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Assessing Feminist Community Psychology Pedagogy

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Abstract

Feminist pedagogy and community psychology share many ideological similarities, including an action-oriented approach to social problems, a focus on the voices of marginalized communities, and an emphasis on empowerment. There is a dearth of research on Feminist Community Psychology Pedagogy (FCPP), yet there is a compelling case for implementation of this approach in the undergraduate psychology curriculum. This article presents focus group findings from seven students who took an undergraduate community psychology course taught with FCPP, to better understand the impact of this teaching approach on their educational experiences. Thematic analysis identified 10 themes, including those regarding student professional growth, the empowering process of collaborative power-sharing, and a deeper understanding of social problems within a broader ecological context. The findings suggest FCPP enhances students' educational and career development, providing tools otherwise underdeveloped by other pedagogies. These findings have implications for further research and instruction regarding FCPP, as well as broader implications for community psychology as a discipline.

Exposure to the field of community psychology (CP) is a rare opportunity for most undergraduate psychology students, as CP is typically not part of undergraduate curricula either as a stand-alone course or as part of introductory psychology textbooks (Bauer et al., 2017; Carmony et al., 2000; Glantsman et al., 2015; Jimenez et al., 2016; McMahon et al., 2015; Simmons & Smiley, 2010). There are many benefits to undergraduate CP education. In addition to helping secure a pipeline of students into graduate training programs, undergraduate CP education provides students opportunities to learn about the role of larger macrosystemic, organizational, community, and mesosystemic factors that impact human behavior and mental health, which are often absent or under-emphasized in psychology courses (Kornbluh et al., 2019). Exposure to CP as an undergraduate thus increases students' awareness of systemic factors contributing to social problems and political awareness (Cattaneo et al., 2019), and provides students training in community practice skill sets, which are both useful in a multitude of careers and can also catalyze advocacy and activism (Jimenez, et al., 2016; McMahon, et al., 2015). Exposing undergraduate students to CP's strong social justice value orientation can improve multicultural competency skills (Gallor, 2017) and help attract and retain students of Color in psychology (Garibay, 2015; Gibbs & Griffin, 2013; Henderson et al., 2019; McGee & Bentley, 2017; Torres-Harding et al., 2014). Moreover, such exposure increases both students' commitment to addressing oppression through social change (Cattaneo et al., 2019; Gallor, 2017; Henderson & Wright, 2015), and students' preference for socially responsible jobs upon graduation (Ellison, 2018). For these and other reasons, community psychologists have called for the development of strong undergraduate CP pedagogy (Jimenez, et al., 2016; Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017).

Despite the benefits of undergraduate CP education, there remains a dearth of literature on best teaching practices (Jimenez et al., 2016), making it difficult to implement CP coursework at the undergraduate level. One promising approach is feminist community psychology pedagogy (FCPP; Schlehofer & Vapsva, 2019; Whelan & Lawthom, 2009). Although feminist pedagogical approaches are underutilized at the undergraduate level (Kite et al., 2001; McCormick, 1997) and undergraduate FCPP is almost unheard of (Worell & Johnson, 1997), there are strong benefits for development of this pedagogical framework. Feminist pedagogical approaches are those which incorporate feminist values into teaching (Forrest & Rosenburg, 1997). Feminist values closely align with those of community psychology, making a feminist approach a strong fit for undergraduate CP education: both feminism and community psychology take a critical approach to mainstream disciplinary perspectives and challenge existing power structures, both emphasize empowerment, and both feminism and community psychology call attention to the lived experiences of people who are marginalized in the pursuit of social justice (Hill et al., 2000; Mulvey, 1988; Riger, 2017). Further, a feminist approach can enhance CP by helping to deeper contextualize people's lived experiences and CP's understanding of diversity, and by reinforcing power-sharing processes (Riger, 2017).

Development of FCPP in undergraduate education is thus consistent with the alignment between CP and feminism (Bond & Mulvey, 2000; Mulvey, 1988; Riger, 2017) and affords benefits to the undergraduate CP classroom in ways that can deepen the educational experience and enhance CP undergraduate education. There are four important features of feminist pedagogy: (a) participatory and reciprocal engagement in the learning process, (b) reflexivity and personal experiences as a source of knowledge, (c) development of critical thinking skills, and (d) creation of political and social change (Stake & Hoffman, 2000). These four features directly reflect the values of feminist community psychology (Moane & Quilty, 2012). Specifically, the participatory and reciprocal engagement of the feminist classroom mirrors the focus of participatory and power-sharing research processes in CP; feminist pedagogy's focus on personal experiences as a way of knowing aligns with CP's emphasis on the importance of respect for human diversity; and feminist pedagogy's focus on political and social change aligns with CP's emphasis on action-research, public policy, and facilitating second-order social change processes. The unique features of feminist pedagogy influences not only what content is taught in the classroom, but also teaching processes and classroom climate (Chin et al., 1997). Therefore, incorporating feminist pedagogy into the undergraduate CP classroom can faciltate creation of a learning environment in which CP principles are integrated into the classroom itself; in essence, turning the classroom into a site for community practice (Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017).

This paper assesses the impact of FCPP on undergraduate students' learning and growth. Feminist pedagogical practices were incorporated into an upper-division undergraduate course, *Community and Applied Social Psychology*. Feminist pedagogical components (e.g., power-sharing, a focus on social change via action-research, and centering the voices of marginalized people) were incorporated into numerous aspects of the course.

Institutional and Instructor Positionality

Consistent with feminist pedagogy's focus on reflexivity (Stake & Hoffman, 2000), it's important to discuss institutional and instructor positionality, as these contextual factors provide insight into the application of

FCPP. The institution is a mid-size comprehensive public institution located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States of America, on Maryland's rural Eastern Shore. The Department offers a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and minors in Psychology and Cognitive Science; together, enrollment exceeds 600 students. The institution is predominately White, with approximately 35% of Psychology majors and minors identifying as students of Color. Most (82%) of Psychology majors are female. Most courses in the program are taught from a traditional post-positivist framework which situates experimentation (particularly lab experimentation) as central to the discipline. Most students do not go to graduate programs. The instructor is a White cisgender and heterosexual female trained in applied social psychology who engages in community psychology research and practice. At the time the course was taught, the instructor was serving as Chair of the Department and was in the process of being promoted to full professor.

The course, *Community and Applied Social Psychology*, is not required for majors, and open to any student who has taken *Psychology 101*. The course was taught face to face during a 15-week spring semester (meeting for 50 minutes three times a week) prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The course had an enrollment of 21. All students were undergraduate psychology majors. Consistent with demographics among Psychology majors, students enrolled in the course were predominantly female (18 students; 86%), and White (76%). Feminist pedagogy was implemented into numerous aspects of the course. First, the course was intentionally structured around the voices and perspectives of marginalized people. The course textbook (Kloos et al., 2011), was supplemented with journal articles and other readings, 60% of which were written by and discussed community projects with all-female participants, people of Color, people of diverse sexual and gender orientations, immigrant populations, or other marginalized and oppressed people. Further, all guest speakers represented a marginalized group. Out of six guest speakers, one was a White woman who was a practicing (non-academic) community psychologist, and five were local community activists: one Black woman, and four Black men (two of whom were immigrants).

Second, the course was structured to deconstruct power in the classroom as much as possible. The inherent context of the learning environment makes it impossible to deconstruct power in the classroom, particularly at the undergraduate level (Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017; Morgan, 1987; Schneidewend, 1983; Shrewsbury, 1987). Instructors and students differ in education, expertise, and experience, and institutions of higher education reinforce these hierarchies (Spencer, 2015). Further, instructors must set at least some structure: they create syllabi, assignments, and engage in preparatory work without input from students. Instructors are also "gatekeepers" (Kimmel et al., 1997): they write letters of recommendation, can create or offer key professional activities and opportunities to students, and grade performance, all of which have very real implications for students' educational trajectories. The instructor-student hierarchical structure of higher education means that undergraduate students typically enter the classroom expecting the professor to serve as an authority figure. Colleagues may question the use of power-sharing in the undergraduate classroom or the rigor of this pedagogical approach. These and other factors can make use of FCPP risky for vulnerable instructors, such as graduate students serving as instructors, contractual instructors, part time instructors or adjuncts, and untenured faculty, particularly faculty of Color (Spencer, 2015). For these and other reasons, power-sharing can never be fully attained in the

undergraduate CP classroom, limiting the application of feminist pedagogy at the undergraduate level (Kite et al., 2001; McCormick, 1997; Worell & Johnson, 1997). To help deconstruct power as much as possible, the professor gave significant responsibility and ownership of the course to students. Rather than planning lectures, students engaged in classroom-based discussion throughout the duration of the semester. Students were also responsible for giving presentations to the class on course content, and were required to include one supplementary, related source of information (e.g., an article, book, video, relevant current event, etc.), from which to inform their presentation.

The above components of feminist pedagogy, along with political and social change, were exemplified in the semester-long course project. Prior to the start of the course, a consortium of Haitian community leaders contacted the university seeking assistance with their goals of attaining social and political capital in the local community. The community leaders were referred to the instructor, and from a series of conversations, the course project was formed. Throughout the semester, students, working alongside their instructor, were responsible for meeting with community stakeholders, determining their needs, and planning an event to meet them. The partnership and relationships were new for the students and for the instructor, which facilitated power-sharing during the planning process and provided the instructor with an opportunity to model how to establish cross-cultural collaborations. The event, *Educated and Empowered*, was a three-hour long Haitian community fair which provided resources on area social service agencies (based on needs identified the community), opportunities for civic engagement (voter registration, positions on advisory boards, and 2020 Census Information), and offered an outlet for building social capital via both intra-cultural bonding and cross-cultural bridging with the African American community (see Barbierri et al., 2021).

For the project, students worked collaboratively with the local Haitian community, the course instructor, and students enrolled in a masters-level Social Work Practice III course (the last of three courses focusing on macro-level social work practice). Students decided early on in the planning to divide themselves up into teams, with each team assigned a specific set of duties for the event. This resulted in four teams, each with three to seven students, depending on amount of people-power needed and student interest: a *planning team* (logistics and event oversight), *street team* (worked closely with the Haitian community to learn needs and advertise the event), *advertising team* (developed advertising), and a *fundraising team* (fundraised for the event). Each team collaboratively discussed what their duties would be, and the instructor helped differentiate each team's tasks to minimize overlap. Teams met inside and outside of class frequently, both to complete tasks and to establish group norms and a sense of community. Students had significant control and direction over the project, including: assessing community need, determining the structure and flow of the event, making decisions about the division of work, being responsive to feedback from various stakeholders, and determining how to work collaboratively. The instructor monitored their progress, connected students with Haitian community collaborators, and provided suggestions for student teams when they got "stuck." When student plans were misaligned with CP principles or input from community collaborators, the instructor provided guidance and redirected students by connecting their practice work back to their learning. For example, at one point the *street team* was planning to door knock and distribute advertising flyers in Haitian neighborhoods. The instructor prompted

students to recall that they learned the Haitian community was close-knit and skeptical of outsiders; many do not have U.S. citizenship and speak only Creole. After discussion, the team decided to advertise with the assistance of local Haitian churches and grocery stores.

Additionally, and in line with deconstruction of power in the classroom, students had some control over how and what they were assessed on for their project grade. Although the weight of the project in students' final grade calculations was pre-determined, students developed their own grading rubrics. A multi-stage process was used to develop rubrics. First, student teams discussed how they wanted to be assessed and their ideas were submitted to the instructor, who developed preliminary grading rubrics for each team. Teams provided feedback on the preliminary grading rubrics, and the instructor modified them. This process continued until consensus was reached; groups created between one to three drafts before consensus.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 7 out of 21 students (one-third) enrolled in an upper division undergraduate *Community and Applied Social Psychology* course. All students identified as female, and were aged 20 to 23 (M = 21.57; SD = .98). Four (57.1%) self-identified as Black, one of whom self-identified as African; the other three students (42.9%) self-identified as White. Students who participated in the focus group were thus more likely to be students of Color (57.1%) in comparison to students enrolled in the course (24%). Three students were juniors (42.9%) and four were seniors (57.1%); all had taken 6 or more semesters of coursework towards their undergraduate degree. Five students were transfer students. Student course loads were between 12 and 21 credits (M = 16.83; SD = 3.25).

Procedure

Recruitment

Students were invited to participate via course announcements made in-person by the instructor and via the online learning management system. In order to ensure that students would be available, the focus group took place during their normal class period. Interested students were informed of the focus group date and were asked to be present if they wanted to participate.

Focus Group Procedure

The focus group was facilitated by a White, female faculty member from the social work department who teaches only undergraduate and graduate Social Work majors and who was not involved in the project. This faculty member was selected to conduct the focus group for two reasons: (a) She has minimal to no contact with students majoring or minoring in Psychology and does not assume an evaluative role (e.g., instructor, supervisor) if and when she interacts with Psychology students; and (b) She has experience facilitating student focus groups coupled with understanding and commitment to diversity issues. The faculty member conducting the focus group was provided with the study goals and underlying methodology.

Upon arriving for a focus group, participants were greeted by the faculty facilitator and provided with a copy of a signed consent form to read, sign, and return. The consent form stressed the confidentiality of the focus group. As part of the consent process, all participants signed a statement indicating their agreement to keep the discussion and identities of the other participants confidential. After informed consent, the

facilitator provided an overview of the structure of the focus group, and discussed ground rules as follows: (a) We all can choose to speak as much or as little as we want, and we can skip questions we do not feel comfortable answering, (b) We will respect each other, will not speak over each other, and will respect differences in opinion, and (c) We will keep what we discuss today confidential, and will not tell other people what was talked about, or the identities of others in the room. Participants were invited to develop additional ground rules; none did so. Participants then introduced themselves and were given letters (e.g., A, B, C) as their pseudonyms. After completion of introductions and assignment of pseudonyms, the facilitator started audio recording equipment, and engaged the participants in a dialogue about their experiences in the course.

Students could leave the focus group at any time, and could refuse to answer any or all questions. At the end of the focus group, participants completed a brief anonymous demographic questionnaire for purposes of reporting the sample. The focus group lasted 1 hour and 15 minutes; this was the duration of the class period. Participants were then debriefed.

The focus group was transcribed by the second author using DragonSpeak talk-to-text transcription software. Transcription did not occur until after final grades were submitted, to ensure that student confidentiality was maintained. The second author assisted with transcription as she has experience conducting qualitative research and was not involved in teaching the course. Any and all identifying information was removed from the transcript during the transcription process. After the audio recording was transcribed, the digital recording was permanently deleted.

Focus Group Prompts

Participants were asked: (1) I'd like to know a bit about your experiences in *Community and Applied Social Psychology* this semester. What did you like best about this course?; (2) Did the way you think about social problems change as a result of taking this course? Did the way you think about social problems change as a result of learning about the ecological model? If so, how? If not, can you explain why not?; (3) Did the course change the way you think about psychology and what psychologists do? If so, how? If not, can you explain why not?; (4) Did this course change the way you see multicultural issues and diversity? If so, how? If not, can you explain why not?; (5) Did the way you think about social justice issues this semester change at all as a result of the course? If so, how? If not, can you explain why not?; (6) Did this course change how you think about community empowerment and social change? If so, how? If not, can you explain why not?; and (7) Did this course influence your career goals? If so, how?

Coding and Data Analysis

To code the data, Thematic Analysis was used (Braun & Clarke, 2016). This process began with the data analysis team consisting of the first two authors independently analyzing the transcripts and formulating themes. They then compared their work and established a consensus version of themes. The third author analyzed the focus group transcript and coded themes independently as an auditor to ensure trustworthiness. The third author then reviewed the consensus version and provided feedback based on their independent data analysis process. Feedback consisted of noting themes they agreed and disagreed with, any discrepancies between themes, and any suggested functional improvements. This feedback was then taken into consideration when formulating the consensus version by the data analysis team.

After this, the 2nd and 3rd authors listened to the audio recording of the focus group to better understand if there is anything that was not captured by a transcript. The first author was the course instructor, and therefore did not review the original audio recording to maintain participant confidentiality. After review, it was concluded that there are some themes that were more salient than others, thus we provided distinctions in the following section. Specifically, following Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2016) description of theme development, determination of what constitutes as primary, supplemental to primary, and secondary themes were made by paying particular attention to participants' level of enthusiasm, lengths and depths in which they were discussed, and examinations of how some themes seem to be connected to one another. Primary themes were discussed in depth and at length, with much enthusiasm, and involved many participants. Supplemental themes stemming from primary themes seem to be intertwined with primary themes in the way they were expressed, where they were the outcomes developed from primary themes. Secondary themes were also discussed at length by participants, however, they did not influence other themes in the way primary themes did.

Results

The focus group yielded 4 primary themes (Broadened view of psychology field; Ecological understanding of and perspective on social problems; Experiential learning with real world applicability; Collaborative learning); 2 supplemental themes stemming from primary themes (Empowering to students; Honed future career goals); and 4 secondary themes (Cultivating cultural competencies; Understanding of how changes occur; Disconnect with larger social movements; and Things to change in future class.) Each theme is described in this section.

Primary Themes

Broadened View of Psychology Field

Students were forthcoming in admitting that they had certain perceptions of psychology and what they could do with a degree in it. Students tended to think of psychology as clinical or developmental, and it was new to them to think about community empowerment and community-based work as also psychology. This course provided exposure to the field of community psychology and they learned how to instigate change in social problems. For instance, one student stated:

"*I was thinking that psychology was basically clinical, because my parents are psych. nurses so I always saw that perspective of psychology. It wasn't until this course that I saw it was broader than that, so, social change and it's more community-based*."

Ecological Understanding of and Perspective on Social Problems

In this course, students learned Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework (1979) to expand their understanding of how social problems are defined and understood, and then moved towards solutions. Students voiced that learning about the ecological framework was helpful in seeing social problems and change processes from various ecological perspectives. As an example, one student said: "It put it in a perspective because sometimes we tend to focus on one level and because of this class it made me see how one level can affect the rest of it."

Experiential Learning with Real World Applicability

Students discussed the course being applicable outside of the classroom setting, beyond exams and quizzes, where the

community project they engaged in provided an opportunity for them to interact with community leaders and members outside of campus. One student stated:

"I like that there was an aspect of the class that was applicable outside of the exams and quizzes. I really feel like I've been able to hold onto a lot more materials from the class because we had the community projects to apply to as opposed to just reading the textbook for the purpose of taking the exams and quizzes."

Collaborative Learning

Students commented on the difference in how the class was facilitated in the CP course where they had a lot more say in the course structure, evaluation, and process of discussions. Students had the ownership of how much discussions were going to occur, and the instructor provided the environment for students to take the lead on the project, creating a collaborative learning environment where students felt equal and centered, and where they made the decisions. One student stated "...it was almost like the whole class was collaborative with her and us."

Supplemental Themes

Empowering to Students

The collaborative learning process of this course seems to empower students, providing them courage and confidence. Initially, power-sharing was confusing but it led to feeling empowered. They stated that the course and how it was taught led them to build confidence, learn from failure, and feel like they can do more than they initially thought. Students felt that they learned more from this course than from traditional courses. One student stated "[...] It [professor-student relationship] was more like nurturing and it made you feel like you can do it. It made you feel like you can do more than what you think you can do." Another student stated:

"...[instructor] uses her practice. When she is teaching she's doing the same thing with us where she is empowering us. Most professors, they don't really give the students the power to make decisions for the class, or have a say in grade or how they perform. I think I'm given a voice and it's a choice if I perform or not."

Honed Future Career Goals

Students shared during the focus group that they rarely heard of opportunities that exist outside of the classroom. When asked if this course has influenced their career goals, participants enthusiastically expressed this experiential and collaborative learning experience's impact on their career paths. Along with newfound information about what psychology could be, they felt that they were provided with career guidance. They shared how they are now incorporating CP by aligning it with their career goals or using it to enhance them. They also expressed their increased interest in community involvement.

"[...] I do a lot of working with the community and giving hands to the community so at first I didn't know how to do that. I thought pre-med was the way and it's definitely not. So seeing that and knowing that something like community health and community psychology exist, and these are two of my favorite things and how to combine it, to figure out how to combine it for future career and the future degree is kind of, I am at this, I don't know if they can both play a role in it or if I can get a degree in one and still apply the other. I've really revamped my whole perspective as to changes in what to do so...It's for the good, I am assuming."

Secondary Themes

Understanding of How Changes Occur

Students expressed their understanding of how social changes occur has expanded as a result of taking the course. Instead of social changes stemming from laws and regulations, students experienced the power of grassroot organizing. Moreover, students recognized community empowerment to be an integral part of the community change process, which requires community members getting involved in the community, engaging in long-term changes, and building intimacy and trust within their community. One student stated:

"[...] I really learned about how change can happen from individual communities? 'Cause I think coming into this course with social justice issues, I felt like it was the responsibility of the legal side of the law for us to get to that point where we put those laws to be in place and then change the issues. But I definitely was able to see how social justice issues can be approached from a grassroots perspective. [...] and so this class really broadened my thinking towards social justice issues in that it's not always that we have to rely on law for. Individuals can positively [make] long-term changes [in] our lives."

Cultivating Cultural Competencies

As students were learning concepts and theories of CP, they also established a partnership with the Haitian community in the area, and worked collaboratively with Social Work master's students at their academic institution in holding a community event. Working on the community project increased their awareness in a number of areas. They learned the diversity that exists in the city in which the academic institution is located, and the existence of the Haitian community, which some students were not aware of. They also learned the impact of their behaviors and how they may be perceived by members of the Haitian community, where their good intentions for their behaviors may not be understood, and may be taken very differently than intended. One student said "At times we can be blinded as college students or Americans or whatever in relations to other cultures. It just really kind of humbled us, and how to react and interact with other cultures." Moreover, they honed in on their interpersonal communication skills in interacting with all the project stakeholders throughout the semester and with each other.

Disconnect with Larger Social Movements

While students gained much knowledge, perspective, and skills in working with the community, they had lingering questions after taking the course. At the time of the course, movements such as #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo were thriving, and students struggled to transfer the knowledge and skills they were learning to these "larger social movements" as they said. Students wondered about how to affect social change in larger movements, and how to sustain their effort in the face of fatigue and burn out. Speaking of Black Lives Matter, one student stated:

"[...] I just feel like that demographics and that community specifically, kinda feels like they are hitting the ceiling and they are not being able to break through it because the legal system is just not listening at all. And because the legal system is such a big entity and it's so high up on the ecological model it feels almost impossible."

Things to Change in Future Class

When asked what aspects of the course they would change, students stated that the course

should be offered more frequently so more students can take the course and have the experience. Other suggestions included starting the community project early, having more communications with the community, and having more advanced notice for meetings outside of the class.

Discussion

In this paper, we describe what an undergraduate FCPP approach might look like, and provide an assessment of the method. The four components of feminist pedagogy: (a) participatory engagement in the learning process, (b) reflexivity and the incorporation of personal experiences as a source of knowledge, (c) development of critical thinking skills, and (d) creation of political and social change (Stake & Hoffman, 2000), were implemented in a CP course in a variety of ways, including by incorporation of course content that prioritized marginalized voices, through the use of assignments and activities which were largely student-defined and student-driven, and by restructuring of course project grading criteria to allow for collaborative assessment. Undergraduate students responded well to this pedagogical approach. Students reported the course deepened their understanding of the ecological model and social change processes, empowered them to create change in their communities, helped them develop stronger multicultural practice competencies, and clarified their career goals.

When reflecting on their experiences, students noted several classroom components that were impactful on their learning. Students noticed and appreciated a pedagogical style which put them in the driver's seat, both giving them control over the direction of the course and centering them as sources of authority in the classroom. Students also explicitly mentioned several class assignments, discussions, and even specific classroom exercises that impacted their learning.

Out of all class activities, the collaborative community-based project conducted with Haitian community leaders was repeatedly and most frequently mentioned as having had a strong impact on student learning and development. Involvement in social change or social action efforts is perhaps a critical component to FCPP, reflecting both the values in feminism and the discipline of CP (Mulvey, 1988). Students reported that engagement in the project helped put course concepts into action, resulting in deeper learning. They also reported increased multicultural competency, a finding consistent with research on the impact of engaging in community-based projects on student multicultural competence (Einfeld & Collins, 2008). However, while students self-identified their perspective as one of increased multicultural competency, their descriptions better reflect *cultural humility.* While acknowledging that multicultural competencies is an integral aspect to people understanding each other as racial cultural beings, it has been critiqued for inadvertently suggesting that people can reach a mastery of sufficiently knowing a particular culture (Abbott et al., 2019). The concept of cultural humility emphasizes a way of *being* with people, honoring flexible and fluid interpretation of people's experience, taking into account power, privilege, and oppression that exist in the society (Abbott et al., 2019). Students' lack of use of the term "cultural humility" may reflect the way that topics are framed in CP textbooks[3] and articles or in general psychology education (Abbott et al., 2019), including the ones used in this course, which continue to use a "competency" frame[4].

[3] The most recent edition of Kloos et al. (2021), published after the conclusion of the course, includes discussion of cultural humility.

[4] The practice competencies are currently being revised, and the use of the term "competencies" may change; as noted elsewhere (e.g., Akhurst et al., 2016) the framing of CP work as

Of course, engagement in a community-based action-research project in and of itself is part of-but does not fully embody-FCPP, and courses may entail a community action-research component which are not feminist in design or execution. In this course, the community-based project was infused with feminist pedagogy by relinquishing almost full control over all stages of the project to students. The project was conducted in a classroom environment in which power-sharing and deconstruction of the hierarchy between students and instructor was integrated as much as possible. While students initially found components of power-sharing in the classroom confusing (particularly around the project), they ultimately appreciated and benefited from this teaching approach. This confusion is not surprising, as undergraduate students often have no prior experience or context for a collaborative teaching method. As such, this pedagogical approach requires instructors to provide undergraduate students with ample and ongoing explanation, justification, and reinforcement of the method.

Deconstructing hierarchical relationships between instructors and students in an undergraduate classroom is challenging and can never be fully accomplished (Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017; Schlehofer & Vapsva, 2019); the instructor has to determine at least some of the content and structure of the course in advance, and serves as a gatekeeper. Ultimately, the instructor has authority, regardless of any pedagogical approach. However, the findings suggest that power differentials can, to some extent, be deconstructed in the undergraduate CP classroom.

Deconstruction of power is not without potential risks. Risks are two-fold. The first risk is that students might incorporate content that is outside the scope of or contradictory to CP principles if tasked with co-creation of course content (Schlehofer & Vapsva, 2019). There were times in this course in which students added materials which contained questionable language (e.g., a student showed a video which described Black-White biracial people as "mulatto"), or which skirted viewpoints which reinforced "helping" mentalities instead of community empowerment approaches to community practice work. When this happens, the instructor must course-correct on the spot, in a way that maintains power-sharing processes. The second risk is that power deconstruction brings with it increased threat of bad-faith ideological "challenges" to instructors. There is a well-documented history of students challenging the experience and expertise of instructors from marginalized socio-localities in the classroom (e.g., Sue et al., 2011). Intentionally deconstructing hierarchical relationships might further invite challenges of this nature; indeed, one student directly and repeatedly challenged the instructor in the course. How can power deconstruction occur in a way that fosters interpersonal connections and student learning and growth, while avoiding "opening the door" to bad-faith challenges or "push back" to difficult course content? This is an important question that must be addressed before FCPP can be widely adopted, and scholarship and theorizing on the relationship between power deconstruction in the classroom and challenges to instructors as a source of embodied knowledge is needed. Instructor positionalities likely impact this balance, the nature of which should be explored in future work. In this course, the instructor was a White female faculty member who had tenure protections and was Department Chair. This positionality likely provided both challenges to deconstruction of power hierarchies, as well as potentially discouraged students from directly challenging the instructor's expertise.

"competencies" is oppositional to community psychology's democratizing and ecologically focused approach.

Instructors teaching from different socio-localities might experience this process differently.

This course attempted to deconstruct power in multiple ways: students contributed to course content, took the lead in designing and executing a community-based project, and controlled over how a large portion of their work was assessed. Interestingly, few students explicitly reflected on the impact of having control over their project grading. It is possible that this component was not as impactful in reaching pedagogical goals of power-sharing.

Conducting community-based work is more challenging in general than other types of work (Warren et al., 2018), and when that work is incorporated into a course, it can create additional problems that must be continually addressed. The timelines of community work are often structured significantly differently than semester timelines: community work is faster-paced, deadlines are often tight and can change with little notice, and the ability to be flexible throughout is critical. Students struggled with adjusting to the timelines and rapid changes inherent in community work: a common concern with community-based projects (e.g., McKibban & Steltenpohl, 2019), and while not unique to FCPP, these challenges impact the classroom. While creating challenges, the rapidly adjusting timelines and changes inherent in community work presents an excellent learning opportunity, facilitating the development of skills that students can use in the future. However, instructors may need to spend extra time to explain the nature of community work and to help students adjust to changing community timelines.

The increased risk of implementing FCPP in the undergraduate classroom presents real challenges for instructors, particularly those who are untenured, and implementing this pedagogical approach requires additional resources and support. Community-based action-research projects take time, energy, and resources that far exceed those expended with other pedagogical approaches (McKibban & Steltenpohl, 2019). For the project, the instructor had to "pound the pavement" to establish community contacts and enter into MOUs, seek external funding to support the work, and pick up additional tasks and duties when students lacked competencies or needed assistance. Institutional and departmental level support for undergraduate community psychology courses is often insufficient (Kornbluh et al., 2019); employing FCPP may further highlight these insufficiencies. Institutions and departments must be willing to provide the support, space, and time for instructors to engage in this pedagogy. They must also be willing to support instructors, particularly those without tenure protections, if their best pedagogical attempts fail. There is substantial payoff in adopting an FCPP framework, and thus with greater risk also comes the potential for greater reward. Students felt empowered, as both emerging professionals and as change agents. These feelings of empowerment are a direct byproduct of the pedagogy used. In addition to stronger and more empowered students, benefits for departments supporting faculty using this pedagogical approach include stronger community-department relationships which can lead to later opportunities for student training and employment, students who are better-prepared for workforce entry, and a program that is situated to attract and retain students of Color, thus helping diversify the field of psychology.

Of course, it may not be possible for instructors to implement community-based action-research projects in their CP courses for a variety of reasons: institutional contexts might not permit inclusion of such a component, the instructor might not have the resources or community connections to do so, or the course might be offered remote or

online, which reduces opportunities for place-based community interactions. In these instances, instructors could still weave in components of community-based action-research projects to instill FCPP throughout the course. For instance, students in an undergraduate CP course could focus their work on an on-campus action-research project, or, for an online or remote course, be asked to implement CP principles to create change in their own online learning community. Provided that the components of FCPP are present (e.g., an action-research project centered around creating second-order change in a community, in which power differentials are actively deconstructed as much as possible), FCPP using a community-based project could be implemented in a wide variety of classroom and institutional settings.

Because FCPP is such a pivot from how many, if not most, undergraduate psychology courses are taught, it can be a hard approach to introduce at the *end* of students' undergraduate education. The instructor spent considerable time in class deconstructing well-established behavior patterns for faculty-student interactions and student expectations. Introducing FCPP earlier in undergraduate students' academic careers would be beneficial, both in terms of better-preparing them for upper division undergraduate coursework, and in terms of their general growth and development at emerging professionals (Kornbluh et al., 2019).

Students felt that the CP course content was disconnected from larger social movements that are currently playing out in society, such as Black Lives Matter and metoo. This speaks to the question of whether CP is best-positioned to be of relevance to large-scale social movements. The field of CP has been criticized as focusing too heavily on individual level and microsystemic solutions to problems, to the deficit of focus on larger ecological processes (Angelique & Culley, 2007; Riger, 1993). This bias can be addressed by pedagogy, but should also be addressed by the field. This is perhap a key cruxpoint for the discipline; students clearly are concerned about ongoing civil rights movements, and are looking to CP for solutions. To address this through classroom pedagogy might require intentional teaching collaborations with instructors from disciplines that are better-positioned to address higher-level ecological levels and their associated social movements, such as sociology, political science, and history (Perkins & Schensul, 2017).

Limitations

Limitations of the study include lack of a course to serve as a control against which student outcomes can be compared. Selection bias could have resulted in those students most impacted by the course being most likely to participate in the focus group. Further, as data were collected at the end of the course, it is unclear the extent to which different course components of FCPP most (or least) impacted student growth and learning. A process evaluation would be useful in helping determine which pedagogical components are most effective.

Implications

Feminist pedagogies remain under-utilized at the undergraduate level (Whelan & Lawthom, 2009; Schlehofer & Vapsva, 2019). Yet, feminist pedagogies and feminism generally is a strong ideological fit with CP (Mulvey, 1988; Whelan & Lawthom, 2009), and show promise as a framework from which to build a distinct FCPP (Schlehofer & Vapsva, 2019). Given the utility of CP education for undergraduate students, both in terms of generation of future community psychologists and for students' growth and development as scholars and workers (Jimenez et al., 2016), identifying ways to best

bring CP principles into the undergraduate classroom is a worthy endeavor. A feminist approach to undergraduate CP education can deepen student learning by turning the classroom environment into a community practice setting, empowering students and better-preparing them for their future educational and career goals. At the same time, the findings raise interesting questions regarding the ability of CP undergraduate education to truly embody CP principles, how to best help students navigate concepts pertaining to *cultural humility* as opposed to multicultural competency, and ways to best-connect our discipline to current, pressing social issues which are of interest to students.

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