

GRJ

GRADUATE
RESEARCH
JOURNAL



 INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SOUTHEAST

VOLUME 5

Graduate Research Journal

Volume V

Indiana University Southeast

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Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

Welcome to the fifth volume of the Indiana University Southeast's Graduate Research Journal. This journals' mission is to provide a public platform for the best and most original research papers produced in the Business, Education and Liberal Studies graduate programs. The editors of the GRJ would like to thank everyone who submitted work for consideration for this edition, with a special thank you to those whose contributions were selected to appear in this edition. We would also like to express our appreciation to our faculty advisors for their commitment to and guidance of this journal. We would like to thank the University for its support of the work of graduate students and extend a heartfelt thank you to all university students whose activity fees help to make this journal possible. Finally, we would like to sincerely thank the Writing Center for their guidance to ensure we stayed on track in the editing process. The viewpoints expressed in these research papers belong solely to their authors and should not be construed to represent the viewpoints of the editors of the GRJ, its faculty advisors, or the University as a whole.

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The IU Southeast Graduate Research Journal is an interdisciplinary forum for the publication of original graduate work. We strongly encourage all IUS graduate students to submit their work to the next volume of the GRJ, scheduled for publication in the spring of 2016. All types of papers will be considered: research, literature reviews, case studies and so forth. Maximum length is 5,000 words including references. Please send submissions as a Microsoft Word attachment in an e-mail addressed to webmls@ius.edu. Be sure to include in the body of your e-mail your contact information, the title of your paper, the name of relevant course and its professor, and note the style of documentation your paper uses. The submission deadline will correspond with the beginning of the winter recess 2015.

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Creating a college-going culture
among Senior African American Males
through the completion of college
admissions applications

Lashala Goodwin

Creating a college-going culture among Senior African American Males through the completion of college admissions applications

This research took place at an alternative high school located in a large urban city in the South. The school has an intense application process that students must complete in order to be considered for enrollment. The school offers an academic alternative designed for students ages 16-21 who fall into the category of truancy or who have unsuccessfully completed four or more academic core content subjects. The structure and the curricular programs of the school are designed to address students' barriers for learning and promote graduation from high school.

The school offers many services to the student population. The services that are provided to students include information about scholarships and financial aid, career and major exploration, ACT test prep, resume building and a variety of other educational opportunities.

The school has many positive attributes. It is an outlet for many students who may not otherwise be able to obtain a high school diploma. The school offers a low student to teacher ratio, which is 15 students to 1 teacher, which fosters a hands-on approach style of teaching that many students find helpful. Students are taught 7 principles of behavior, also known as the 7 P's (promptness, preparedness, participation, perseverance, positive mental attitude, politeness, and production) which provide expectations of how the students should conduct themselves daily, in and out of school. Another positive attribute of the

school is The Discovery program. This nine-week course is designed to provide the basic foundation of the school's culture while helping newly admitted students make a connection to their peers, teachers and staff. It requires 90% attendance and focuses on life building skills such as communication, team/trust building, and anger management.

Area of Concern

One striking concern at this high school is the college going culture among the students. Although there are mentoring and college prep programs at the high school, not all students benefit from them. Each program has a maximum amount of students that can participate, leaving a large portion of the student body untapped. The professional school counselors attempt to reach the entire student body to address these concerns but sometimes encounter barriers with student truancy and other personal and academic issues facing the students. The purpose of this study is to increase the amount of college applications submitted by senior African American males by 50%, using 22 African American males as the subset group (n=22).

A requirement of this school district is that students are required to meet college readiness benchmarks as a graduation requirement. These benchmark scores are set by the American College Test (ACT). Students must achieve a specific composite scores on their ACT in each subject in order to be considered "college ready" (Math-19, Reading-20, and English-18). The ACT is administered during junior year of high school as a graduation requirement. If students do not meet these "college

ready” requirements they receive mandatory remediation implemented by the school in order to show that attempts have been made to help students reach their college and career ready benchmarks.

In addition to the ACT, students must take the COMPASS test in their senior year in order to prove they are college ready (if scores are not met on the junior ACT). Seniors only take the COMPASS if they did not meet the benchmark scores on the ACT. The COMPASS can be administered twice during the school year and seniors must have a specific score on the test in order to meet the benchmarks. If students do not meet either benchmark then the student is classified as not being “college ready”. During the 2013-14 school year only 1.02% of the senior class met the ACT college readiness benchmarks. Nearly 99% of seniors needed remediation and were required to take the COMPASS test to try to reach the benchmark. Out of the 98.9% of seniors who were required to take the COMPASS test, only 4.08% tested college ready on the required test. Male students are generally the under-represented population of students, especially those who achieve lower academically than their female counterparts.

At the end of each school year seniors are required to complete a senior transition survey, which is mandated by the school district to help them track graduates after high school. The survey consist of multiple questions that the students must answer pertaining to their plans after high school which includes post-secondary plans (if this is an option for the student). Based on the results of the 2014 transition survey, 71 of 83 graduates completed the survey. Of the 71 who completed the

survey there 28 were males and 43 were females. Only 22 out of the 71 seniors who completed the survey (27.69%) completed an admissions application for college and planned to enroll in college or a vocational program. A total of 8 of the 22 students who completed the survey were male students, and of the 8 males, 5 were African American (33.3%).

These low test scores and the notion of not being “college ready” decreases the motivation of the seniors which makes them feel incompetent of being successful on a college level which is not always the case. Many students believe they are unfit to attend college based on these benchmarks so they don’t apply, which is an underlying issue.

Students should be made more aware that their remediation does not directly reflect their ability to apply and potentially go to college if they desire. As college readiness is a growing concern in school systems across America, it is important to acknowledge non-cognitive factors that play a role in student success. Although the submission of a college application does not directly affect academics, completing one plays a motivational role to help build resilience of these young men.

Review of the Literature

African American males continue to be an under-represented population of students who perform poor academically and socially across the education spectrum. Creating a college going culture can help increase the knowledge and possible motivation to achieve post-secondary credentials. According to Oakes (2003) “College-going culture refers to the environment, attitudes, and practices in schools

and communities that encourage students and their families to obtain the information, tools, and perspective to enhance access to and success in post-secondary education” (p. 2). Creating a stronger college going culture at this high school will provide new opportunities students may not have realized were possible before. Research suggests (Oakes 2003, p. 3) three elements necessary to create a college going culture: “1) Students learn about options for their future, careers and the education they require, as early as elementary school, with a specific focus beginning in middle school. 2) Schools convey the expectation that all students can prepare for the opportunity to attend and be successful in post-secondary education. 3) Schools, families, and communities give students the same message of high expectations for their future.” Cultivating these three elements into the school’s atmosphere was predicted to help with the increase of the submission of college applications among the senior class because students will become knowledgeable of the steps it takes to actually be “college ready” after completing high school.

With a focus on senior African American males, there are many factors to consider that hinder this population of students. According to research conducted by Hudley and Irving (2008), “African American males suffer from poor school achievement such as high rates of educational dropout, low college enrollment, over-representation in special education classes, and low standardize test scores” (p. 678). Many of these categories hold true to the African American male population at this alternative high school. Their research also shows that when African American males have cultural mistrust, this lowers their value

for education. Cultural mistrust is the tendency for African Americans to distrust institutional, personal, or social contexts that are controlled by European Americans (Hudley & Irving, 2008 p. 679). If there is a lack of trust among African American males and their school (teachers, staff, administrators, etc.) this will decrease their willingness to be invested in their educational success. It is important to build trust among students because this trust in turns gives them the ability to try to be successful without the fear of being judged for their shortcomings.

When students apply for college it can be very intimidating and rejection can be harmful to one's self-esteem. This initial rejection can cause African American males motivation to apply to college because of the fear of not being accepted. Hudley and Irving's (2008) research suggests that building resiliency and decreasing the cultural mistrust of students will help increase their academic performance (p. 687). Increasing the students trust can help build their confidence and their success with college related activities and their willingness to participate in them.

School is one of the most important places to shape a student's life, especially their life after high school. Since African American males have been at the bottom of the totem pole for academic success, there is no surprise that this population has low percentages of college enrollment and a lack of knowledge about what it takes to apply for college. Research suggests that "the creation of opportunities for early career and college exploration inside the classroom is an effective, proven strategy to increase success of African American males" (Livingston & Nahimana, 2004, p. 213). Creating lessons for college and career exploration can possibly

help these students and increase their willingness to apply for college. Another important point in addition to career and college exploration, is creating and fostering meaningful relationships that provide consistency for African American males. Livingston and Nahimana's research makes the valid point of "utilizing professionals, especially males (particularly males of color) from the school and the community as mentors to African American male students to create a consistency and a positive role model" (p. 213). In addition, mentors that have a strong parental presence have a big impact on African American students as well. According to research conducted by Hines and Holcomb-McCoy (2011), the family structure is an ecological factor that plays a significant role in the development of African American males is family structure (p. 73). Having parent support will help encourage a college going culture among African American males as well because they have someone at home invested in their educational success.

Another point to make when working with African American males is being knowledgeable of the barriers they face daily. The nature of this alternative school addresses some of these barriers. These barriers can be the determining factor which affect the overall success of the student. Breaking down these barriers can help increase the overall morale of the African American males which could possibly create more awareness of their academic success. "Success with young Black males requires understanding the social context in which they exist" (Livingston & Nahimana, p. 210). It is important to understand this population in order to provide an effective learning environment for them.

Providing African American males various options for success after high school can contribute to their achievement in school and willingness to apply for college. The idea of social capital supports this notion. Social capital which is one's access to information and support that is needed to be successful (Hines & Holcomb-McCoy, 2011). Acquiring the knowledge about various educational opportunities while having access to academic and community resources that can help them with their success can be very beneficial to African American males. Having options can broaden the spectrum of goals students are capable of setting for themselves and achieving. Merely graduating high school and possibly getting a job after graduation is the dominating option for most African American males. However when additional options are presented, this can change the mind frame of some these students.

Evidence-Based Interventions

A strategy to help increase the submission of college applications is parental involvement. According to Fishel and Ramirez (2004) "parental involvement refers to the participation of significant caregivers in the educational process of their children in order to promote their academic and social well-being" (p. 371). Their research shows that it is effective to focus on a multicomponent design in which you have a variety of engaging opportunities in a school setting to increase parental involvement. It is important that students have a support system at home to help encourage them to complete tasks and to hold them accountable for their potential success. Coordinating a college family night and

a having an incentive for those who attend is a part of the plan for implementing parent involvement. Inviting parents to chaperone college campus visits and volunteer to help or simply learn more information during other college and career related activities through the school will build parental involvement at the school. Many of these activities will be in close collaboration with the Youth Services Center and the school principal as parental involvement is a part of the school's growth plan for the 2014-15 school year.

Research by Conwill, Garret, West-Olatunji, Rivera and Shure (2008) supports that mentoring programs foster resilience among low income African American and Hispanic/Latino males (p. 132). Their research discusses the 'Rites of Passage' mentoring program and how the program addresses cultural variables that affect the underachievement of the African American male. The program components consist of community involvement, positive role models, collective instructions and personal and cultural identity development. A mentoring program was created that consisted of teachers and staff in the school is one method that will be executed during this intervention. According to the research of Conwill, et al. (2008), the 'Rites of Passage' program makes an emphasis on student involvement with the community. Another activity that was added to the mentoring intervention, is to facilitate a panel of current and recent graduated college students to come and talk with a student audience about their experiences. This gave the students an opportunity to see individuals that look like themselves and see success as an option. This panel helped tie in community involvement which

helped with the schools' collaboration efforts. Also the student's received a community perspective of college and feel a sense of attachment to these individuals.

It is important to have as many support systems as possible for these students, which is executed through small group counseling. According to research conducted by Bailey and Bradbury-Bailey (2007) "Through the use of groups, the counselor can provide a safe place for group members to share fears, frustrations, and misunderstanding associated with problems faced by adolescents" (p. 84). All adolescents have a need to feel social acceptance and a sense of belonging and group counseling can encourage that. In group counseling, information can be gathered about these students to help them with their success after high school. In group counseling, ideally students are accountable for one another which will build on their peer to peer interaction and may help them encourage one another. Their research also interjects that "Group counseling experiences can help African Americans increase their sense of hope and optimism, decrease their feelings of alienation, develop more effective coping techniques, and acquire more effective socialization skills" (Bailey & Bradbury-Bailey, p. 85). A needs assessment will be given prior to the start of group to determine the content that will be discussed in group counseling. Students will participate in a series of 6 group sessions. Group counseling will enhance the experience of the study and allow for positive change to take place.

A college going culture will be fostered through college campus visits. The campuses that will be visited was decided upon using the

senior classes Individual Learning Plan (ILP) results for post-secondary interests. These male students will be invited to attend a college campus with the hope that this will further motivate them to pursue post-secondary attainment. Seeing is believing and for a student to set foot on a college campus and visualize themselves attending can be effective in encouraging them to apply for admission. In addition to the visits college admissions representatives were contacted to visit with the seniors during their lunch to provide information about their college to help increase the access students have to various colleges, functioning as a great networking opportunity for students.

A fifth intervention that was executed was the coordinating of a college awareness month. During the month of November 2014, each day represented something related to college. Students learned about the differences between public, private, two year and four year colleges, what is a college major, various admissions processes, scholarship information, NCAA clearinghouse information, breaking down the parts of an admissions application, etc. Each weekly advisory lesson that month covered these various topics so that all students can learn this information. The school will be richly decorated to support this theme. The month was designed to be full of fun, exciting and educational activities that will help with the preparation of attending college. This intervention was done in collaboration with the College Access Resource Teacher.

Methods

The first intervention of parental involvement occurred during the months of September and December 2014 and February 2015. There were two parent centered programs that were created to increase parent involvement. The second intervention of mentoring is an on-going program that will take place for the duration of the school year. Each senior student is assigned a teacher mentor through a program called "Operation Graduation." The third intervention of conducting small group counseling sessions is taking place during February and March 2015. Through a needs assessment given to all seniors, the topic of transitioning to college will be discussed during group sessions. The fourth intervention of college campus visits occurred during September, October and December 2014. Students attended three different college campuses. The fifth intervention of creating a college awareness month occurred during November 2014.

Each week of the month had a significant focus pertaining to college and career readiness. Students who participated were eligible to receive weekly prizes from the college treasure chest made of donations from various colleges and universities.

Results

All target students received a mentor for the duration of the school year. A total of 59% of the target group attended a college campus visit. Of the target students (n=22), preliminary results of the study show that 77% of the African American Male seniors completed

at least one college admissions application. Through pre-post surveys given to participants, increases in knowledge of college and career readiness was shown. The results of the study exceeded the proposal of a 50% increase in the submission of college applications.

Discussion

Many of the interventions that were implemented during this study were found to have a significant impact on the high school. The parent nights that were coordinated for the year, were among the most attended events during the school year. There was an increase in the exposure students had to college, and more students, across all grade levels, were able to benefit from many of the interventions. The data improved during this study because there was an asserted effort to focus on the subject of increasing college culture and dealt with various aspects of creating this culture for the school. Some students benefited more than others from their mentors due to the involvement of the mentor with their mentee. Overall, the study was successful and had a great impact on the entire school.

Recommendations for the Future

Recommendations for the future would include having more mentors who are actively involved with their mentees. Creating more activities for all grade levels instead of the activities being geared mostly toward seniors to have a greater impact. The process for the selection of target students would be different due to the nature of the alternative population and students filtering in and out of the school for various reasons.

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In Pursuit of Empathy: An
Interdisciplinary Guide to Moral
Education

Jennifer Mason

In Pursuit of Empathy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to Moral Education

There exists a growing global trend of prioritizing the profitable education arenas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and promoting the associated values of competition, innovation, and logic. Despite the good intentions underlying a dominant Western culture “to educate the individual so he or she can be self-supporting and not be a burden on the state” (Swanger 41-42), the pendulum swing to a pragmatic emphasis on productivity has left a void in its wake: modern society lacks empathy. The ability to understand and share another’s perspective or mental state, is critical for effective cooperation, fairness, and ethical problem solving, and even STEM advocates must concede that a stable foundation for contemporary society requires at least basic pillars of morality like fairness and cooperation.

Indiana University Southeast advocated for principles of tolerance, perspective-taking, and compassion in education with its selection of the 2014-15 Common Experience theme, “The Gift of Empathy: Seeing the World through the Eyes of Another.” Overall, however, such efforts within academia to effectively instill critical secure-attachment values within its student populations have fallen short. In fact, recent studies reveal significant long-term decline in empathy levels among American college students as modern connections to the social world have shifted (Konrath, et al 23). In order to maintain or further develop a moral society, a

countermovement is needed to promote the teaching and development of empathy.

This movement would require a holistic approach with an interdisciplinary agenda to include lessons from the natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Although an ideal curriculum which intends to teach empathy should infuse scientific factors such as genetics and neurodevelopment into theories that explore human relationships and social interactions, the humanities' particular capacity for creating connections of shared humanness offers a foundation from which to pursue these efforts. In particular, an exploration of the three disciplines and their definitions, studies, and applications of empathy within the context of literary analysis models the very dynamics I intend to establish and defend.

The key to providing moral education is well demonstrated by an analogy which deconstructs the concept of war to core components: knowledge how, knowledge about, and knowledge of. There is the "how," like a military academy's lessons in battle strategies, armament instruction, commanding troops—how to wage and win wars. This education may overlap with the "about," for which history, political science, and economics coursework address concepts such as general war theory, implications of specific conflicts, or "theoretical distinctions between 'just' and 'unjust' wars." Yet neither "knowledge how" nor "about" can express the emotional experiences of "the glory, the fury, the terror, the heroism, and the cruelty of war" (Swanger 45-46). Apart from literally participating in the horrors of war, only the aesthetic heights

and depths of art, untethered to reality, offer the means to transcend cognitive (factual and theoretical) knowledge for emotional intellect. More specifically, “the ‘morality’ of art, then, inheres in its capacity to foster empathetic knowledge that counters our tendency to create the ‘other’ of our fellow humans” (Swanger 48).

Northrup Frye’s “educated imagination” defines the literary phenomenon in which fiction’s imaginative efforts create an emotional experience that is neither real nor unreal, and his lecture of the same name describes a system of conventions which generate uniformity and likeness. An education in classic literary form exercises the mind’s capacity for recognizing personal connections to the unfamiliar while simultaneously constructing the unique perspective that “as a reader of literature, I exist only as a representative of humanity as a whole” (Frye 92,101). Literature has the ability to create genuine connections from fictional accounts by stretching the imagination to consider wholly new vantage points. David Swanger further develops the concept as an incremental effect with an example of Holocaust literature:

The empathetic connection fostered between reader and created character is in the first instance between reader and the specific Jew. Next, it is between reader and Jew as symbol; next, it is between reader and all men and women who have suffered oppression. Finally, it is the internal connection between the reader and his or her humanness, which includes the capacity for good and evil, and, of single importance

here, the capacity to be empathetic, to see the other not as someone distinct and different, but as someone with whom human destiny is shared. (44)

Art's allure is this ability to create complex representations through which readers and observers process their own emotional landscapes.

Within the humanities, morality is the consequence of using imagination to fuse emotion with intellect. For skeptics of the educated imagination who would challenge its appropriateness or effectiveness as the premise for moral development, I submit an exercise in literary analysis as evidence for its particular proficiency. Specifically, the effort examines empathy through reader-response literary theory with the cultural assumptions of an interdisciplinary interpretive community comprised of natural and social scientists. Ironically, effective means of understanding empathy can actually be found by scrutinizing the lack of this important moral capacity. Profiling characteristics of autistic spectrum conditions, often described as disorders of empathy, offers a two-prong advantage to the study. First, recognizing deficiencies on the part of someone exhibiting said traits can illuminate pragmatic challenges to daily interactions and clarify needs for a broader society. Second, the need to have empathy for others is paradoxically reinforced by gaining a better perspective of an autistic condition. For the subject of criticism concerned with elements of empathy, Mark Haddon's *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* offers its profile of Christopher Boone, the fifteen-year-old narrator with

an unnamed social disorder resembling Asperger's syndrome. Please note that for the purpose of this essay, the term Asperger's syndrome is used in reference to qualities traditionally associated with the "portion of the pervasive developmental disorder continuum that is characterized by higher cognitive abilities," despite the recent revision to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders which subsumed "Asperger's syndrome into autistic disorder/autism spectrum disorder" (Dente and Parkinson Coles 27).

Readers are submerged into Christopher's world through Haddon's unrelenting use of the limited and unreliable narrator. (In fact, the only relief from this point of view is a brief series of letters through which Christopher's mother delivers her perspective.) The novel charges readers with the responsibility of sorting through descriptions, dialogue, and plot points—all conveyed by Christopher with seemingly equal importance—in order to understand the broader reality of his environment. Haddon's sketches of characteristics which expose Christopher's tendency to view his life in terms of his own needs and desires, including inflexibility, difficulty in reading the intentions of others, and a strong distaste for the unfamiliar, offer a sign of authorial intent and direct the reader.

Plot development in *The Curious Incident* hinges upon Christopher's logic and the resulting decisions, most of which underscore his emotional limitations and shortcomings in adaptive behavior. Consider the final sentence of the novel, "And I know I can do this because I went to London on my own, and because I solved the mystery of **Who Killed**

Wellington?, and I found my mother and I was brave and I wrote a book and that means I can do anything” (221)—the final contemplation reflects the strife chronicled throughout the novel. Despite his ultimate fantasy of a world void of neurotypical people and utmost confidence in his ability to achieve academic and professional goals, Christopher struggles to envision a self-sufficient future for himself:

Then, when I’ve got a degree in math, or physics, or math and physics, I will be able to get a job and earn lots of money and I will be able to pay someone who can look after me and cook my meals and wash my clothes, or I will get a lady to marry me and be my wife and she can look after me so I can have company and not be on my own. (Haddon 45)

Readers connect with Christopher through a shared understanding of basic needs; this is the educated imagination at work.

Interdisciplinary contributions present solutions for the problems represented by Christopher’s circumstances. For example, in their case for increasing the role of social workers in facilitating autistic students’ transitions into postsecondary education, Claire L. Dente and Kallie Parkinson Coles frame hardships resulting from the characteristics of students with autism and Asperger’s syndrome within the context of ecological theory. The potential behavioral and emotional problems in their study echo Christopher’s profile and are identified by common autistic traits including “concrete cognitive and thinking styles, strong

reactions to sensory input...They may also insist on sameness, have poor concentration levels, and experience greater levels of emotional vulnerability” (Dente & Coles 29) Ecological theories such as social environment, person-in-environment, interface, adaptations, coping, and interdependence focus on inter-relational transactions between systems; in other words, Dente and Parkinson Coles recognize that all existing elements within one’s environment “play an equal role in maintaining balance of the whole” (“Ecological Perspective”).

Besides illuminating the difficult reality of “the student’s pragmatic language deficits, social skills deficits, and organization skills deficits [which] kept him from being able to manage himself in a community college class or in employment or to organize activities of daily living, such as personal hygiene” (Dente & Coles 33), Dente and Parkinson Coles’ article can also inform a literary interpretation of *The Curious Incident*. Although Christopher boasts an aptitude for logical thinking and detaching his mind at will like Sherlock Holmes, ecological theory prompts readers to consider all environmental factors actually affecting Christopher’s behavior. The broader perspective considers parallels established throughout the narrative and exposes contradictions. There are several examples of these conventions within the novel: imagining molecules of his presumed-dead mother in the clouds over Africa undermines his dismissive attitude towards others’ belief in heaven (32-34); the Monty Hall Problem ironically illustrates the intuition influencing his reasoning to travel to London and live with Mother (65,131); the anxiety symbolized by the pain in his chest

represents uncertainty stemming from the recent domestic upheaval rather than his disappointment regarding the A level math tests (209-211).

This affect is achieved by applying the sociological imagination, C. Wright Mills' term for considering troubles of an individual nature within the context of broader historical issues. The reader must discern Christopher's personal troubles (e.g. his inability to read social cues) from societal issues like the impact of relationship dissolution and divorce on children. According to Mills, the best social analysts ask questions that

“...are the intellectual pivots of classic studies of man in society—and they are the questions inevitably raised by any mind possessing the sociological imagination. For that imagination is the capacity to shift from one perspective to another...It is the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self—and to see the relations between the two” (Dente & Coles 7).

Therefore, the social sciences do not merely contribute ideas about moral development; the mental flexibility embodied by the discipline is an essential component of empathy.

This type of social intelligence requires Theory of Mind (ToM), or the ability to attribute mental states such as beliefs, desires, or intentions to one's self and others. Cognitive empathy is a mental capacity for self-other distinction and perspective taking that comprises

part of empathy's multifactorial construct. Alternatively, someone capable of emotional empathy responds with appropriate emotion to another's perceived mental state. Unlike ToM, emotional empathy is widely demonstrated by animals in such behaviors as reconciliation after conflict, reciprocity, and prosocial choices. Furthermore, these moral behaviors can be attributed to neurological phenomena like emotional contagion and synchronicity (De Waal). A nuanced view of empathy encompassing both facets is best developed with an understanding of scientific as well as sociological factors.

Such an interdisciplinary approach is exhibited by "Behavioral Genetic Approaches and Family Theory," an article published by *the Journal of Family Theory & Review*. In their exploration of nature versus nurture, authors Ginger A. Moore and Jenae M. Neiderhiser consider gene-environment correlation within families to measure the varying ways in which genetic susceptibility and external environments interchange as influences on symptoms like antisocial behavior, anxiety, and depression. The article concludes that while "family researchers do not necessarily have to adopt behavioral genetics research methods... they may adapt design and data analytic methodologies to be more consistent with within-person approaches and to examine and distinguish relational and independent influences on behavior and biology" (Moore & Neiderhiser 27). Embracing the empirical evidence of another field exemplifies the core intention of interdisciplinarity to transcend traditional academic boundaries which commonly leave questions only partially answered (Newell 110).

If the question is Christopher, meaning should not be taken from his narrative without consideration for “an inexorable connection between human development in the context of healthy relationships and the vigorous growth of the four observable empathy-related networks or components in the brain” (Gerdes, et al. 113). As part of a multidisciplinary conceptualization of empathy, social cognitive neuroscientists have defined empathy by its “bottom-up” and “top-down” components. Bottom-up describes the unconscious ability to recognize another’s emotional state while “the top-down part of empathy is the conscious cognitive process that enables us not only to explain and predict our own behaviors, but the behaviors of others as well” (Gerdes, et al. 112). Although Christopher recognizes his deficit in top-down empathy as it pertains to understanding others, he commonly oversimplifies his own motivations. He condones hitting authority figures because he does not like to be surprised (Haddon 82) and claims that merely his distaste for crowds produces the screaming fit in the clothing store (Haddon 201). Yet neuroscience proposes that human cognition and behaviors are direct effects of specific brain functions.

The concept of genetic influences on brain function is echoed throughout *The Curious Incident*. During his description of the rage that resulted in Wellington’s demise, Father says, “But, shit, Christopher, when that red mist comes down...Christ, you know how it is. I mean, we’re not that different, me and you” (Haddon 122). Filtered through an understanding of the latent structure of cognitive and emotional empathy as exhibited in individuals with autism and first-degree relatives, the reader recognizes that “at least part of these genetic influences are

inherited (rather than *de novo* genetic events)” (Grove, et al. 2). The reader’s perspective broadens to consider factors beyond Christopher’s immediate control as potential influences on his behavior.

Because the brain remains malleable throughout life, it follows that neuroplasticity offers means for promoting the development of desirable functions as well as stemming the undesirable. To this point, “researchers now believe that autism may in part be explained by a failure to develop or form adequate neural circuitry or mirror neurons that enable language and social brainways to mature” (Gerdes, et al. 115). If genetic factors produce conditions in the brain which inhibit functions conducive to social interactions and empathy, the natural sciences also offer insight for correcting related developmental disorders. One such innovation is brain stimulation, which is widely expected to become increasingly common as means for improving mental performance in various capacities (Madrigal 28).

Haddon hints at the technical aspects of empathy through Christopher’s insight:

Also people think they’re not computers because they have feelings and computers don’t have feelings. But feelings are just having a picture on the screen in your head of what is going to happen tomorrow or next year, or what might have happened instead of what did happen, and if it is a happy picture they smile and if it is a sad picture they cry. (Madrigal 119)

This oversimplification indicates that at least the author recognizes the brain's direct role in bottom-up processes. Because brain stimulation techniques have been successfully demonstrated to “artificially alter various empathetic processes such as motor resonance response, emotional/affective reactions to others’ emotional state, self-other discrimination, and mentalizing” (Hètu, et al. 100), a holistic approach to empathy recognizes that these cognitive abilities can be cultivated.

Given that social cognitive neuroscience reveals that empathetic capacities can be nurtured by stimulating the appropriate neural systems, therapies should incorporate mental exercises which develop these cognitive skills. The Novel Approach is a creative writing intervention that encourages writers to “write from the perspective of other characters in their story, as well as their own” (Valadez and Evans 110); unlike journal writing, this method forces writers to consider the feelings, intentions, and beliefs of others. The practice is effective because “affect-based experiential learning engages mirror neurons at the visual, auditory, and somatic levels, helping us to relate experiences we may never have had, thereby increasing empathy” (Gerdes, et al. 118-119). In essence, cultivating an educated imagination exemplifies this process.

In conclusion, an interdisciplinary pursuit of empathy effectively encompasses all features of the multifaceted construct, while literature functions as the medium for its development. As demonstrated, Christopher personifies empathy's complicated nature while Haddon's artistic simulation is a prime forum for relating these dynamics to real-life experiences. However, although it is “through the arts youth

might come to experience appreciation of cultural differences, be guided to think critically and analytically about problematic situations and – in perceiving these issues through the viewpoints of others – identify harmonious solutions to complex intellectual, social, cultural, environmental and geo-political problems” (Eca, et al.), incorporating the natural and social sciences’ empirical data with the aesthetic context of the humanities promises optimal results. To emphasize the global implications of this issue, consider the recent rebuttal to the STEM advocacy of British Secretary of State for Education Nicky Morgan from the International Society for Education through Art, which recognized that “we need citizens of nations and the world who are emotionally stable, have balanced interests in the practical and aesthetic, and are free to pursue career paths that are deeply satisfying – whatever those career choices might be, – and who, as a result, find welcoming opportunities in those chosen fields” (Eca, et al.). To this point, if an intelligent, social, peaceful society is the end, then an interdisciplinary approach to moral education must be the means.

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Academic Unity: The Creation and Synthesis of Knowledge

M. Justin Miller

Composition of Academia

Academia is commonly referred to as having three main disciplines: natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences. These main disciplines of higher education contain specific disciplines. For example, psychology and sociology are placed in the social science discipline, literature and fine arts are in the humanities discipline, and biology and physics are in the natural science discipline. In addition, there are subdisciplines that focus on a specific aspect of a discipline. For instance, psychology has subdisciplines such as developmental psychology and clinical psychology, biology has marine biology and molecular biology, and fine arts has music and ceramics. In academia there are hundreds of subdisciplines. Sometimes these subdisciplines define an area of knowledge where two or more disciplines overlap, such as biopsychology which combines aspects of biology and psychology. These various disciplines and subdisciplines use knowledge for different outcomes. However, the creative process to obtain knowledge is the same for every individual in every discipline of academia. The basis for obtaining knowledge makes academia one fundamental culture whereas, different uses of knowledge produce disciplines and subdisciplines in academia.

The debate about academia being divided into multiple cultures has been around for centuries. Stefan Collini pointed out that the Romantic period marked “the beginning of an anxiety that some such fissure in types of knowledge might be opening up” (Collini, 1993, p. x). However, when examining what a culture is it becomes clear that multiple cultures have

always been false divisions in academia. Although there are a variety of definitions of culture, each description demonstrates that knowledge and patterns of behavior are shared by a group (Birukou, Blanzieri, Giorgini, & Giunchiglia, 2013). Academia represents a group of individuals commonly referred to as academics or intellectuals. Disciplines represent specializations in academia that allow sub-groups of individuals to call themselves psychologists, biologists, etc. Disciplines cannot stand alone as individual cultures in academia because knowledge is shared between disciplines. Classifying disciplines as individual cultures based on specializations creates false divisions within academia. These false divisions become apparent when considering that the process of obtaining knowledge is the same for every individual regardless of their discipline. Furthermore, consistencies between disciplines would not be possible if academia was composed of multiple cultures. The flexibility of knowledge among disciplines creates opportunities for synthesis of knowledge. Due to the vast possibilities and needs for synthesis, integration of knowledge is inevitable within academia.

Variety Beautifies Academia

Academia represents unity in a variety of disciplines that use imagination to obtain knowledge. Knowledge is information, understanding, and skills that are acquired by experience or education. To put it another way, knowledge is a process that uses creativity, imagination, and data. Jacob Bronowski (1956), a scientist, described this process in his three steps to the discovery of truth/knowledge. In

the first step a person collects separate pieces of data. In this step the person has information such as there being a piece of white plastic with one black dot, another white piece of plastic with two black dots, and so forth until there are six white pieces of plastic each with a black dot one number higher than the last piece of plastic. In the second step of obtaining knowledge the person connects pieces of data through hidden likenesses. In this step the person realizes that each white piece of plastic with black dot(s) is joined to other white plastic pieces with black dot(s) to form a cube. The final step is to give a name or a symbol to the connected pieces of data. In this step the person would name the cube a die. Although all six sides of the die cannot be viewed at the same time, within our mind we are able to connect the information and imagine the die as a whole. We continue to use imagination a step further to give the information functional language by naming the object.

Beauty exists in academia through unifications of knowledge. Bronowski uses Coleridge's description of the word beauty as "unity in variety" when evaluating how all disciplines find hidden likenesses in data (Bronowski, 1956, p. 16). The creative act of using our imagination to connect pieces of data through hidden likenesses gives reason to believe that each creation of knowledge is indeed a beautiful act. This beautiful act can be found in every discipline. Even Bronowski wrote, "Each [discipline] in its own ways looks for likenesses under the variety of human experience" (Bronowski, 1956, p. 16). Nevertheless, this beautiful process of obtaining knowledge is often ignored when creating false divisions in academia.

Even while ignoring this universal process of obtaining knowledge, several authors have unknowingly used the three steps to discovery of truth/knowledge in an attempt to describe a unique quality of a specific discipline. Northrop Frye, a literary intellectual, suggested that “we need two powers in literature, a power to create and a power to understand” (Frye, 1964, p. 63). However, Frye’s concept can be extended beyond literature when taking the three steps to discovery of truth/knowledge into context. The power to create is done by connecting pieces of data through hidden likenesses. The power to understand takes place during the connection of data and continues when we give a name to the object or concept that is formed. Frye is not the only author to take this narrow approach when attempting to describe a unique quality of a discipline. C. Wright Mills, a sociologist, claimed that the sociological imagination connects pieces of historic and biographical information (Mills, 1959). Although this claim is true, the sociological imagination is a division of imagination that connects hidden likenesses within social data.

Choosing Sides: Similarities vs. Differences

Within each discipline and subdiscipline of academia there is a distinct use of knowledge. To examine if academia is truly comprised of multiple cultures we first have to ask ourselves what is most important. For instance, is the starting point of obtaining knowledge more important? Or, are the end products of knowledge for each discipline more important? Claims such as those made by the scientist C.P. Snow

suggest sciences and humanities are “of mutual incomprehension” due to a “lack of understanding” between the disciplines (Snow, 1959, p. 2). Snow’s claim indicates a multiple culture view by placing importance exclusively in the different outcomes of knowledge. Arguments like Snow’s that build off a lack of understanding between disciplines create false divisions in academia. Snow’s argument becomes irrelevant when realizing that concepts, methods, and theories from different disciplines can synthesize. Synthesis shows that there is a level of understanding between disciplines. Another critical point that Snow did not consider is that different end products of knowledge would not be possible without first obtaining knowledge. Different outcomes in disciplines rely on this fundamental similarity of obtaining knowledge.

When considering specific purposes of a distinct discipline some intellectuals may attempt to prove that their discipline is superior. For instance, when referring to statistics on scientists Snow stated, “I should say that naturally they had the future in their bones” (Snow, 1959, p. 6). This superiority approach is common of a public figure such as Snow who is described by Collini as someone “who prided himself on always looking forward and on being the spokesman for those who have the ‘future in their bones’” (Collini, 1993, p. xxv). However, Snow is not the only one guilty of this discipline superiority complex. For example, Mills argues that the most essential discipline in an industrialized society is the social sciences because the sociological imagination finds solutions to modern social problems. This statement by Mills is not intended to discount the value of language that is developed by the humanities

disciplines. However, Mills does believe that the social sciences hold an advantage over the humanities disciplines by taking language a step further to evaluate history and biography (Mills, 1959). Thus, arguing that one discipline is superior over others only creates false divisions within academia.

Synthesis in Academia

Although many arguments can be made for one fundamental culture, it is important to acknowledge that some disciplines are comprised of concepts, methods, and theories from two or more fields. Julie Thompson Klein, an interdisciplinary author, described two plausible disciplines that use information combined from two or more individual areas. These disciplines are labeled as multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity. Multidisciplinary is described by Klein as adding concepts, methods, and theories from one discipline to another area of study to approach a problem. Interdisciplinarity is described by Klein as synthesizing information from two or more disciplines (Klein, 1990). Both multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity show how two or more individual disciplines communicate. This verification of understanding between disciplines gives more reason to conclude that disciplines are not multiple cultures. If academia were composed of multiple cultures then mutual incomprehension would make multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity impossible. However, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches and studies haven't proven to be achievable. Therefore, the assumption of

mutual incomprehension between disciplines is another example of false divisions in academia.

In addition to multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity, Klein described a third discipline that combines information from multiple disciplines. This discipline is labeled transdisciplinarity, which is defined as an overarching synthesis of information (Klein, 1990, pp. 65-66). However, a perfect discipline such as transdisciplinarity does not exist. Moreover, perfection does not create a culture and a culture does not indicate complete harmony. As mentioned earlier, academia as a culture requires similarities and differences in disciplines to best solve problems. It is evident that a transdisciplinary approach will not become a reality due to its implications of perfection in synthesis of information from all disciplines. However, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches are used frequently for a variety of problems. The reality of interdisciplinary problem solving further proves that the concept of disciplines being their own cultures is created from false divisions in academia. Nonetheless, synthesis of knowledge cannot happen in academia unless students learn how to take an interdisciplinary approach in their courses.

Like any area of study in academia, courses that take an interdisciplinary approach meet some criticisms. As William H. Newell, an interdisciplinary author, points out from Professor Thomas C. Benson's arguments against interdisciplinary studies, integrative courses involve more rigor than an introductory course to any discipline (Newell, 1998; Benson, 1982). Therefore, it would

be more appropriate to engage in interdisciplinary studies when a student is at the graduate level or has obtained experience synthesizing information at the undergraduate level. Interdisciplinarity is viewed by Newell as a specialization which requires prior knowledge of multiple disciplines (Newell, 1998). This view provides support for learning about interdisciplinarity in graduate school since graduate programs are more focused on a specialization than undergraduate programs. However, to be able to use information from more than one discipline students need to have a basis of knowledge for multiple disciplines. This basis of knowledge can be obtained through the undergraduate curriculum. Yet, the undergraduate curriculum should also require interdisciplinarity as part of assignments to look at other approaches that are valuable for solving problems. Even more important, to make an interdisciplinary approach successful in academia faculty need to be trained in synthesizing knowledge from multiple disciplines. Requiring students to learn how to correctly synthesize information from different disciplines is imperative for advancing future generations of academics.

Applications of Interdisciplinarity

The field of interdisciplinarity is inevitable and imperative in academia. Interdisciplinarity is inevitable because problems have and will continue to arise in society that require an interdisciplinary approach. Interdisciplinarity is also imperative because the approach is essential for solving problems that require synthesis of information from multiple disciplines. There are a variety of topics and issues that require

an interdisciplinary approach. For example, Webber and Kirshenbaum (2012) expressed the imperativeness of interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving energy needs for the progression and innovation of the large-scale energy field. Webber and Kirshenbaum believe that in order to advance the educational field of energy courses need to be able to synthesize information from energy science and energy business disciplines. In addition, disciplines that involve information pertaining to political, technical, and social issues in the energy field play an important role in problem solving issues such as energy consumption, waste, and energy innovation.

Interdisciplinary studies are not only important in academia for the purpose of problem solving energy needs. There are a variety of other topics that require an interdisciplinary approach such as issues in policies, health, families, and career preparation. To give another example, Margolis, Rosenburg, Umble, and Chewing (2013) conducted a research study to examine the effects of interdisciplinary training on professionals in maternal and child health organizations and systems. The study found that graduate students, from five different Maternal and Child Health Bureau funded training programs in interdisciplinary leadership development, acquired valued attitudes and beliefs for interdisciplinary practice. The students in these programs also gained interdisciplinary skills. In addition, these students continued to seek opportunities to use and develop their interdisciplinary skills. The study also found that students in these programs used their interdisciplinary skills to improve outcomes for families in maternal and child health

organizations. Furthermore, interdisciplinary students improved systems in maternal and child health organizations, programs, and policies. Although interdisciplinarity is necessary for many issues, this study is a good example of how imperative an interdisciplinary approach is to solving problems in a specific type of organization.

Overpowering False Divisions

In conclusion, each discipline in academia involves the discovery of truth/knowledge by using imagination and creativity to find hidden likenesses in data (Bronowski, 1956). Furthermore, each discipline begins at the same point in synthesizing separate pieces of data. This similarity gives reason to conclude that multiple cultures in academia are created by false divisions. Without having one fundamental culture that has many disciplines and subdisciplines this similarity would not exist. In addition, synthesis of methods, theories, and concepts in different disciplines would be impossible if there were multiple cultures. Interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary are indicators of one fundamental culture that uses information as an additive or for synthesis between disciplines. Multidisciplinary approaches can solve problems by borrowing aspects from one discipline and use them for problem solving in another discipline. However, interdisciplinary approaches can take problem solving a step further by increasing consistency of methods, theories, and concepts synthesized from multiple disciplines.

Ultimately, interdisciplinarity is inevitable because systems and organizations in policies, health, family, education, etc. will always

have issues that require an interdisciplinary problem solving approach. Interdisciplinarity is also imperative to many issues within different systems and organizations such as businesses, education, and energy because the approach comes up with the best solutions to specific problems within these areas. Without learning and using interdisciplinary approaches we would not be able to advance and/or improve society in certain areas of issues. Moreover, if divisions in academia were authentic there would be lack of understanding between disciplines which would make interdisciplinarity impossible. Essentially, comprehensive problem solving is at stake when considering the importance of academia being one fundamental culture. Holding the differences in disciplines as more important than the fundamental similarities limits and narrows the possibilities of best solving problems. Furthermore, it is important to understand the interconnectedness of disciplines through their similarities and opportunities for synthesis. Acknowledging this interconnectedness is of vital importance to comprehend the endless possibilities of mutual understandings between disciplines.

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Closing the Gap for 21st Century
Scholars that are High-risk Students

Lynda J. Phillips

Closing the Gap for 21st Century Scholars that are High-risk Students

I am an Indiana University Southeast School Counseling student. I received my undergraduate degree from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University in Bloomington in Marketing, while concurrently fulfilling the requirements for a Bachelors of Science in Management. I also have a minor in Psychology. I have spent the past fourteen years working in schools in various capacities as a volunteer, substitute teacher and member of leadership councils. I have a passion for working with children and teenagers. I find the theory of person-centered counseling from Carl Rogers to be most congruent with my beliefs, although I do like the ideas behind solution-focused brief therapy as a tool when working with limited time resources.

I am affiliated with a rural high school located in the southern part of a mid-western state for my Internship. There are approximately 900 students that attend the high school with two school counselors and around 50 certified faculty. There is one campus principal and two assistant principals. The school has recently implemented a 1:1 student ratio with laptop computers. In fact, this accomplishment has been implemented throughout the District. In addition to the focus on technology, a New Tech high school was opened within the campus three years ago and next year will be graduating their first senior class. New Tech is a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) based school that focuses on collaborative learning. Overall the high school is not very ethnically diverse with 94% white students in the District. Other ethnic

groups include Hispanic (3%), Multi-racial (1.3%), Black (.8%), Asian (.6%) and Pacific Islander (.4%). There is a range of socio-economic students from very low poverty to upper middle class. Approximately 53% of the students participate in a free or reduced meal plan.

The school district is located in a county that is ranked number one in the entire state for children under the age of 18 living in poverty (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Thirty-four percent of the population is made up of children living under the poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The county has a mammoth problem with substance abuse. Unfortunately, it is also ranked as one of the highest counties for teenage pregnancy, child abuse and general unhealthiness (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These are contributing factors in many students who are considered high risk. Some of these students have been in disciplinary trouble and were suspended throughout the school year. Some exhibit poor attendance or failing grades. Behavioral issues, inconsistent attendance and poor academics lead to higher high school dropout rates. Poverty can be a big influence in whether or not a child finishes high school. There is a need to find a solution that teaches students positive coping skills and encourages them to finish high school and pursue post-secondary education. For my Close the Achievement Gap project in the school counseling program at IUS, I developed an in-depth program to address the issues that face high risk students, to improve attendance as well as grades.

The 21st Century Scholar Success program was established in 1990 to make certain that every student can afford an in-state college

education. Students meeting the low income-eligibility rules must enroll by the end of their 8th grade year. Once enrolled they are guaranteed to receive up to four years of undergraduate tuition at any participating public college or university within the state. Enrollment in the *21st Century Scholar Success program* is at an all-time high today with more than 100,000 students enrolled statewide (21st Century Scholars, 2013). The statistics show that 21st Century Scholars graduate from high school and attend college at a higher rate than other students. However, they do not complete college. Only one in ten 21st Century Scholars graduate from college on time and less than a third earn a degree within six years (21st Century Scholars, 2013). I believe this is in part due to the influence of the high risk factors these students experience as children of poverty. The program requires that students maintain at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) and pledge to not use illegal drugs or alcohol, or commit a crime or delinquent act; and apply for college admission and financial aid on-time as a high school senior. Seniors are grandfathered under a previous program requirement and their GPA should be at least a 2.0 or higher.

This project targeted the high risk students for the 2013 – 2014 school year who are enrolled in the 21st Century Scholar Success program. In terms of achievement, the project strived to increase the participating students average GPA to the 21st Century Scholar program requirements of 2.0 for seniors and 2.5 for all other grade levels. The targeted group comprised of students who can realistically bring their grades up. In other words, a senior with a 1.0 GPA is not statistically

going to be able to bring his GPA back to the 2.0 requirement in the time before he graduates. Therefore the project focused on:

- Seniors whose GPA falls between a 1.7 and 2.09
- Juniors whose GPA falls between 2.2 and 2.59
- Sophomores whose GPA falls between 2.1 and 2.59
- Freshmen whose GPA falls between 2.0 and 2.59

Good citizenship is another 21st Century Scholar requirement. Tardies, absenteeism, disciplinary issues and suspensions are indicative of a student who may not graduate from high school.

For the 2013 – 2014 school year, there were 228 students enrolled in the 21st Century Scholar Success program at the target high school. This reflected about 25% of the total student population. Interestingly, 10.5% of the students fell within the project's targeted GPA range and this percentage seemed to hold true at each grade level. Of the total number of enrollees, 35 were seniors with four of them falling into the target GPA group. The junior class was the largest with 107 students enrolled and 15 falling into the target GPA group. There were 42 sophomores, of which five fell into the targeted GPA range for intervention. There were 44 freshmen, but at the time of this report, high school GPA information was not yet available for that grade level. Of the total 24 students targeted for the project, 13 of them had either been tardy to class or been counted absent for at least one day during the first four weeks of the school year. One student had already missed

four days. This meant 54% of the kids had some sort of attendance issue. The goal was that the skills the students learned throughout this program would reduce the average number of infractions, tardies and absenteeism by half.

Review of Literature

A high risk student for this project was defined as one that is in danger of not graduating from high school. There are several factors that could influence the student's ability to graduate. The students in this project were those that are enrolled in the 21st Century Scholar program but did not meet the 2.5 GPA requirement. Being eligible for the 21st Century Scholar program means that the student must come from a low income background. This in turn makes the student susceptible to outside influences that may affect his or her ability to stay in school.

Young, Helton and Whitley (1997) identified some traits of students who are considered high risk in their study on high school at-risk youth. These include high absenteeism and tardies, poor time management, no study skills, no sense of cause and effect, low self-esteem, no parental support, no sense of responsibility, inability to control anger, poor sense of humor and victims of abuse. The study also found that students will seek support from someplace. If they are not receiving the support they need at home or school, they will seek it from another source. If the support is not positive, then the student is vulnerable to peer pressure and/or making poor choices. As might be expected, the study found that attendance did have a substantial bearing

on grades. They also found that the parents of these students often do not get involved with school. Some parents reported feeling isolated because they do not feel qualified to understand or help their student with the school work.

Another study by Hickman and Wright (2011) on the effects of mentoring and graduation rates explains that symptoms of at-risk kids include academic and behavior problems, school drop-outs, low test scores, grade retention and disciplinary infractions. In addition, these students tend to experience higher rates of divorce, teenage pregnancy, poverty, drug abuse, violence and stress in their home life. This produces students who do not graduate at all, or do not graduate with the necessary life skills to be successful and overcome basic life challenges. This study went on to explore the relationship of mentoring and graduation rates and their correspondence to academic and behavioral variables. It also found that the earlier a student received intervention, the greater the chance that the student would complete high school. The study took place over 10 years and used school data from 447 students.

One program that utilizes the concept of mentoring along with creative visual tools is **Why Try**. According to their website, **Why Try** was born in January of 1996, when a college professor asked Christian Moore how he had managed to be so academically successful in light of his severe learning disabilities. At the time, Christian was struggling to obtain a bachelor's degree at a large university. He was doing so with sixth-grade math abilities and seventh-grade reading and writing skills. Christian thought about the professor's question and wrote the words

“Why Try?” on a piece of paper. He came up with a list of 15 principles that he was using to overcome his challenges. Later, while in graduate school, Christian worked as a counselor at an alternative high school. He realized that the students he was helping were overwhelmingly visual learners. He drew pictures to illustrate the principles that had helped him get through school. Today, the **Why Try** program is now in use in over 16,000 schools and 500 school districts in all 50 states and countries worldwide (Why Try, n.d.).

Wilhitea and Bullock (2012) studied the **Why Try** program as it was applied to an alternative school. They looked at attendance, grades, office disciplinary referrals, and behavioral rating scales prior to the intervention and then after implementing **Why Try**. They found that students showed noteworthy improvements from pre- to post-intervention in the number of disciplinary referrals and in several areas of the behavioral rating scales. Another study done by the Alpine School District in Provo, Utah produced similar results. This study (Bushnell & Card, 2003) was done over a period of 12 terms and tracked 114 students against a control group of 88 students with similar academic and attendance profiles. The students who completed **Why Try** completed the program with higher GPAs, better attendance, fewer failing grades and a graduation rate that was three times higher than the control group.

Exito means ‘success’ in Spanish. It is the perfect name for a drop-out prevention program set in a low income, Latino neighborhood of Philadelphia. This study by Hartmann, Good and Edmunds (2011) looked at the effects of an after-school program on high school graduation

rates. One other interesting thing is that like the Hickman and Wright study, they too found that the younger the at-risk student was when receiving intervention, the more likely they were to graduate. They focused their efforts on 9th and 10th graders. Reasons for dropping out included academic failure upon entering high school, as well as feeling disconnected in the larger high school setting with no sense of belonging or engagement at school.

In his study on turning high risk youth into high promise youth, McElwee (2007) examines what it takes to get kids classified as ‘risks’ to just ‘at-risk’ and then to ‘resilience’. He assessed a student’s level of risk by rating them as ‘very high-risk’ if they had entered the juvenile justice system; a student was ‘high-risk’ if they engage in substance abuse, have poor grades, truancy and unprotected sex but have not gotten in trouble with the law; ‘moderate-risk’ students engage in some risky behaviors, but not all; ‘low-risk’ students might experiment with risky behavior but are careful; finally there was even a ‘no-risk’ category of students who never engage in any risky behaviors. McElwee found that the home life, familial situation and peer group must all be addressed. The programs that worked the best encompassed the child with multiple interventions. An interesting remark from this study stated that self-esteem is perhaps the single most important area that leads to poor academic achievement. McElwee touches on this when he concludes the study by saying that it is important for us to rethink our ideas of ‘at-risk students’ to ones which embrace ‘high promise’ students. We need to place our focus on strengths instead of weaknesses, and abilities instead of limitations.

Research Design

As per the requirements of the Close the Achievement Gap project, I included at least five school counseling and educational interventions in my project. In Hartmann, Good and Edmunds (2011) study of *Exit*, they found that out-of-school time (OST) programs do have an effect on graduation rates. In fact, OST programs have been found to create resilience in high-risk youth. They help to foster a sense of belonging and competence that help the at-risk student navigate the challenges of life.

Why Try is one such program and I used it as a component of my intervention methods in the 2013 – 2014 school year. The program was developed to teach kids how to be resilient. The **Why Try** program provides tools to help students change patterns of failure and indifference and develop motivation to reach goals. At Scottsburg High School, the **Why Try** program was implemented as an after school program with high-risk students. It took place once a week for seventy minutes. The facilitators were teachers and volunteers from the community who had completed two days of program training. All 21st Century Scholar students were invited to attend.

The second intervention in my effort to “close the achievement gap” was a mentor program. High-risk students were matched up with mentors from the school and community. It was especially important to match the freshmen and sophomores up with mentors as research indicates this increases the likelihood of success. Also, this could enable

the same mentor to take the student through all four years of high school and tangible relationships could be established.

The third intervention used was small group counseling sessions. The sessions met every week for six weeks. They covered the topics of getting acquainted, trust-building, problem-solving skills, educational aspirations, goal setting and relationships. A second small group covered college and career readiness with freshmen students.

The fourth intervention was individual counseling services for specific students each week. Individual counseling provides a 'checks and balance' element to the program and helps to make sure that all components of the program are connecting. The individual counseling session is one more way to connect with the student and build a relationship. It helps the student understand there is another person in their life who cares about them. Also, it is a great opportunity to formally keep tabs on the students' attendance, tardies, grades and any other issues.

Finally, for the fifth intervention, the parents or guardians were included and invited to be involved in the project. My program included an attempt to build a relationship with the parents. I organized a 21st Century Scholar program information booth at the parent-teacher night. This gave me an opportunity to meet parents. I also sought to acknowledge every parent that I interacted with on any situation. I thanked them for their attendance at a meeting or event, or interest in their child's education, if it was a phone call. This went a long way toward making them feel more comfortable with the school, as well as

the establishment as an equal partner in their child's academic success.

It is important to recognize that an effective program must be comprehensive. One intervention on its own will not succeed. The student will be most successful if all aspects of his/her life are working together in partnership. My program started with a larger group utilizing the **Why Try** curriculum for all high-risk students. Mentoring involved the community and other faculty members to broaden my sphere of influence. I used group counseling sessions to narrow down the focus to those students who exhibited at-risk behaviors. Individual counseling sessions served to follow-up and ensure all components were working together. Finally, parental involvement connected the circle and wrapped the student with support from all sides.

Results

Parental involvement opportunities were offered to the entire 21st Century Scholar population. The first event was an information table at parent/teacher night in the fall to answer questions and discuss the 21st Century Scholar program. A financial aid workshop, also in the fall, was well attended and featured a college financial aid expert, instruction on using the 'College Cost Estimator' and local scholarship opportunities. Finally, a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Completion Event was held in the spring with financial aid experts on-hand to help parents complete the FAFSA online.

The after-school **Why Try**' program was offered after school for 70 minutes once a week. 21st Century Scholar students were personally

invited to attend. Lessons were focused on developing resiliency skills and included things like changing thought patterns, tearing off labels, overcoming hurdles and setting goals. Transportation and snacks were provided. The program was voluntary and attendance was sporadic. Attendance averaged 10 students each week.

The mentors were provided on an informal basis through the **Why Try** facilitators. Because of the nature of the after-school program, mentoring was primarily based on social support as opposed to academic support. In addition, there were a large number of school days that were cancelled due to inclement weather during the spring semester. This hurt the development of relationships.

Small groups were organized in the fall and spring semesters. The groups were comprised of six to eight students. The fall group focused on ‘best practices.’ Topics included goal setting, motivation and organization. The spring semester group focused on ‘careers.’ Students learned about career exploration, personal interests and were even taken off campus to tour several local businesses.

As a final component to this comprehensive intervention program, two students were selected each semester for individual, weekly counseling sessions. These sessions focused on academic issues and stress, as well as career exploration. The individual sessions also served to build relationships with those specific students.

Data for all students involved in the project is provided in the table below. The data indicates that 16 of 21 students did improve their

GPA for a 71% rate of improvement among all students included in the study. The average GPA for the entire group went from 2.257 to 2.274. The days absent for the entire group went from 125 days to 99 days. Sixteen of 21 students did show an improvement in their rate of days absent from school. Better yet, the number of the days that a student was tardy went from 101 to 39. This meant that 18 of the 21 students had no increase in their overall number of times tardy, showing that 86% of students reflected an improvement or no change to their tardiness trend.

Name	August					November grade check				January					March grade check				April GPA	Cum GPA going up
	Cum GPA	Curr GPA	Tardy	Abst	Discipline	Grades	Tardy	Abst	Discipline	Cum GPA	Curr GPA	Tardy	Abst	Discipline	Grades	Tardy	Abst	Discipline		
1	2.323	1.5	0	4	0	OK	5	16	3	2.33	2.383	6	9	7	2D	4	7	7	1.767	Y
2	1.956	1.617	0	1	0	4F	0	2	0	1.838	1.067	1	4	0	D/5F	0	5	0	0.283	
3	2.007	1.825	0	0	0	F	0	0	0	2.025	2.167	0	0	0	F	0	0	0	3	Y
4	2.284	2.75	0	1	0	2F	4	3	0	2.312	2.4	5	4	0	F	2	7	0	2.143	Y
5	2.404	2.356	0	0	0	OK	0	2	0	2.532	3.133	0	4	0	OK	0	3	0	3.425	Y
6	2.035	1.992	1	0	0	F/D	0	0	0	1.997	1.857	3	1	0	2D/F	0	3	0	1.386	
7	2.321	2.429	0	1	0	D	1	6	0	2.334	2.386	1	6	0	2D	0	2	0	1.883	Y
8	2.346	2.529	0	0	0	OK	0	2	0	2.546	3.343	0	3	0	OK	0	4	0	2.8	Y
9	2.412	2.743	0	0	0	F/2D	0	2	0	2.215	1.486	0	3	0	F	0	1	0	2.386	
10	2.233	2.4	0	1	0	D-	0	7	0	2.325	2.783	0	2	0	D/F	0	0	0	0.9	Y
11	2.496	2.692	1	0	0	D	1	0	0	2.367	1.783	1	0	0	2F	0	1	1	1.9	
12	2.382	2.664	0	0	0	D/F	0	3	0	2.294	1.883	1	0	0	F	0	3	0	1.92	
13	2.296	1.623	1	2	0	D	2	3	1	2.394	2.771	3	2	2	2F	0	1	2	1.671	Y
14	2.315	2.523	0	0	0	OK	0	0	0	2.321	2.35	0	0	0	D	0	0	0	2.329	Y
15	2.311	1.879	0	4	1	2F	0	10	4	2.168	1.5	1	7	5	3D/2F	0	3	7	1.1	
16	2.211	2.35	0	0	0	D	0	2	0	2.223	2.271	0	7	0	2D/2F	0	1	0	1.217	Y
17	2.489	2.614	0	0	0	OK	0	0	0	2.512	2.64	0	0	0	OK	0	0	0	2.9	Y
18	2.331	1.946	0	0	0	D+	1	0	0	2.374	2.471	1	1	0	4D	0	1	1	2.529	Y
19	2.022	1.569	0	1	0	D+	0	1	0	2.167	2.6	0	0	0	D/F	0	0	0	2.483	Y
20	2.166	1.854	0	0	0	F	1	1	0	2.275	2.567	1	1	0	D/2F	0	1	1	1.857	Y
21	2.05	1.643	1	0	0	2D	1	1	0	2.202	2.571	1	1	0	D/F	1	2	0	2.143	Y

Recommendations

The implication of this study shows that the original goals were unrealistic and hard to measure. Freshmen had no trending data and could not be included in the study. Of the original 24 targeted students, three withdrew from the school, leaving 21 for the study. The goal was to show improvement in the GPA's of all students. Two of the targeted students

were actually meeting their goal prior to the study. At the conclusion of the study five of the 21 were meeting their GPA requirement. However, 16 of those 21 students did show *some improvement* in their GPA – they just did not meet the requirement of the 21st Century Scholar program.

Another goal was to reduce the absenteeism and tardiness trend by half or 50 percent. This was not quite achieved with a total of 226 total infractions reduced to 138. There was overall improvement, but the goal was not achieved.

The logistics of including all targeted students in every intervention proved to be very difficult. Some students would participate in some activities, but not all. The interventions would have been more effective if every targeted student could have received every intervention.

Relationships are the key to success in any intervention program. Relationships between mentors and students help give value to the mentor's words. Relationships between teachers and students improve academic performance and self-esteem. Relationships between the students themselves help to maintain better attendance and participation. And finally, relationships between parents and both the students and the school increase the overall effectiveness of everything else. The mentor program should be more formalized and training provided to the mentors.

An intervention program takes time. It cannot be completed in one academic year. Ideally, students are targeted at the middle school level and continue to receive interventions throughout high school. A successful program also requires consistency in both focus and the personnel who staff it. Changing leadership damages those important relationships. It also is important to have all parties involved to be committed and passionate about serving. Training should be provided to leadership to insure that students receive similar messages.

McElwee (2007) provides the best philosophy for thinking about high-risk students when he quotes the Irish economist, T. K. Whittaker:

If we think about it, save for the vagaries of birth, errant biology, class and status, or simply circumstance, we are all but a half step away from the 'other' families we describe as in need of service, or 'at risk.' In the final analysis, it is not 'us' and 'them.' It is all of us. Together. (p. 269)

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Telling About Society: The Sociology
of Representation and Representations
of Society

Tabitha Short

Abstract

The goal of this paper is to determine how two distinct representations of society are constructed. The two creators of the representations are from different backgrounds and both have an opinion about the law, but they are not lawmakers. The main objectives are: to determine who the users and makers are, how the representations are produced, what is included in the representation, and what is left out. Knowing how a maker creates their representation is important because it gives us a deeper understanding of the reasons why the content is chosen and what the maker is trying to communicate. Interviews and ethnography were used to study the topic and to collect qualitative data. The results show that the creator's view of the law impacts what is included in the representation. However, it does not impact the process of creating the representation. The main factors that impacted these two representations were organizational structure and financial feasibility.

Telling About Society: The Sociology of Representation and Representations of Society

The purpose of this study is to analyze two representations of society. One representation is a hand-bound book, written by an author who is also a theologian and philosopher. For the purposes of this article, the initial creator of the book will be referred to as *the author*. The second representation is a collection of reports created by a police officer, who will be referred to as *the officer*. Both creators have an opinion of the purpose of the law and this opinion contributes to the content of the representation. However, their opinion does not solely determine the content of the representations.

Review of Literature

Literature review in the area of sociological representations has provided the standards by which the works will be analyzed. Using the work of sociologist Howard Becker (2007), the following areas were investigated: (1) Division of Labor; who are the makers and users? How does the organizational structure impact the final work? (2) Conventions; what are the standards for creating the representation? Who decides what is included and excluded? (3) Resources; how is the creation funded? Where are the materials obtained? What transformations took place during creation? (4) Interpretation; who is the audience? What is the purpose of the representation? The main objectives are: to determine who the users and makers are, how the representations are produced, what is included in the representation, what is left out, and if the representation

was a success. Knowing how a maker creates their representation is important because it gives us a deeper understanding of the reasons why the content is chosen and what the maker is trying to communicate. It is the theory of the researcher that the organizational structure will greatly impact the content and format of the representation.

Data

The primary data sources were the results of interviews and ethnography centered on the main creator of each representation. Interviews are important because they provide firsthand knowledge to the researcher from the subject that is being studied. Sociologist Robert Weiss (2004) makes this point in an article about qualitative interviews, “studies based on in-depth interviews illuminate the social world.” The qualitative interview gathers information about details that a survey could not obtain. It is up to the researcher to analyze and interpret the data once it is obtained. The process of ethnography is similar to interviewing because the researcher is involved with obtaining firsthand knowledge. It is different in the way the information is obtained. Instead of asking questions, the researcher is immersed in the setting where the interactions are taking place. Being involved in the process allows the researcher to see, hear, and react to the actual experience. “Literally translated as ‘portrait of the people,’ ethnography describes and analyzes the beliefs, motivations, and rationales of a people in a particular setting or subculture” (Adler & Adler 2003). Using both ethnography and interviews to gather data allows the researcher a diverse view of the subject matter.

The process of the interviews and ethnography are explained in the following passages. Permission to interview the respondents was obtained officially and the interview questions were approved by the Indiana University Southeast Institutional Review Board (IU IRB) on October seventh, 2013. The approval by the IU IRB signifies the interview questions meet the ethical standards set forth by the Belmont Report (HHS, 1979).

Interview and Ethnography with the Author

The interview with the author was conducted over the phone as he lives in a distant location from the researcher. The answers to the questions were typed as the author responded, rather than recording the call. Some immediate, follow-up questions were asked; but only if the question related to the original, approved interview question directly. The interview took approximately one hour and the areas of interest are covered below.

Division of labor

The only maker is the author himself, but there are several people who serve as supporting makers. The author does the following tasks to create the representation: planning, writing, editing, formatting, printing, binding, marketing, and distribution. Support is required for the raw materials: paper suppliers, printer ink suppliers, and hardware stores. He also enlists a small amount of helpers for editing, marketing, and distribution.

The user is the reader of the book. According to the author, the intended audience is a person who is spiritual, but not necessarily a member of the religious community; “a person who has an intuitive sense of spirituality that has been turned off by the franchised religious enterprise”. He wrote the book specifically for this audience because of his experiences with conventional churches.

Convention

In the past, the standard for writing a book has been: the author writes the book and then submits it to an editor, once it is edited; it is submitted to a publisher. The editor and publisher have strong roles in determining the content of the final product as well as how successful it is. In our modern age, the author is able to acquire all of the resources needed to create, edit, publish, and market the book himself. The organizational structure he has built for himself allows for full autonomy with regard to creative freedom and expression. However, the price for the freedom is an increase in the amount of work to be done by the author. He assumes the roles of editor, printer, publisher, and marketer along with the tasks they would normally perform.

Resources

Since the organization is small, consisting of only one person, the resource pool is also small. In a larger organization, an author may benefit by being paid to write a book in advance and then have the additional benefit of the editing, publishing, and marketing costs being covered as well. For this representation, all costs for every stage of

creation are the responsibility of the author. The luxury of freedom is balanced by the cost of production for the small organization. Therefore, the cost of creating the representation is one of the most significant factors in determining how to create it.

Representation content

The author spent over thirty years studying theology, language, ancient texts, and philosophy to build his knowledge regarding the subject matter of his book. His personal experiences in all different types of churches and religious organizations also contributed to his knowledge and opinions in the book. With regard to the law, the author believes that it is important because, “It sets a standard for appropriate social behavior and it hands out punishments for those who don’t fit those behaviors.” When asked, “Who is the law intended for?” He responded, “Law is for people with questionable ethics and no moral compass. Because people who do what is right are already obeying the law, it is not for them. The laws are for the lawless.” The author was also asked to explain how his representation contributed to the concept of the law:

My book focuses on religious institutions using directives to control people. I have no qualms with society using laws to control the lawless. My main issue with it is when churches use directives to control people. It is direct evidence that what they are preaching is incapable of changing people’s behavior

so they have to use religious directives and prohibitions to control them. Neither of these tactics work.

The author acknowledges the importance of the law, but only as it is needed to maintain order in society, not as part of a religious belief system. The author was asked what he left out of the representation; the items he left out were things he considered to be too technical or theological in nature. His goal was to keep the representation readable and understandable for the average reader.

Interpretation

The reader also plays a role as a maker as it pertains to the interpretation of the book. The author's expectations of the audience call on them to play an active role in the interpretation of the work and of its use in their life. He outlined three things he would like the reader to be able to do after reading his book:

- 1) My reader (the seeker) will be able to tap into their own internal sense of spiritual reality. Each person has their own sense of spirituality whether they know it or not. I would like to give them the ability to tap into this on their own.
- 2) Help the seeker to avoid the pitfalls of the franchised religious enterprise.
- 3) Extension of number 2, to provide any information he can to assist a person in becoming enlightened.

So they can become ethically, morally by virtue a better person. But it must be with this caveat; without religious directives.

Based on the criteria set forth by the author, the user becomes a maker as they are expected to take some action upon reading the text. The content of the book has the purpose of helping the user without commanding them to do anything specific.

Creation of the Representation

During a four hour session on December first, 2013, the steps to create the book were shown to the researcher by the author via video-conferencing. The author had purchased all of the supplies from a hardware store and used his at home workshop to make the book. He started with cutting the cover boards from hardboard and did the following steps outlined below.

- 1) Prepare the cover boards
- 2) Make the spine
- 3) Complete Embossing
- 4) Create outer panels
- 5) Apply gold tint
- 6) Apply the prints
- 7) Varnish the covers
- 8) Print the manuscript
- 9) Touch up the edges of the manuscript

- 10) Create the endpapers
- 11) Attach the spine to the manuscript
- 12) Glue it all together

Interview and Ethnography with the Officer

The interview with the officer was conducted in person, by the researcher. The answers to the questions were typed as the author responded, rather than recording the conversation. Some immediate, follow-up questions were asked; but only if the question related to the original, approved interview question directly. The interview took approximately one hour and the areas of interest are covered below.

Division of labor

Since the officer is part of a large organization, the division of labor is very structured. It is the officer's duty to create the reports based on the events that take place during her shift. The officer has the following tasks: arriving at an incident, observing the situation, documenting the incident by taking notes and pictures if required, and entering the information gathered into the *e-report* on-board computer screen. Once the information is entered, the report has been created. The screens inside the computer system have required entries to ensure that certain fields are completed before the officer can move to the next screen. The controlled environment only gives the officer one place to enter free-form text, a portion called the *public narrative*. Therefore,

the officer has limited control over how the representation is created but moderate control over the content.

There are many users of the officer's representations: judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, detectives, trainers, insurance companies, and the media. Each user has a different intent for the report but the intent of the officer is to provide sufficient evidence for the criminal to be put in jail. The officer's expectations of the user's vary depending on who is using the data. However, the users who are most relevant to the officer are the detectives and judges because she "expects the judges and attorneys to use them to prosecute criminals but unfortunately most of the criminals are back out on the street committing the same crimes again and again."

Convention

Until recently, the traditional convention for creation of police reports has been hand-written reports. In the last two years, the city has upgraded all of its database systems and police cars to allow for computer based reports to be created. The innovation makes it easier for the organization to control which fields are filled in. The control feature means fewer reports are rejected for lack of information. There are also controls that cross-check data between fields to ensure an incident has the proper elements mapped to it which enables more accurate reporting.

Resources

The officer is a part of metro government, a very large

organization, which controls the police department and it has many resources. Creating the representation is part of the officer's job and she is paid to do it. She has very little freedom with regard to how she must create the report, but it doesn't cost her anything either. On-board computer systems and large, integrated databases are very expensive resources for the organization. These costs must be remediated by the efficiency, effectiveness, and accuracy of the representations.

Representation content

As part of the interview process, the officer was also asked about her opinion of the law. Her response was much different from the author's. "The law is for everyone, every single person." The officer's opinion of the law is an important factor in how she conducts herself on the job. She sees the law for what it is; right and wrong. Period, there is no gray area:

Without it, people would go nuts. There are people who try to follow the law, but even these people break it: speeding, running stop signs, stuff like that. Without the law, it would be total chaos, like an apocalypse. There would be a crazy amount of people running the streets, stealing, taking advantage of and abusing the weak. There would always be this situation and there would always be people compelled to rise up and defend the weak from becoming victims. So the law, even if this official, structured form of

it was gone, would always exist in some way or another, out of necessity.

The officer's commitment to the letter of the law is a necessity as well. Without it, she would be unable to do her job effectively. She is committed to doing her job to the best of her ability and she includes the most important facts of each call into the reports. When asked what she leaves out, she responded, "Unnecessary information gets left out." Only the relevant details are included so the report is clear, concise, and accurate.

Interpretation

Police reports can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Defense attorneys look for mistakes or missing elements to use on behalf of the accused. Prosecuting attorneys look for evidence to convict the accused. Detectives look for clues to find a perpetrator or build a case against one. Judges use them to help make decisions; sometimes the report is the only evidence in a case. Insurance companies use them to determine who is at fault in an accident or what the value of the stolen property was. Interpretation can vary widely, depending on who the user of the representation is. According to the officer, this is why it is important to be accurate when creating reports.

Creation of the representation

Observing the officer on the job, the researcher was able to record how the process is completed. Only one of the calls during

the ride-along is documented below. The following information was obtained during ethnography lasting approximately four hours on October second, 2013:

A person called into the police regarding an issue using 911 or the non-emergency number. All of the emergency calls go to MetroSafe which is one larger room in a building downtown. The dispatchers at MetroSafe decide if the police, fire, ambulance, or media are needed and dispatch the call accordingly. The decision was made that it was a residential disturbance so the call was sent to the police. The police dispatcher sent it to the correct precinct and then it is routed to the beat officers on duty. The beat officer, who accepts the call, does so on the radio and in the vehicle's computer. The officer went to the address displayed in the computer. A 45 year old man is on his neighbor's roof, stumbling around, ripping off shingles, and looks drunk or drugged or something. He doesn't appear to be a professional roofer. As the officer arrives at scene, the man has fallen off the roof and is stumbling around the yard putting shingles in a pile on the ground. The officer questions the man. The man states he was hired by the homeowner to take off the old roof. The man can only remember the homeowner's first name,

not his last name or his phone number. The man at the house does not have identification. He appears unstable, thin, and very unkempt. He states he is off of his “medicine” and that he has AIDS. The officer attempts to confirm the man is supposed to be at the residence but none of the neighbors have the homeowner’s phone number. The officers tell the man he should come back at a later time and get the number and full name from the man who hired him. They also advise him to have the homeowner get a work permit and to NOT touch the electric line until the power company cuts off the electric.

All of the calls the officer answered have the same format, although each call is completely different. The officer receives a call, she logs the call, she arrives at the scene, she investigates and documents, she takes appropriate action, and she makes a report. Her process never changes, but the content of the report is always changing which means the representations are in a standard format and can be utilized by the organization in a uniform way, even though the data collected will vary.

Methods

Steps were taken to codify the data so it could be rendered useful in a quantitative way. The texts of both interviews were searched for occurrences of significant words. The values gathered were charted.

The quantified data led the researcher to develop elements that could be developed for this study. The three elements that were extracted from the data were as follows: (1) the organizational structure determines the amount of control the maker has on the end product, (2) the organizational structure determines how the representation is created, (3) the maker's opinion of the law contributes to the content of their representation but does not wholly determine it. There were some words that both the author and officer used in their interviews. However, the only obvious overlap between the author and the officer is that they both capture words to create their representation.

Results

Interpretation of the data obtained by the methods above was done by attempting to take the qualitative data and quantifying it. Becker (2007) explains this approach as, "noting that all these representations serve as devices for summarizing data and ideas. Every version of social science analysis has to do the job of making less out of more, in the process making what has been gathered more intelligible and assimilable" (p. 59). In other words, it is the researcher's responsibility to take the data collected and make it understandable and useable.

The results show that the creator's view of the law impacts what is included in the representation. However, it does not impact the process of creating the representation.

Discussion

The main factors that impacted these two representations were organizational structure and financial feasibility. For the officer, the organizational structure strictly controlled the representation. She had no confusion about how to proceed with her job. Every step was outlined clearly by a specified protocol and she followed them to the letter. The cost of the representation was owned by the organization but the success of the representation was shared between the officer and the organization. With regard to the author, he is the organization, so he enjoyed complete freedom to create his representation in any way he desired. However, he was also solely responsible for the cost and success of the representation. The officer's black and white view of the law gave her the necessary framework to perform her professional duties well. She understood her position clearly and the representation was not muddled by clouded judgment or confusion. The author had a more progressive view of the law; it is only needed for the lawless. His view allowed him to create the representation in a way that reflected his beliefs; that the enlightened did not need to be legislated because they have morals to guide them.

Conclusion

The exploration of this subject matter has been interesting and important. It is imperative to understand how makers create their representations and why they choose their content because it gives us a deeper understanding of society as whole. When we can see how all the pieces fit together, we can understand the whole picture better.

Each of the makers in this study contributes to society by having honest portrayals of their work to present to the public. They stand by their beliefs and create their representation within the organizations they are part of. These organizations contribute to the representations depending upon the degree of control they possess.

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Contributors

Jennifer Mason

Jennifer Mason is a graduate student in the Masters of Liberal Studies program with a concentration in gender studies at Indiana University Southeast. Current academic pursuits build upon both her bachelor's degree in English literature and work as vice president of Southern Indiana Abstract Company, Inc., a third-generation research firm founded in 1948. More specifically, her research commonly examines academic implications of interdisciplinary studies, and recent scholarly projects have applied feminist pedagogical principles to interdisciplinary praxis. Additionally, her work is inspired by her involvement in both the Pinnacle Honor Society and "Mentor Mii" mentorship program.

Justin Miller

I received my Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Indiana University Southeast in May 2014. I will be receiving a Graduate Certificate in Liberal Studies in May 2015, also from Indiana University Southeast. Afterwards, I will be working towards my Master's in Applied Psychology (concentrations in Industrial-Organizational Psychology and Evaluation Research) at University of Wisconsin-Stout. I have a vast amount of research experience. I have been conducting research with Dr. Bernardo J. Carducci since the fall semester of 2013 as his research assistant at the Shyness Research Institute at Indiana University Southeast. With Dr. Carducci, I have conducted and published research in the field of Educational Psychology. Aside from our Educational Psychology research, Dr. Carducci and I have conducted research on hostility, impulsivity, suicide, and shyness. In addition, I have conducted field research in psychology with Dr. Lucinda Woodward and Dr. Brian Laythe. Ultimately, I aspire to be a professor at a university. I want to build

a career in research and teaching. I plan to achieve this goal by earning a doctorate in Industrial-Organizational Psychology or Applied Psychology after earning my Master's in Applied Psychology. On a final note, I also have work experience in behavior therapy and management.

LaShala Porter Goodwin

LaShala Porter Goodwin is a native of Lexington, KY. She was raised in Louisville, KY by her mother Sheila Porter Davis and her father William Lyle. She has a younger sister, Minister Talisha Lyle, who is an alumnus of Indiana University Southeast. Upon graduating from DuPont Manual High School, she attended the University of Kentucky where she received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. She is enrolled in the School Counseling Cohort here at Indiana University Southeast pursuing her Masters of Education in counseling which she will complete in May 2015. LaShala is married to Alvin Russell Goodwin II and has a wonderful son named Ayden Ra Goodwin. LaShala is currently employed by the KentuckianaWorks College Access Center (KCAC) where she has been the Lead College/Career Youth Counselor for the last seven years. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a career as a professional school counselor. LaShala is a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and is passionate about educating and advocating for student success. Her quote to live by is "be the change you wish to see in the world."

Lynda Phillips

Lynda Phillips is employed as a School Counselor for Jennings County Middle School. She earned her Master of Science in Education through the School Counseling program at Indiana University Southeast. Lynda received her undergraduate degree from the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University in Bloomington in Marketing, while concurrently fulfilling the requirements for a Bachelors of Science in Management. She also has a minor in

Psychology. Prior to completion of the School Counseling program, Lynda spent the past fifteen years working in schools in various capacities as a volunteer, substitute teacher and member of leadership councils. She has a passion for working with children and teenagers. Lynda is married to Matthew Phillips and resides in southern Indiana. They have two sons who are also Indiana University students. She enjoys spending time with her family and walking the trails of their farm.

Tabitha Short

Tabitha Short is an information technology professional at a local insurance company. She has worked in the IT industry over ten years and is currently in a leadership position. In her time on the job in IT, she had the opportunity to work with people from many diverse backgrounds. The experience of having co-workers from different cultures inspired her to pursue a master's degree in liberal studies with a focus on international relations. The liberal studies program offered courses in the humanities and in social sciences that enabled her to learn about social issues, cultural norms, and communication styles of her professional counterparts. It is her goal to use the interdisciplinary skills she has acquired to improve relations between Indian contractors and American associates in her current position in order to increase efficiency, effectiveness, and to foster communication and understanding between all employees in her sphere of influence.



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