franklin

Readings:


8 October (Session 6): Revisiting Gender

Cultural Genogram Project (Part 1) due

BNIF Interview: The Women’s Project

Readings:


15 October  (Session 7):  Let’s Talk About Sex!

**Reaction Paper #2 due**

**Readings:**
Rathus et al. (2002). *Human sexuality in a world of diversity* (5th Ed.).
- Chapter 1: What is Human Sexuality?
- Chapter 8: Relationships, Intimacy, and Communication

22 October  (Session 8):   Sexuality Across the Life Cycle

**BNIF Interview: Monica McGoldrick**

**Readings:**
Rathus et al. (2002). *Human sexuality in a world of diversity* (5th Ed.).
- Chapter 13: Sexuality in Childhood and Adolescence
- Chapter 14: Sexuality in Adulthood

29 October  No Class!  (Mid-Term Break)

**Readings:**

5 November  (Session 9):   Sexual Orientation: Demystifying Gay and Lesbian Sex

**Reaction Paper #3 due**

**Readings:**
Rathus et al. (2002). *Human sexuality in a world of diversity* (5th Ed.).
- Chapter 10: Sexual Orientation
12 November (Session 10): Sex Therapy Revisited

**Cultural Genogram Synthesis Paper (Part 2) due**

**Readings:**
Rathus et al. (2002). Human sexuality in a world of diversity (5th Ed.).
   - Chapter 15: Sexual Dysfunctions
   - Chapter 17: Atypical Sexual Variations
   - Chapter 18: Sexual Coercion

19 November (Session 11): The Impact of Social Class

**“Sex on the Internet” Assignment due**

**Readings:**
   - Introduction
   - Chapter 1: Underorganization in the Poor Family
   - Chapter 2: Assessment in Family Therapy
   - Chapter 3: Family Therapy and the Community
   - Chapter 4: Home/Community Based Services: The Two-Tier Approach
   - Chapter 5: The Family-School Interview: An Ecostructural Approach

26 November No Class!!! (Thanksgiving Holiday/Reading Week)

3 December (Session 12): Family Therapy Among the “Marginalized”

**Reaction Paper #4 due**

**BNIF Interview: Harry Aponte**

**Readings:**
   - Chapter 6: “Too Many Bosses”
   - Chapter 7: “If I Don’t Get Simple, I Cry”
   - Chapter 8: Training of the Person of the Therapist for Work with the Poor and Minorities
   - Chapter 9: The Negotiation of Values in Therapy
   - Chapter 10: About Forgiving
   - Chapter 11: Strength and Vulnerability
Final Project due:

Readings: