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VOICES WITHIN FAMILY THERAPY: THE LIFE STORY OF A PRACTICUM TEAM

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A yearlong ethnography that documented the life story of a practicum team is reported in this paper. The life story included how the team cohered, how inclusion of supervisors-in-training affected the team process, and what team members concluded about their experiences. An audit trail of the ethnography included interviews of the therapists, supervisor, and supervisors-in-training, both individually and in a group. In addition, all informants audiotaped field memos about their experiences throughout the year. A domain analysis of the transcripts yielded four domains: 1) Steps In Team Building; 2) When the Team is Least Effective; 3) Ways Conflict Developed On the Team; and 4) Ways Conflict Can Be Resolved. The role of ethnography in articulating and in resolving tensions around diversity is discussed, particularly surrounding the entrance in the team of supervisors-in-training during the second semester. The paper concludes with a discussion of the broader implications of how ethnography may give voice to conflicts and tensions within family therapy.

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The use, acceptance, and popularity of supervision teams in family therapy training has followed the lead of early pioneers of family therapy. Many have lauded therapeutic (Papp, 1980) and training benefits (Pegg & Monacchio, 1982) of team-based supervision. There seems little question of the importance of live supervision and therapeutic teams as a creative environment for training and supervising marital and family therapists. However, very little systematic research has examined how these teams develop and are maintained (Roberts, 1981; Sells, Smith, Coe, Yoshioka, & Robbins, 1994). This yearlong study, using ethnographic research methods, described how a clinical practicum team cohered, was maintained, and weathered the crisis of the entrance of the supervisors-in-training. It is the life story of a clinical practicum team as told by its members (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994).

In writing the life story, a qualitative methodology was adapted from Spradley's (1979) ethnographic Developmental Research Sequence model (DRS). A modified version of Spradley's model has been used in ethnographic and in process studies of family therapy (e.g., Sells et al., 1994; Smith, Sells, & Clevenger, 1994; Smith, Jenkins, & Sells, 1995; Smith, Sells, Pereira, Todahl, & Pappagiannis, 1995). This use of qualitative designs has been supported by Moon, Dillon and Sprenkle (1990) and Liddle (1991) who called for qualitative studies that followed a replicable methodology. This study makes public its premises and procedures so that others may examine them, possibly replicating the methodology. In addition, this article incorporates research as an integral component of the team experience itself that practitioners and educators both can access.

We used ethnographic research methods because they comprise a qualitative methodology that asks the question "what is the culture of this group of people?" (Patton, 1990, p. 67). With its origins in anthropology, ethnography attempts to systematically understand and describe culture from the perspective of the people in that particular context (Agar, 1986; Spradley, 1979). Contrary to the anthropologist's initial interest in remote, non-literate cultures, today's ethnographers use this methodology for the study of contemporary problems in a multitude of social contexts, ranging from addiction (Agar, 1986) to family therapy (Sells et al., 1994; Smith, Winton, & Yoshioka, 1992; Smith, Yoshioka, & Winton, 1993).

METHODOLOGY

This ethnographic study utilized Spradley's (1979) Developmental Research Sequence (DSR) model. Beginning with a general area of interest, team building, we initially collected data in interviews using open-ended questions. The general research question in this study was "How are teams built?" Transcripts were

analyzed using a domain analysis (Spradley, 1979). What follows is a detailed description of the methodology.

Descriptions of the Context

Description of the Site.

This study was conducted at Florida State University's Marriage and Family Therapy Clinic. In addition to providing services to clients, the integral function of the clinic is to serve as a research and training facility for doctoral students and masters students from several disciplines. In addition, the program has a supervision training sequence in which a course on supervision is linked to students' participation as supervisors-in-training (SIT) with practicum faculty. Practicum faculty serve as supervisors of supervision for the SITs. SITs typically supervise one or two students on couples and families not seen on practicum night.

Description of the Sampling Procedure.

Informants in this study were drawn from a purposive sample. All members within the practicum studied in this paper had expressed an interest in working with the faculty supervisor as his interest in team-based therapy and supervision was widely known and appreciated in the clinic. Practicum team members started with an interest in team-based treatment and supervision approaches. Membership on the practicum team was determined through a standard selection process as stated within the university's Marriage and Family Therapy Program Policies and Procedures Manual. Selection for membership on all teams in the marriage and family therapy clinic are made by program's clinical faculty and was not influenced by the research project. The authors, who served as both participants and observers, brought their own perceptions and biases that were identified using methods discussed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). As much as possible, an audit trail, member checks, and triangulated data sources and media were used to understand and articulate the authors' biases. One overt bias was that the therapists and SITs shared an interest in Reflecting Teams and narrative-based therapies. One obvious result of this bias was the use of a domain analysis that relies heavily on semantic relationships.

Description of the Researchers.

The second author, a first semester doctoral student, conducted a series of audiotaped interviews with all practicum team members, the practicum supervisor and the supervisors-in-training assigned to the practicum. In addition, she was also interviewed but by a student who was not on the team. She had participated on a practicum team one year prior to the study but was not familiar with previous literature on team building. The other team members and supervisors-in-training had received similar clinical practicum training at the same institution prior to the study. Although the faculty supervisor initially assisted the second author in preparing for the ethnographic interviewing, he did not partici-

pate in interview question formation or data analysis. In addition, to control for any undue influence the faculty supervisor could exert on the participants, it was agreed that the interviewer would maintain the confidentiality of the interviews and not share information. The faculty supervisor would be apprised of the process of the study but not the content. Only during the group interviews was there an exchange of information between all the members of the team. The second author and a masters-level social work student, who was not a participant in the study, conducted the domain analysis. The second author discussed the progress of the study with the practicum supervisor who became involved at the end of the study in reviewing findings and manuscript preparation.

Description of the Team.

The practicum team consisted of three doctoral students in marriage and family therapy, and one social work masters student intern. The doctoral students consisted of one student in her first year and two students in their second year. The students ranged in age from 30 to 48. The faculty supervisor is on the faculty of the School of Social Work and was the director of research at the marriage and family therapy clinic. He had had extensive experience supervising practicums and teams for the past eight years. The practicum team met once a week for two semesters. During the first semester, the team consisted of the faculty supervisor and the practicum team that included one doctoral candidate who became a SIT during the second semester.

At the start of the second semester, three supervisors-in-training (SITs) were assigned to this practicum. The SITs consisted of three doctoral candidates ranging in age from 30 to 50. The SITs were supervised by the practicum supervisor and each SIT was assigned to work with one practicum team member. The SITs had served on a practicum team one year prior to this study and had been supervised by the same practicum supervisor. One commonality among the three SITs was that the practicum supervisor had supervised them in practicum during the previous year and was chair of their dissertation committees.

Data Collection

Interview Procedures.

All the research conducted for this study took place as part of the practicum on practicum night. The team was expected to conduct and participate in some form of research. They had expressed an interest in learning more about qualitative research and discussed the idea of conducting a study on their own development as a team. One member of the practicum team, a first year doctoral student, volunteered to conduct the interviews, participate in and coordinate the domain analysis. To begin the study, each team member and the faculty supervisor recorded field notes using an audiotape recorder during practicum nights. These field notes addressed the general research question of how the teams are built and the team's impressions and observations of this process. A series of five

field notes of sessions were gathered during the study. A series of four individual team member interviews were also conducted. The first two and fourth interviews included only the team members and the faculty supervisor. The third set of interviews included the SITs as well as the rest of the team. These interviews averaged 15 to 30 minutes in length. These interviews were all audio taped and transcribed verbatim and followed a series of questions developed by the researcher based on analysis of previous interviews.

A series of three group interviews with the team members and faculty supervisor were also conducted during for this study. These interviews were of two types: two were open discussion format and one followed questions developed by the interviewers. The group interviews allowed the team to confirm domains, themes, and patterns. The final interview of this study was a group interview and served as a form of debriefing and closure for the practicum.

Types of Questions.

The types of questions asked were of two kinds: open-ended or descriptive questions and structured or close-ended questions described in Spradley's DRS model (1979). In the beginning of the study only open-ended descriptive questions were asked to gather as much information as possible with little or no influence from the researcher. All of the field notes were open-ended interviews. For example, one field note question that was asked was "What did you observe in terms of team building tonight?" An example of another interview question was "Could you tell me in a step-by-step fashion what it is like on this team?" All field note questions were posed verbally to the team before they recorded their responses.

Structured questions were developed from domain analysis of the field notes and initial interviews. Structured questions were developed from these emergent domains that attempted to capture how the team organizes information (Spradley, 1979). For example, early on an initial domain that identified humor and presession dinner as important emerged as characteristics of a team. From this, the following structured question was developed: "What are all the ways to build the team?" Each team member was asked this question and as a result this provided more structured questions for the next set of interviews. This continued until there was theoretical saturation in which no new data emerges about a particular category (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Theoretical saturation occurred at the end of the first semester and third individual interviews and at the end of the second semester and third group interview. Over the course of the study questions evolved in an iterative fashion with the generation of new information that was analyzed, expanded upon, omitted or saturated through domain analysis. Table 1 presents the iterative development of questions in this study.

Data Analysis.

Each sentence or paragraph was analyzed and divided into three parts: the cover term that is the main concept identified in the sentence; included terms that describe the main concept; and semantic relationships that define the relation-

Table 1. Evolution of Interview Questions

Original Questions Individual Interview #1	First Iteration Individual Interview #2	Second Iteration Individual Interview #3
1) Could you tell step by step what it is like being on the team?	1) Why is dinner so important?	1) How is the team different now?
2) What is the most useful thing about being a member of the team?	2) What part does humor play?	2) What are all the ways the team has redefined itself?
3) What is the least helpful thing about being on the team?	3) When is the team least effective?	3) What are all the ways the team is least effective?
	4) What part does trust play on the team?	4) What role does humor play?
	5) What role does camaraderie play on the team?	5) What role does dinner play?
	6) Many of you mentioned that the team provided an atmosphere where "anything goes" and that you are free to be yourself. What do you mean by this?	6) What part does trust play?
		7) What roles does camaraderie play?
	7) What role does freedom to be yourself play on the team?	8) What role does freedom to "be yourself" play?
	8) What role does shared learning play in the team?	9) What's the role of shared learning?
	9) Some of you mentioned that you never know what will happen to a team until there is conflict. What is your perspective on this?	10) What are your thoughts on the role of conflict on the team?
		QUESTIONS FOR SITS
		1) What is your relationship to the team?
		2) What are the rules for the SITs?
		3) What are the rules for the SIT on practicum night?

ship between the cover term and included terms (e.g., Sells et al., 1994). For example:

Ethnographer: Others on the team have stated that sometimes the team is not very effective. When do you think the team is the least effective?
Team Member: When it is too large, people just feel like they are one of a

Table 1. Continued

First Iteration Group Interview #1	Second Iteration Group Interview #2	Third Iteration Group Interview #3
1) What are all the steps in team building?	1) How are things different being on the team since it first started?	1) Give me your comments on all the ways the team is different now?
2) What is the role of crisis on a team?	2) In light of how things are different, how are all the ways that the team has redefined itself?	2) What are all the ways the team has redefined itself?
	3) What are all the ways the team is effective?	3) What are all the ways the team is effective?
	4) What are all the ways that conflict developed?	4) What are all the ways that conflict developed on the team?
	5) What are all the ways that the team resolved conflict?	5) What are all the ways that conflict was resolved?

crowd, they can't get air time. The other time that a team is ineffective is when it is chaotic, when the level of energy sometimes becomes too much so that people can't focus on what they are doing.
Team Member Statement:

(1) cover term: team ineffectiveness
(2) Included terms:
-when it is too large
-when it is chaotic
-when the level of energy is so much people can't focus
(3) semantic relationship: cause-effect

Domains were combined into diagrams, tables, or spreadsheet and a taxonomic analysis was conducted that compared and contrasted themes across domains. This collapsed domains into core categories that identified relationships between domains. These core categories were derived directly from themes and patterns spanning the domains. The domains were grouped together on a table at the end of the first semester. A taxonomic analysis was done to discern differences and similarities among the domains. The purpose of the taxonomic analysis was to collapse domains to ascertain what themes and patterns across domains would emerge. Table 2 shows an example of how this was completed.

In this study, the following domains emerged: 1) Steps In Team Building; 2) When the Team is Least Effective; 3) Ways Conflict Developed on the Team;

Table 2. Completed Domain 1: Steps in Team Building

Steps involvved in building the team Team member #2; pg. 10; In. 6-62 Semantic Relationship #7 —The faculty supervisor's humor —We play, eat and have camaraderie —I think the trust is the biggest part of it	Ways to build cohesion or team building Team member #4; pg. 47; In. 14-19 Semantic Relationship #7 —for people to rely on one another —directing my problems or questions to the team
Role of trust in the team Team member #6; pg. 71; In. 77-86 Semantic Relationship #9 —it is the biggest part —ability to take chances and risks —dinner helped build trust —humor helped build trust —taking risks and not getting slammed —not getting criticized built trust —togetherness and cohesiveness and a group feeling	Role of trust in the team Team member #1; pg. 54; In. 32-27 Semantic Relationship #7 —knowing that the team is going to be there —there is honesty and respect —the team is learning just as I am —we're all in the same boat —we're all here learning and honoring that
Why dinner is so important Faculty supervisor; pg. 64; In. 6-13 Semantic Relationship #4 —it was the act of eating together —it was a common experience —it was unique because other teams didn't eat together —team became special —it helped establish boundaries —it helped establish camaraderie	Role of humor in the team Team member #1; pg. 66; In. 10-15 Semantic Relationship #4 —it relieves the stress —a way of showing caring —a way to connect —this is a safe place to be humorous —humor has become a ritual
Importance of humor on the team Faculty supervisor; pg. 64; In. 24-30 Semantic Relationship #4 —is a way of expressing suffering without getting morose —can share pain without becoming self-indulgent —it is a way of trying to avoid the heaviness of being a therapist	How shared learning helps build the team Team member #3; pg. 80; In. 146-165 Semantic Relationship #9 —it is the idea of expanding your range —permission to be what you want —watching someone else be the therapist watching the supervisor —watching others try, succeed, and stumble —working together to try and meet some goal

Table 2. Continued

Ways that shared learning builds the team Team member #2; pg. 31; In. 19-27 Semantic Relationship #3 —seeing more participation behind the mirror —having something that you said accepted —to learn using your suggestions as an intervention	What part does camaraderie play on the team Team member #1; pg. 66-67; In. 39-41 Semantic Relationship #9 —it is the humor —it is the trust —you don't have to be on, you can just kick back when we no longer have to be therapists after 9 p.m. —it is just the friendliness

and 4) Ways Conflict Can Be Resolved. It must be noted that the authors chose those representative segments that all team members referenced in some form or another. To include all the participants comments would have overburdened the reader.

RESULTS

Team Domain 1: Steps In Team Building

Steps in team building was the first domain to emerge from interviews. All team members were able to identify those characteristics that built the team. Humor and a presession dinner that was catered each week by a different team member were identified repeatedly as critical elements that contributed to developing team cohesion.

Team Member (TM) #1: In terms of step-by-step, my first response is that it is refreshing and I think incredible. Step-by-step how this team is evolving. I think humor is important. I look forward to it. Anything goes. I feel everything will be maintained.

Practicum Supervisor (PS) #1: Humor really looks at human suffering and helps us appreciate our suffering. Most therapy is really motivated by understanding pain and how to deal with it. Humor is one way of being able to understand pain.

TM #4: With dinner it was a way in which people had a common experience that was unique because other teams did not eat together and so the team became a special team. It helped establish boundaries, it helped establish camaraderie, it helped establish common experience, and because we were hungry it helped meet some of Maslow's basic needs.

In the beginning some team members reported that they were nervous and

did not know what to expect but that the interviews helped articulate these reactions. All team members noted that presession dinners and humor especially helped build the team, develop trust and build camaraderie. In addition, the team discussions and support behind the mirror when a team member was conducting therapy facilitated shared learning. Such shared learning was an essential aspect of how team members perceived the team environment. Team members reported that they had the freedom to be themselves in front of the mirror and to take risks especially in the use of phone-ins, bug-in-the-ear, walk-ins, a using the team as a reflecting team. They reported that this perceived freedom to experiment expanded their range of skills and contributed to team building.

TM #1: What's emerging for me as a vehicle which is building the team is feeling more and more of a participant and member of the team as therapists, therapists in training, therapists in front of the mirror and behind the mirror.
TM #4: I can see that one of the ways of building cohesion in a group, or team building, is for people to rely on each other.
TM #3: To me it is the ability to risk. Loosening up and trying different things and knowing you might fall flat on your face. In this team, risk is promoted. For instance, tonight I really felt like I was just out there (with a client in front of the mirror) and that that was okay. I asked questions, and I didn't care if anyone thought they were right. I knew what I needed to do and I had to just take those risks. To me it is just throwing caution to the wind. You begin to live the experience rather than using a particular technique.
TM #2: I had to risk. I had never pushed myself that far with a client. That was sort of the missing piece for me. I needed to be stretched. I needed to expand my range. That's what this is all about. There's a playfulness that happens as well as knowing that I'll be taken seriously and that I will be respected.
TM #4: I know I'm feeling more relaxed. Part of that is just getting my feet wet a little bit with everybody doing a few sessions. That's helped me relax. I think also having the faculty supervisor coming into the room and using the bug-in-the-ear, having that right there has been helpful. I feel more secure. Phone-ins, too. When I go back behind the mirror, I feel like people have been paying attention and listening. It's like everybody there cares about it. I haven't totally blown it. I haven't done anything real stupid yet.

Team Domain 2: When the Team Is Least Effective

In the beginning the team generally reported that the team was least effective in doing the mechanics of paper work and when post-session ran too late. Over time, team members reported that the team was least effective when the team is too large, it can lead to chaos, when there is infighting, when rules are rigid, or when rules are changing. They also related that they were least effective when they were confused about a case and when boundaries were not set. Most notably, team members said they were least effective when they were silent when there was conflict.

PS #1: When it is too large and when it is chaotic, when the level of energy sometimes becomes too much so that people can't focus on what they are doing. Teams are least effective when there is infighting, and when there is no trust.
TM #2: At the end of the evening during post-session at 11:30 p.m. At that point it is too late. We all have papers to write and things to do. The conversation is still good, the feedback is still good but I don't know if I am emotionally available.
TM #3: I think when we haven't spoken up when all the rules were changing. I think we were least effective when we were silent. When there was some conflict, I just found myself shutting up.
PS #1: I think the team is least effective when there's no leadership or it's adrift. That is, there is no clear purpose in what direction it's going, there's no clear philosophy guiding it, there's no clear understanding of who are its members.

Team Domain 3: Ways Conflict Developed on the Team

This section consists of two parts: team members' comments and the SITs' comments. All team members except one reported that conflict began to develop with the entrance of the SITs in practicum. Team members noted that conflict began to develop when one SIT challenged the practicum supervisor. The rules of the team began to change and the team met that challenge with silence. This team silence contributed to the development of conflict.

PS #1: The net result of all that is that the overt challenge, I think in the last couple months, degenerated into a debate over philosophy.
TM #2: I think bringing the SITs (created) a crisis.
TM #3: When we haven't spoken up when all the rules were changing. So we were vulnerable to all those rules changes. We didn't deal with them. I didn't say anything.
TM #4: When things started to heat up in those sessions and people were willing to take the risk of saying, "I don't like the fact that, that SIT is coming in and acting this way." And I think that all of that had the potential for a crisis and it started getting stirred up when this thing happened with the SIT and who was supervising the case and how we were going to go.
TM #1: One of the SITs and the faculty supervisor had a parting of the ways philosophically and it got very acrimonious. It took place in postsession and it was entirely inappropriate to be taking place on the team. It was personal stuff and should be dealt with outside of the team.
Team members indicated that with all of the rules changing that they did not

know who was part of the group and what the team boundaries were. In addition some team members expressed role and leadership confusion.

PS #1: And the regrouping really meant re-examining what is the group, specifically were the SITs part of the group or not part of the group. So inclusion and exclusion became the rule. A team redefines itself by both who's in, who's out, who's in charge and what the philosophy is.

TM #2: When we had very different opinions, and I don't know that the boundaries had been set clearly or not to deal with that kind of ambiguity or that kind of differences. And to have two therapists in the room: one supervised by one supervisor and one supervised by the other supervisor.

Most of the SITs also expressed similar concerns about team membership, role and rule confusion, and concern about boundaries. One SIT, however, was quite clear about not being a member of the team.

SIT #1: I don't view myself as any part of the team. I am like right on the boundaries of the team. I was not in the formation of it. I was not in any of the planning of the rules, establishing of rules. I play by the rules of the team, but I don't consider myself a member of that team. The other two SITs expressed more confusion about their role, the rules, and boundaries.

SIT #2: I don't know what my role is. It's like I'm not part of the team. We're on our own. That's part of the problem. Don't know what the rules are. And we had a real crisis, I thought. That situation with the SIT. That really brought to a head everything that was under the surface.

SIT #3: I'm a visitor to the team. Not knowing necessarily what rules there are, what guidelines there are, not knowing when you've overstepped bounds. I think it was very vague. Did we come to meals or not? Were we there for pre-session? What was our role? What was our role in postsession?

Team Domain 4: Ways Conflict Can Be Resolved

This domain is also divided into two sections: comments by the team and comments by the SITs. Some team members stated that aspects of the conflict had been resolved and others brainstormed how conflict can be resolved in the future. The same held true for the SITs in that they were able to contribute useful recommendations for conflict resolution in the future.

Both the team and the SITs identified roles, rules, and boundaries as central to the discussion.

PS #1: I try to structure it so that the challenge can play itself out. There has been a difference in how the team has redefined itself, it's been by membership and by leadership. The struggle to determine who's in charge of not only the physical leadership of the team, but also mostly like the philosophical and spiritual leadership of the team.

TM #2: We tent to minimize the difficulty of their (SITs) roles. I don't know how welcomed they have really felt. Did we ever really make any attempt to invite them in (for dinner)?

PS #1: I had to violate the boundaries set up in terms of my role and take charge of the entire team and, in essence, swept out the SITs and said, let's start over again.

TM #2: Since the SITs have been a source of conflict, we've had to verbalize what our rules are because some of the rules were violated.

PS #1: The team needs to cut back to its original dimensions and the role of the SITs needs to be more sharply defined, perhaps reduced. Setting up boundaries. The team needs to go someplace where anything goes. Where observers cannot dictate philosophy, procedures are necessary . . . where SITs learning needs doesn't dominate. When the SITs can make a very observable shift from being an SIT to being an observer then it works.

One team member summed up the experience as:

TM #1: We've gotten clear on what our rules are: I want to be advised or consulted if there are any anticipated changes, what the rules are for SITs, what SITs might be experiencing (e.g., they might be scared). If they ask you to hush, just respect that. We would like to be considered and consulted with someone who's attempting to change the rules and see if we're willing to work with it or not.

Another team member simply stated:

TM #2: It'll be interesting to see how it ends. I don't know what the team's response ultimately is, or will be.

The SITs contributed considerably to suggestions for future conflict resolution, again focusing on roles, rules and boundaries.

SIT #1: I think the basic thing is that the SITs and the team should have met together to reestablish new ground rules where everybody had input to it.

SIT #2: I think it would have been better if we had all sat down together and talked. Had some preparation, what everybody's roles would be, had input from the team members so they felt like they were empowered.

One SIT expressed an understanding of the rules quite clearly.

SIT #1: The rules to me are when I am in the supervisor's chair, I'm in charge of the case in front of the mirror, and I'm in charge of the therapist or therapists that are in front of the mirror. The faculty supervisor is in charge of the team. It's up to the faculty supervisor what the team does behind the mirror. If I'm having a problem, I go to the faculty supervisor. The basic rule when I'm in charge, the faculty supervisor won't upstage me. He'll put input in, he'll give suggestions.

DISCUSSION

In this study, team members related the life story of their practicum. The life story included three stages: the beginning of a practicum team, its maturation, and how it weathered a crisis (it has been suggested that it is actually two smaller specific stories: the "Camelot" period; and the "civil war" period). The epilogue to the life story is that all SITs completed their doctorates with the practicum supervisor as their major professor, and that team members in turn became SITs and are completing their program of study en route to completing their doctorates. We believe that a life story was valuable to our understanding of a tumultuous year. It is "the study of experience is the study of life, for example, the study of Epiphanies, rituals, routines, metaphors, and everyday actors" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 415). Within the life story was a description of structural and functional characteristics involved in practicum team building, multiple levels of supervision, and resolution of conflict. Four domains of our team experience emerged from our ethnographic methodology. These domains framed the experience of this team and how it cohered, functioned and coped with conflict. The introduction of the SITs into the team challenged the team's perceptions of itself and its process but also challenged the team to become clearer and to redefine itself.

Literature on family therapy training teams emphasizes the characteristics of an effective team: a sense of collaboration, clarity of rules, roles, boundaries, and goals (Cade, Speed, & Seligman, 1986; Heath, 1986, 1992; Larson & LaFasto, 1989). By all accounts of team members, these characteristics were endorsed as part of an effective team. During the first stage of the team's life story, the team focused on characteristics that defined team building that make up the domain of Steps In Team Building. This team was remarkably cohesive, cordial, harmonious, and supportive, defining itself as valuing shared learning, free to be oneself and able to take risks in a supportive environment. It is notable that a domain of the team's effectiveness did not emerge but was implied within the of team building domain. Because teams members were pleased with the team process and structure, especially as it related to clients, effectiveness was not a concern.

Clearly, the most interesting aspect of this study was the entrance of the SITs

in the second semester and the ensuing conflict that developed. With the entrance of the SITs, the team entered the middle phase of its life story and was catapulted into crisis. Two levels of conflict emerged: the role, rule, and boundary concerns and the philosophical challenge to the faculty supervisor. Larsen and LaFasto (1989) emphasized that when a team becomes ineffective, "Something was being attended to that had assumed, at least at that time, a higher priority than the team's goal" (p. 34). This is essentially what happened, with the original goal of the team becoming usurped. The confusion with the structural issues of roles, rules, and boundaries began to absorb more and more of the team's energy. The relationship between the SITs and the faculty supervisor became unclear as well, causing a strain among the team members, SITs, and faculty supervisor. Yet, it was with the challenge from one SIT to the faculty supervisor's authority that the team moved from strain to crisis. This challenge was addressed in the form of a polarization in philosophy.

All team members were distressed by the philosophical and political challenge issued to the faculty supervisor by one of the SITs. Cade et al, (1986) suggested that, "Basic clashes can occur where, for example, one part of the team views a depressed woman's symptoms as tactics in a power struggle with her husband, while the other part of the team views it as the expression of an existential dilemma and the consequence of unresolved internal conflict" (p. 108). This illustrated how fundamental philosophical differences can lead to conflict; a variation of this theme was at work on this team. The conflict involved how to best philosophically understand and treat a couple. There were allegations of spousal abuse as well as concerns of the wife's mental health. One SIT clearly articulated a feminist perspective, underscoring the need for safety and that the wife's mental health status was a result of the abuse and would be alleviated with the cessation of abuse. Others on the team agreed with the need for safety parameters, but were still concerned for the wife's mental health, stating the need for evaluation and treatment. The lack of clarity of the roles, rules and boundaries when the SITs entered the team laid the groundwork for an escalation of the philosophical struggle over that particular therapy case. In part, this reflects the larger debate that is changing the face of the field of family therapy with the emergence of a new paradigm and the impact that it is having on the nature of the therapeutic relationship (Berg, & DeJong, 1996; de Shazer, 1991, 1994; Hoffman, 1990; Mirkin, 1990). For example, with the inclusion of feminist and constructivist philosophies and approaches to therapy to more traditional strategic and systemic approaches, many perspectives can be represented on one supervision team (i.e., Smith et al., 1995). The potential for "difference" is high. The experience of this particular team confirms this and speaks to the need for open discussion of differing philosophical approaches to treatment within supervision teams (Smith, 1991; Smith et al., 1995).

The third stage of the team's life story was reflected in the domain of Ways Conflict Can be Resolved. This, in fact, marked the emergence of a more "ma-

ture" team. Earlier, it was noted that a domain about when the team was most effective did not emerge. Rather it was implicit. Yet with the entrance of the SITs, conflict resolution focused attention on what had previously helped this team to be effective. Team members stated that the SITs violated the implied rules of the team and forced those rules to become explicit. Team members' difficulty in sorting through SITs' roles and rules and deciding how they interfaced with the team roles and rules challenged them to better understand team dynamics. Some team members were highly distressed by the philosophical and political challenge issued to the faculty supervisor by one of the SITs. Team members were concerned that someone outside the team had disrupted team process. Team members were surprised by their own silence in the face of their increasing anxiety and concern.

The SITs also expressed confusion about their role and rules governing their interaction with the practicum team. Two SITs expressed concern about the challenge to the faculty supervisor from one of their own and expressed confusion about whether they were members of the team. One SIT clearly expressed confusion about his role and stated the need for rules governing a smooth transition of the entrance of SITs into the practicum team. Interesting to note, there was no conflict between the team members and the SITs. Rather, the SITs and the team members remained quite sociable with each another. It was instead the challenge to the faculty supervisor and confusing structural elements that created anxiety and distress. Unfortunately, the end of the academic year prevented a complete resolution of the team conflict; however, team members contributed suggestions for future teams, how they should be structured and function, how they could interface more effectively with other levels of supervision, and easily saturated the domain "Ways conflict can be resolved." The team suggested that SITs and the team should meet together to reestablish new ground rules with input from all, particularly if SITs come into an established team. If the team and the SITs are beginning together, the same rule should apply; establish ground rules with input from all. Some suggested that the SITs participate in dinner, and that there be clarification on the rules of pre- and post-session. Others suggested that the number of SITs be limited in a practicum.

Implications for Training

The entrance of additional levels of supervision in a practicum team led to conflict in this study. Painful as it was, it clearly contributed to clarity of team roles, rules, boundaries, and conflict resolution. It helped suggest practice guidelines for development of future practicum teams and the interface with SITs that can minimize the risk of conflict. Through this experience, we did not conclude that conflict could or should be avoided. On the other hand, we suggested ways to minimize the risk, and/or use conflict more effectively in order to diminish its debilitating effects. In particular, we decided that the SITs and practicum

teams should be included within a single system and that a collaborative discussion of rules, roles, boundaries, and goals should be an initial order of business.

Two critical issues face practicum teams that are comprised of faculty supervisor, practicum therapists, and SITs. Within practica, therapists are developing autonomy and SITs are developing leadership. As much as is possible, the faculty supervisor teaches both simultaneously; teaching leadership to SITs who supervise therapists who are striving for autonomy. It is the role of the faculty supervisor to monitor and balance these goals. Negotiating the multiple expectations and agenda may inevitably create tension. In this team's life story, conflict was the outcome. Yet for this team, conflict was also a surprise. One year prior to this study, the team was comprised of the current SITs who were then practicum therapists with the same faculty supervisor. At issue was the different goals and roles of practicum therapist and SITs and how to manage them in one practicum team. No one on the team expected or anticipated the extent that these differences would have.

Of critical importance was the role that the research study itself played on this team. The ethnographic interviews provided an opportunity for the team members, supervisor, and SITs to discuss and reflect on the team process. The group interviews allowed the team to regroup and formulate strategies for dealing with conflict and philosophical differences in approaches to treatment. The ethnographic interviews inadvertently helped resolve the confusion that the acrimony had caused. Other practicum teams can also incorporate ethnographic research as a tool to understand team process and dynamics and as a tool to allow the team to tell its story.

This practicum team experienced humor and the ritual of dinner as vital to building a sense of trust, support, and camaraderie on the team. These elements in turn laid the groundwork for the team members growth as individual therapists through shared learning and freedom to be oneself and to take risks. These characteristics of the team were the foundations of team building. These findings have implications for how practicum teams develop, identification of useful building blocks for team formation, levels of supervision, and management of conflict.

Implications for Future Research

Qualitative research methods are beginning to find a place in family therapy research (Newfield, Kuehl, Joanning, & Quinn, 1991; Sells et al., 1994; Smith et al., 1992, 1993, 1994). Ethnography, traditionally associated with anthropology and sociology, is increasingly recognized as singularly useful in understanding complex human interactions, such as those in family therapy (Sells et al., 1994) and in generating findings that are relevant for the profession and its consumers. The same argument can be made for teams in family therapy training programs. There are varying descriptions: peer consultation teams, co-ther-

apy teams, supervision teams, reflecting teams, and training teams (Cade et al., 1986; Cornwell & Pearson, 1981; Heath, 1982). Each description is slightly different; unfortunately, it's not always clear what occurs during these team interactions. Ethnographies can be useful in grounding descriptions in the expressions and opinions of the people involved in the training teams. By incorporating research as an indispensable element of this team and documenting this experience, readers are given a better chance to understand the benefits and drawbacks of teams as a training methodology.

This study suggests that ethnography can be useful in defining teams, in particular clinical practicum teams. However, as Sells et al., (1994) point out " . . . results of this study or any qualitative study raise the possibility that findings may be idiosyncratic to the clients or therapists who were interviewed . . . " This certainly applies to this study's findings which do not claim to be representative of all clinical practicum teams. However, this ethnography did use replicable data collection and analytic methods that have been field tested in other ethnographies (Sells et al., 1994). The credibility of any ethnography relies on the persuasiveness of the written description and its audit trail. In this study, readers can judge for themselves the persuasiveness of the write-up and the thoroughness of the audit trail.

This study began as a response to a challenge issued by a qualitative researcher, "The challenge will be for ethnographic methods to be melded into a program of study that captures therapist/client worldviews . . . (Sells et al., 1994; Smith, et al., 1995). The ethnographic methods captured the worldviews of a practicum team and allowed them to be articulated within a team setting. Clients were not a part of the team and therefore were not included in the study. It further captured the maturation of a practicum team that was grappling with diversity as a clinical and training issue. Although diversity is prized by many leaders in family therapy, its expression can be limited by social inhibitions (Mirkin, 1990). In looking back at the process of training, we believe that the conflict experienced within the team mirrored conflicts that exist within family therapy. The ethnography allowed participants to voice their understanding of the process and in so doing keep active a discussion of diversity. The research itself was the means for the team to find its voice. Both in terms of understanding and in terms of healing, ethnographics contributed to an expression of diversity without starting anew ideological arguments.

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THE JOY OF NARRATIVE: AN EXERCISE FOR LEARNING FROM OUR INTERNALIZED CLIENTS

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Recognizing that theoretical orientation has real effects and consequences on the lives of both clients and therapists—that how we look determines what we see, and what we see determines what we do—an exercise is provided for interviewing internalized clients as a way of enhancing consistency between knowledge/practices and therapeutic intent. The exercise offers both an experience for increasing awareness of mutual influence (client-therapist reflexivity) and an opportunity for therapist re-invigoration.

"There is nothing so practical as a good theory."
—Kurt Lewin
"A part of her still lives inside of me, we've never been apart."
—Bob Dylan

How therapists choose to conceive and construe their clients and their work together not only profoundly impacts the clients, but also the therapists. Especially in this "age of accountability" (Johnson, 1995) and "managed care" (Hoyt, 1995), fatigue and demoralization can be common experiences for therapists. However, while the pressures are considerable, we agree with Michael White (1995a, 1996) that therapist burnout is not inevitable but has to do in part with how the therapy project is structured. Approaches that allow therapists to work in ways consistent with their best intentions for entering the therapy field—ones that emphasize client autonomy and choice, that highlight respectful collaboration, that speak to issues of justice, and that avoid therapist isolation and concep-

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