Undergraduate Community Psychology Research Practice:

The Story of the Community Narrative Research Project at Rhodes College

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experiences meaningful in a cultural community. *Anna Manoogian*, J.D. candidate at Boston University School of Law. Anna recently graduated from Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee where she earned a B.A. in psychology and participated on the Community Narrative Research Team from 2016-2018. *Anna Baker-Olson*, fourth-year undergraduate student at Rhodes College. She will graduate in the Spring of 2019 with a B.A. in psychology and political science, in addition to a minor in gender and sexuality studies. She has been a member of the Community Narrative Research Team for three years and is currently conducting honors research using this data in order to examine Bonner students' navigation of personal and societal boundaries during their community engagement. *Bianca Branch*, native Memphian and senior at Rhodes College majoring in Psychology. She became a member of the Community Narrative Research Team as part of summer fellowship in 2017 and has since presented alongside her team at the 2017 AME conference in St. Louis and in a community psychology webinar focused on undergraduate competences and practices. After graduation, Bianca is considering a career in clinical counseling. *Adele V. Malpert*, doctoral student in Community Research and Action at Vanderbilt University Peabody College specializing in Education and Youth Development. Prior to her graduate studies, Adele earned a B.A. with Honors (2015) in psychology from Rhodes College. Adele's research centers on promoting positive youth development and youth voice through out-of-school time programming and youth participatory action research. Additional research interests include: youth narrative and storytelling, attendance and engagement, community engagement, youth academic and professional development, and evaluation. *Karina Henderson*, alum of Rhodes College, class of 2018. At Rhodes she studied English literature and creative writing, as well as anthropology and sociology. Additionally, Karina served as a Bonner Scholar during her four years at Rhodes. As a Bonner Scholar, Karina worked with the Refugee Empowerment Program and served as a Rhodes Bonner Scholar Intern her senior year. Through the Community Narratives Research Project (CNRP), Karina focused on understanding the relationships between Bonner Scholars and their mentors and supervisors. Her involvement with the CNRP strengthened her passion for service learning and her work as a Bonner Scholar. Karina now attends Northwestern University,

and is working towards receiving a Master's degree in Higher Education Administration and Policy. *Remi Parker*, junior psychology major and religious studies minor on the pre-medicine track at Rhodes College, Memphis, TN. Parker is also a Bonner Scholar recipient, which has enabled her to complete 280 hours of service per academic year, as well as two summers of service dedicated to her academic and personal interests, such as women's reproductive health. Through her service she has had the opportunity to write grants, act as a patient advocate and educator, work under both midwives and OBGYNS, and train as a birthing doula. These experiences as a Bonner scholar guide Parker in her contributions to the Community Narratives Research Team.

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Abstract

The Community Narrative Research Project (CNRP) is an undergraduate action research initiative focused on undergraduate students' experiences of community engagement over time. At the center of the project is the collection and analysis of narratives written by Bonner Scholars at Rhodes College over their four years working in Memphis communities as part of their scholarship. This paper describes the participatory community research model that has evolved in the CNRP, including the voices of undergraduate student leaders in the Bonner Scholars program and undergraduate researchers in developmental and community psychology. We focus on the community of practice that has emerged in our team, and how this community grounds our interpretive and longitudinal analysis of the narratives we examine. Our discussion of the data analysis process, including students' engagement with coding and reliability, illustrates the methodological repertoire that undergraduates develop in a community of practice and that is scaffolded by more experienced faculty and senior student researchers. Undergraduate students build the community psychology research and practice competencies that are often understood to be part of graduate student development. We are able to ask creative research questions informed by our unique and shared experiences, as well as our deep understanding of the data. We feature individual accounts by each of the six student authors to illustrate our research practice and share the experiences of team members. We offer practices that may be adapted to other undergraduate research contexts, and we discuss challenges and supports needed to sustain participatory action research with undergraduate students.

Over the last decade, community psychologists have elaborated an understanding of research and practice competencies for our field, as well as the types of academic training and field experiences students need to develop these competencies (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012; Haber et al., 2017). These conversations have largely focused on graduate education, describing effective models and generating ideas for building capacity within masters and doctoral programs (Faust, Haber, Christens, & Legler, 2017). Here, in the story of the Community Narrative Research Project told collectively by undergraduate students and faculty on our team – and in individual accounts by team members – we extend this discussion to the development of research and practice skills in community psychology at the undergraduate level.

We begin with a brief review of recent conversations among community psychologists that support our efforts to include undergraduate students as collaborators in a research project. Following this, we describe how our research has evolved over five years, focusing on six features of our practice, and explaining how each of these has been enhanced by the inclusion of undergraduates on our research

team. For each of these features of the research, we include a personal account of one of our co-authors, showing how participation on the team has facilitated their own professional and personal development. We conclude with a discussion of challenges and supports needed to sustain participatory action research with undergraduate students.

Extending Community Psychology Practice: Undergraduate Research Opportunities

The field of community psychology has much to gain from an increased focus on undergraduate research opportunities. Research on undergraduate learning suggests that college students from many backgrounds are capable of and benefit from experiential learning in high-impact practices, including undergraduate research and capstone projects (Kuh, Schneider, & Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2008). These experiential learning experiences may be supported and strengthened through mentoring and research collaborations. An analysis of a program whose strategy included efforts for cross-collaboration between academic departments and research teams and brought together faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students revealed positive outcomes for all involved (George, Wood-Kanupka, & Oriel, 2017). For the undergraduate researchers specifically, their reflections suggest that this collaborative research opportunity led to an increase in faculty interactions as well as an increased interest and sense of competency in their academic field (George et al., 2017).

Despite accumulating evidence for beneficial effects, the mentoring relationships between faculty and undergraduate students that may promote undergraduate research opportunities face institutional barriers and are often undervalued. In many academic contexts, faculty mentorship of undergraduate students is considered an

extra-role behavior that is often left out in terms of institutional recognition (DeAngelo, Mason, & Winters, 2016). Even when undergraduate research mentoring is valued, as in the liberal arts college, models of undergraduate research in psychology and related fields may be quite narrow, excluding collaborative, interdisciplinary, and action-oriented research. Engaged learning and scholarship with undergraduate students challenges norms at many levels within the academy, and excellence in this area is not formally recognized by our field of community psychology.

Community psychologists have increasingly recognized the need for greater attention to work with undergraduates in our field (Jimenez, Sanchez, McMahon, & Viola, 2016). More undergraduate students engaging with community psychology may strengthen the field as they move into graduate work in community psychology and allied fields. A greater number of those undergraduate students may develop and share skills, perspectives, and dispositions that influence a range of settings and the broader practices of democracy and civic engagement.

Most psychology departments do not offer undergraduate courses in community psychology, and the few who do offer only a single elective course (McMahon, Jimenez, Bond, Wolfe, & Ratcliffe, 2015). And even with the call for a greater focus on undergraduate community psychology, the emphasis has been almost exclusively on strengthening the stand alone introductory community psychology course. We have much to learn from this focus on the introductory course, and from those who have outlined best practices in service learning and civic engagement as part of the community psychology course (Bringle, Reeb, Brown, & Ruiz, 2016). This important work has brought attention to ethical challenges we face as undergraduate teachers working for a socially just community psychology pedagogy

(Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017). Dilemmas faced by teachers and students around issues of power dynamics, privilege, and inclusion are ones that extend well beyond the introductory community psychology course and remind us that collaborative research at the undergraduate level is always about collaborative teaching and learning for all involved.

As important as these discussions are, we believe that an exclusive focus on a single undergraduate course limits our potential for bringing committed new scholars into the field and for integrating community psychology ideals more fully with the rest of our discipline. We see the undergraduate community psychology research team as a way to deepen the undergraduate experience of community psychology beyond a single course to a multi-semester experience – one that allows us to more fully enact our philosophy of critical and experiential education and to experience an interdisciplinary community of engaged scholars made up of students, staff, and faculty. We also see this as a way to engage the larger conversation about research and practice competencies in our field and to expand the reach of community psychology approaches across sectors.

For these reasons, we hope to contribute to a discussion of undergraduate community psychology practice by examining our multi-year undergraduate action research project at Rhodes College, a national liberal arts college located in Memphis, TN, USA. Rhodes is largely residential, with 75% of its 2000 students living on campus. The majority of students are traditional-aged college students, and approximately 30% are students of color. The campus is known for its collegiate gothic stone buildings and its designation as an urban arboretum. It is located in the heart of the city of Memphis across from a large urban park and just 10 minutes from downtown and the Mississippi River. Rhodes college has the Carnegie

Community Engagement Designation, and many of our students are engaged in community service. While we are known for our service, we are still working to strengthen our models of community engagement and to better integrate engaged learning and scholarship with our academic program.

The Community Narrative Research Project at Rhodes College

The Community Narrative Research Project (CNRP) is an action research initiative focused on undergraduate students' experiences of community engagement over time. CNRP goals include contributing to scholarship in community psychology and community engagement, as well as advancing organizational learning and institutional change to better support campus community partnerships in our local context. At the center of the project is the collection and analysis of narratives written by Bonner Scholars at Rhodes College over their four years spent working in Memphis communities as part of their college scholarship fund.

The Bonner Scholars Program aims to provide college access to students with a passion for service and social justice by providing tuition scholarships. Rhodes is part of a national network of 65 colleges and universities that are supported by the Bonner Foundation. The Rhodes Bonner Program admits fifteen students each year; 85% of each class must have need for financial aid, as determined by an Estimated Family Contribution at or below $6,000, and the number of students of color in each Bonner class is typically twice that of the Rhodes class as a whole. Bonner scholars have a service requirement of 10 hours per week during the school year and two full summers of service. Many scholars develop long term relationships and take on leadership roles through sustained engagement with community partners.

We have chosen a narrative approach to our research with the Bonner Scholars, as it enables authors to tell their own stories and position themselves within relationships and communities. Twice a year at Bonner retreats, we have asked students to write and share narratives in response to prompts designed to elicit meaningful reflection. In the fall, we asked scholars to "please write about a situation related to your community service that felt particularly meaningful to you," and in the spring, to "please write about a situation that felt particularly awkward and you were not sure what to do." After four years of data collection in our cross-sequential study, we have collected 406 stories from 123 Bonner Scholars.

A. The Weekly Team Meeting: Building a Community of Practice

Our research team, which includes Bonner Scholars, faculty, and student researchers from several departments and programs at Rhodes, works as a community of practice that meets one hour weekly for tea and roundtable discussions. Lave and Wenger (1991) first proposed the concept of communities of practice in relation to their situated learning theory, describing them as "groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis" (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4). Brought together by our interest in the Bonner experience, as well as narrative and participatory action research, we routinely come together in community. Shared rituals, including weekly check-ins and drinking tea together, provide a ground from which learners become teachers and shared expertise grows.

A typical CNRP team meeting begins with each team member providing a brief personal update, often focused on challenges and accomplishments as well as general health and well-being. We move to a review of ongoing work and upcoming deadlines to ensure that we have a collective sense of priorities and goals for the team. For example, we may spend a few moments preparing a time line for submitting a conference abstract or developing an outline of responsibilities for a campus presentation. Then we spend at least half of the meeting time discussing our understandings of the stories themselves and our goals for narrative analysis. We assign a designated note taker for all meetings and keep minutes in a shared secure folder. Our discussion of the stories in team meetings typically focuses on one of the two to three discrete data analysis projects in process at that time. In 2018-2019, for example, one project examines how students narrate boundary crossings and a second project is coding narrative descriptions of collaborative agency. We are also currently categorizing stories by service site to examine experiences across community settings. These discrete projects develop out of the interests of individual team members. We propose potential research questions that emerge through individual close reading and analysis of the stories. The questions are then refined in our community of practice as multiple team members provide interpretations of the same stories, drawing on a variety of theoretical backgrounds and experiences.

Last year, for example, we became aware that members of the team were employing varied definitions of 'power' in their analysis of stories. We decided to read more about different theories of power, each of us in our own discipline, and come back to the team with a report about how power was conceptualized. An English major, a political science major, an economics major, an educational studies major, and a psychology major returned to the table prepared to explore how previous work on power in their own discipline might contribute to our

understanding of student accounts of their community service work. Each of us found our own thinking broadened or nuanced by this discussion. For example, the developmental psychologist on the team, previously inclined to look for changes over time in expressions of self-efficacy and features of authorial voice, became much more focused on structural inequalities. Having students read and explain the theories from within their discipline shows not only a respect for the student as a competent scholar within their field, but also an openness to the prospect of our project being changed by another discipline and by multiple forms of expertise.

Drawing on diverse knowledges and expertise, we identify key themes and ask questions of our narrative data. These are foundational research competencies that we hone as a team on a weekly basis (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012). Remi's account below illustrates this process of getting to know the stories, asking key questions of the data, and becoming a member of the community of practice through participation in weekly team meetings.

Becoming a member of the CNRP team: experience of a first-year team member and Bonner Scholar. As I (Remi) first began to read through the narratives in my first semester as a member of the team, I truly began to recognize and appreciate the power of narrative, not only for understanding personal moral development and growth, but also issues of agency and power dynamics. During our team meetings, we typically discuss these elements in the narratives we have reviewed and collaborate on the interpretation of them and plan for future angles to explore. In my first meeting, I remember how fascinating it was to watch the upperclass Bonner student leaders discuss with Dr. Thomas and Dr. Walton the progression of the research and future endeavors, with their contributions being truly valued by the professors. The openness

and cooperation on the team created an inviting and respectful atmosphere for any ideas, which prompted me to engage more and provide insight from my personal Bonner experience.

As a Bonner Scholar myself, I am able to empathize with the authors' sentiments and conflicts at their sites, as I have encountered similar incidents and struggles myself. To read that other Bonners, at other service sites and in different academic classes, have felt similar emotions and have navigated comparable experiences evokes a communal spirit; it is consoling and encouraging to become aware of the community of service learners that can understand and guide me. This realization has led me to develop a research interest in exploring the community building powers of narratives. I am particularly drawn to analyzing how the language of narratives fosters this communal spirit.

B. Sharing Power and Expertise: Sustaining a Community of Practice

Individual team members quickly move from an initial reading of a subset of narratives and a role on the periphery to become confident, contributing members of the community of practice over time. They shift roles by asking their own questions of the stories and creating meaning together with other more experienced members of the team. Typically, as shown in Appendix A, new student researchers are recruited in the spring and join the team at the beginning of the next school year. Orientation to the team includes training in research ethics, orientation to qualitative data analysis software, and discussions of research epistemology and methodology.

Most student members of the team, by the end of a first semester of participation, begin to identify a specific focus and work to formulate a research question that can guide

their work in the upcoming semesters. At times, the entire team will turn our attention to one of these questions, and at other times pairs of students will work with slightly different questions. In their senior year, students often complete a senior seminar paper or honors thesis based on their multi-semester research experience.

While the team is made up of students and faculty, this division is not often a salient feature of our conversations, as each member of the team is given the same responsibilities and respect as every other member. By creating the space for collaborative work and power-sharing, professors engage in mentoring and facilitate collaboration between team members and partners. Additionally, students take on a mentoring role. The emphasis on mentoring relationships between new sophomores joining the team and experienced senior team members provides a sense of continuity as the overall direction of the research project adapts to the ever-shifting makeup of the team. Individual student projects are often influenced by earlier student projects. In sustaining a community of practice across multiple semesters, we are intentional about fostering Community Leadership and Mentoring, a community psychology practice competency (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012).

Several student researchers on the team also participate in a research practicum in the psychology department, which brings together students from a variety of faculty labs and enables the students to receive academic credit for their undergraduate research. Often, student researchers from the CNRP represent the only projects that use qualitative, longitudinal, and interdisciplinary methods in the psychology department. Our ongoing work as a community of practice has challenged the norms for the department and the assumptions of several faculty in the department. It has been difficult at time to explain our work, but overall, we believe our

sustained community of practice has led to greater support and understanding for the role of narrative, qualitative, and participatory research within the psychology department. The CNRP community of practice has been an anchor for many of us over time, as illustrated in Anna's account of her experience across multiple semesters.

Continuity and growing contributions: a third-year team member and graduating senior's account. I (Anna Manoogian) found myself in Dr. Thomas's community psychology course in the semester following a particularly rough first year of college. At the end of my semester, Dr. Thomas asked if I would consider joining the CNRP team. I was shocked that she would believe me capable of this opportunity as a second-year student. Our team has engaged in weekly round table meetings since that time, through which I have more deeply come to understand the immense power of collaboration and my own strengths. My other teammates seemed genuinely curious about the insights I brought to these meetings and pleased with the quality of my work. Slowly, I began to see my contributions through their eyes and eventually gained the confidence to work towards designing a project based on my individual interests.

In many of my courses at Rhodes, it seems that a considerable portion of the semester had passed before many students were comfortable enough within a course to openly contribute in meaningful ways. My three years on the research team provided a sense of cohesion to my undergraduate educational experience. Our weekly roundtable meetings remained a stable fixture during some of the highest and lowest points of my college career. When I returned from a semester spent studying abroad, I nervously considered the possibility that I had lost a sense of where I fit in on campus. It was comforting to rejoin the team's weekly ritual of discussing our research project over tea.

The mentoring that I have received throughout my time on the CNRP undoubtedly shaped my time in college and my future plans as I prepare for law school this fall.

C. Data Analysis: Examining Collaborative Agency in the Narratives and on our Team

While providing continuity and a sense of belonging for undergraduate team members, our community of practice enhances our data analysis as well. Our work has largely proceeded in cycles: For each project, we begin with independent reading of subsets of Bonner narratives, with a goal of understanding what the authors want us to know about their experience. As we have noted, these independent readings are enriched by weekly discussion of the stories in a research team constituted as an interpretive community, where we seek to illuminate multiple possibilities of meanings, and to notice not only what the authors have written, but what linguistic devices, and discursive frames they have used. Part of our work is to notice what is not written, what experiences are not reported, and what seems to go undescribed by our authors.

By analyzing our data in this way, we take advantage of our different experiences and forms of expertise. Our current project dealing with collaborative agency was developed through this process. As we began the project of examining agency in the narratives, we noted the individualistic nature of many conceptualizations of agency, particularly in the psychology literature. In looking for an understanding of the concept that included community and collaboration, we turned to conceptions of collective agency and discovered Raelin's (2016) work on "collaborative agency." In the Bonner's narratives we read accounts of dialogical, nonjudgmental inquiry in which the students and those they work with "display an interest in listening to one another, in reflecting upon

perspectives different from their own, and in entertaining the prospect of being changed by what they learn" (Raelin, 2016, p. 137).

Our work with the data regularly provokes an examination of our own process, and as we began to recognize the emergence of collaborative agency in Bonner student narratives, we turned the lens on ourselves and examined our own process of establishing collaborative agency on our research team. Going further, we began to consider struggles reported by Bonner Scholars crossing boundaries of social class, race, and other social locations as we also examined our own process of crossing boundaries often erected between faculty, student, and staff status at the college.

As we studied collaborative agency, we recognized that the structure and trajectory of our project, in which outcomes have never been predetermined, embodied the open-ended flexibility that characterizes the practice of collaborative agency (Raelin, 2016). While a set of conceptual questions guided the development of the procedure and structure of the team, the team has been able to freely explore the data, as opposed to performing a strict, open-and-shut analysis. This exploration has been a dialogical one. Each individual brings a unique perspective to the table, but rather than remaining individual, that understanding may be taken on, reflected upon, and often adopted by others on the team. For example, our efforts to understand expressions of agency in the narratives regularly turned our attention to considerations of who held power or authority in the situations described by the authors.

As we have engaged in these dialogues about our data, we are constantly made aware of the fact that the analysis we are performing is not a linear process, but rather follows a cyclical, winding path. The iterative nature of narrative analysis is inherently collaborative.

Raelin (2016) wrote that a collaborative effort is "seldom orderly; it is irregular and provisional. The activity chain may shift, may be broken, or may even end in an unresolved conflict as new structures, data, and relations become salient. However, activity may resume as participants decide whether or not to negotiate a new set of understandings to continue the effort" (p. 143).

In order to engage in a collaborative effort then, we must be willing to confront and embrace uncertainty. Raelin (2016) wrote that people freely engaging may "disrupt the efficient order of things or they may challenge individual security, but it is through the confronting of uncertainty that they recognize the interdependence of themselves and others" (p. 137-138). On our team, the activity chain has shifted, and the efficient order of things has been disrupted many times. The CNRP has developed and evolved, first looking at benefit finding in the narratives, then exploring civic identity, implications for service learning, boundaries, and power and agency.

Sometimes it feels as if each time we identify a new theme or possible area for exploration, we are set back in our analysis process. However, being open to these "disruptions" fosters an environment in which collaborative agency thrives, and it makes the data analyses richer in the long run. It is a balancing act, however, as we do need to move the work forward and finish discrete projects. College support for student summer undergraduate research fellowships has enabled us to move forward considerably. Undergraduate honors research projects and the structures surrounding them, including college and department deadlines, have also been useful. Anna Baker-Olson's story below represents both forms of support and emphasizes the undergraduate student as collaborator and colleague.

Students as collaborators on the team: experience of a third-year team member.
As part of my (Anna Baker-Olson's) summer work with the team, I had the opportunity to go to Saint Louis University and meet with their community engagement office and with Dr. Bryan Sokol, a developmental psychologist who directs the program. His office had produced papers that we had read over the summer that spoke to some of the key connections we were seeing in the stories between agency and service learning, and Dr. Walton suggested that we should try to get a better understanding of their program and their approach to their scholarship. This made sense to me until she said that I should go to SLU as part of my summer fellowship. I found the idea of going alone to represent the team and discuss our work with other "real" researchers to be very daunting. While I was used to being taken seriously within the confines of our team, I assumed that once we left the office or the campus, the task of discussing our work and exchanging new ideas with other scholars would be for Dr. Thomas and Dr. Walton. The trust and confidence with which they sent me to SLU showed me that equal participation and collaboration extended beyond our team meetings not just in theory, but in practice as well. As a collaborator on the CNRP team, I have come to understand that being undergraduate students does not have to limit the kind of work we can do, and that we can both learn from, and contribute to, the research project at the same time.

Since that summer visit to St. Louis, I've had the opportunity to develop and investigate my own question concerning the data, in preparation for an honors thesis. Building on the team's work around agency, I became interested in the way power and agency played out in the relationships between Bonner scholars and patrons at community sites. In some stories, Bonners would refer to patrons as friends, in others, Bonners were harassed by patrons. Sometimes moments of

patron self-disclosure were reciprocated by the Bonners, and other times the Bonner felt uncomfortable. I became interested in investigating the ways in which Bonners navigated relational intimacy in their service sites in a way that maintained personal boundaries while also performing the social justice work that inherently involves social boundary-crossing.

D. Building our Methodological "Chops": Reliability in an Interpretive Community

Undergraduate students can become collaborators and colleagues in community psychology practice and research, yet the training process is necessarily intensive and may not be supported fully by undergraduate psychology curricula. Work with narrative data presents a different set of challenges to reliability and validity, for example, than the challenges faced by researchers who construct surveys or questionnaires that establish in advance the categories of responses that participants can make. Interdisciplinary collaboration and perspectives have served us well. The methodological and epistemological questions that arise when we face these challenges with student researchers from different liberal arts disciplines have been important to our research process and to the professional development of student, staff, and faculty members of the team.

Several student members of our research teams over the past four years have been psychology majors, whose courses in statistics and research methods have encouraged them to think about inter-rater reliability and predictive validity, but these courses have rarely encouraged them to question the questions posed or the selection of possible responses imposed by the researchers. Other student members of the research team have been English, educational studies, economics, political science, and urban studies majors. These students are

learning different methods of inquiry and when such a diverse group sits around a table to consider how we will approach our data, we find ourselves discussing epistemological underpinnings of different research traditions. We are not just developing skills in research methods; we are investigating research methodologies. We have formed an electronic folder for a growing collection of articles we felt that we needed to read and discuss about the many ways that other researchers have worked with narrative and other free-response data.

Our methods have evolved as we revived these discussions every time seniors graduated and new students joined our team. Faculty on the team (who do not graduate and get replaced) were tempted to see the repeats of these discussions as impediments to progress, but we have come to understand that regular discussions about how our methods of inquiry are related to our research goals and to our epistemological grounding have turned out to be a critical part of the research.

As we focus our attention on more and more specific research questions, we attempt to identify recurring themes and to find ways to identify those reliably. Although we do not conceive of our work as hypothesis testing, we do find it useful in some cases to count features of stories and to consider how those counts may differ at different points in the students' college career or in different types of service activities. We attempt to ground this more quantitative work with an assessment of coding reliability. Our approach to reliability, however, is guided by an interpretive bent.

Once we have identified features of the stories we wish to code (for example, an author's concern with collaborative agency), we select a sample of stories and independently code for these features. Discussion of our independent coding leads to

the development and refinement of a written coding manual. See Appendix B for an example of a coding manual that we developed for coding collaborative agency in the narratives.

Then we utilize the coding manual that we have developed to code an additional set of the stories. We bring these coded stories to a team discussion in which we identify all disagreements in our coding. These coding 'misses' are classified in three types. Sometimes we find disagreements we call *sleepiness errors*, where all team members can clearly see which coder missed the feature we were coding. A second set of disagreements are a result of *genuine ambiguity* in the author's narrative, where each coder can clearly see both ways of interpreting the text, and where we suspect that the author may have intended either meaning or may have been deliberately ambiguous. The third kind of coding disagreement occurs when we have not been clear among ourselves about what we are trying to do. *Category vagueness* misses bring us to a recognition that we need to refine our thinking about what we mean by the categories we established. Once a discussion of our interpretive differences leads us to clarify our categories, we select a new set of stories to code independently, and we repeat the above process. We continue to do this until none of our misses fall into the third category, and we are confident that our coding system is reflecting what we believe our authors are communicating in their narratives.

The procedure described above is similar to procedures that psychologists often use to document the reliability of their analysis. Our use of the procedure serves a different end; we seek to refine our understanding and to maximize the benefits that accrue from having members of our research team who approach the stories from different positions. With the exception of the occasional 'sleepiness errors,' we do not understand

disagreements between independent coders to be reliability failures. We are respectful of genuine ambiguity in the stories our authors share, and we are respectful of the possibilities for multiple interpretations of various features of those stories. Our practice of independent coding, followed by discussion of differences, repeats until we are satisfied that the differences among us have been discussed and incorporated into our analysis. The procedure is a hybrid of consensus coding and inter-coder reliability assessment.

The procedures for assessing reliability refine our understandings as a team, and they rely on the strengths of individual team members. These themes are illustrated in Bianca's account, highlighting some of the struggles she faced to identify these strengths in her own contributions. In sharing this account, we emphasize the real challenges and investments made in an intensive process of becoming an experienced researcher and contributing member of an interpretive community.

Data analysis in an interpretive community: Experiences of a second-year team member and graduating senior. My (Bianca's) experience as part of the CNRP has been one characterized by continual personal negotiation and reinterpretation. Officially, I started working with data during a summer fellowship, but I began my introduction by joining the prior semester weekly research meetings to become more familiar with the team as well as observing their community of practice. During the summer, my peers and I began by trying to establish reliability coding for relational features within the stories and then moved into independent close reading. Working with qualitative data was not only novel but so drastically different from the research methods employed in my previous research courses. As I began working, I found myself without a framework and unsure about how to approach analyzing the data.

Many days I walked away with more questions than when I began and few concrete results, or so I thought, to present at meetings. Often, I was plagued by a feeling that I was not producing substantive work. Truthfully, I was intimidated by how naturally my peer researchers discoursed with Dr. Walton and Dr. Thomas. They seemed so confident in their knowledge of the data and theoretical framework and their contribution was evident. I became dejected that my work and progress did not mirror that of my co-researchers and indicated so in my weekly fellowship logs. After one meeting, I broached my insecurities with Dr. Thomas and she shared a narrative of her own experience. This conversation reinforced my understanding that the very nature of this work is characterized and strengthened by the differences that each member brings. Although my work may evolve differently, it is this difference that gives our work the nuance that is critical to its substance.

Dr. Walton, Dr. Thomas, and the entire CNRP team helped me see that someone else's strength was not my weakness and that what made our work so diverse was that we each approached the process differently and that it was this dialogue of differences that brought greater depth and evaluation. Our process of working with narrative data is not linear but is constituted by a continuous, reiterative process of interpretation, negotiation, and collaboration. This type of work naturally engenders a high level of interdependence on one's co-researchers that is critical for creating an interpretive community that broadens the scope of our evaluation. Throughout the summer, I learned to lean on my peers, to dialogue and value collaboration with my team, and to trust my own observations and knowledge about the stories. Yet, it is important to note that this, like our work, is never complete but rather a continual process which I am constantly navigating. What I have come to appreciate most about the CNRP is that our team is a

space of boundary crossing with traditional professor and student power dynamics in which students are encouraged to take ownership of the collaborative and creative process of shaping and evolving the research.

E. Our Participatory Model Evolving Over Time

The participatory nature of the CNRP is something that continues to evolve over time, and it has been a process of adaptation. Bonner Scholars are essential to the team, yet some students who have wanted to participate have also had multiple academic and leadership commitments that made it impossible to commit to weekly research practice and meetings. Over time, we have created formal roles and they have become advisors and consultants to the project. We have also been intentional in assessing our practice over time. We rely on ongoing collaborative partnerships with multiple stakeholders and a model that promotes program accountability and improvement (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012). Adele completed an honors thesis three years ago that identified strengths of our participatory model, but also a need for greater dialogue with the larger Bonner Scholar community. This honors project led to a number of improvements in our practice, including more meaningful engagement with the team. Adele describes that project, and our evolution as a team, in the account below.

Reflections from the beginning of the project: a former team member and graduate student's account. Nearly 5 years after joining the CNRP team as an undergraduate student, and three years after leaving the CNRP to pursue a career in community psychology, I (Adele) often find myself reflecting on the CNRP and its lasting effects on my personal and professional development. My experience in the CNRP was transformative and allowed me to build lasting connections between my

undergraduate coursework, research methodology, personal and professional relationships, and my emerging identity as an academic researcher. This transformational quality in my education was unique to the CNRP and emerged directly from the structure and methods of the project.

The CNRP felt vastly different from my past experiences. The team-based structure and participatory methodologies of the team allowed me to shed disempowering roles of student or research assistant and take on the group's shared role of team members. Encouraged to openly share differences in understanding, values, and epistemology as they emerged in the research process, I became an active contributor to knowledge creation and an expert in my own experiences. I found myself engaging more meaningfully with faculty and staff, but most importantly with peers both within the research team and in the Bonner Program. I began to value other students as experts, and I recognized that our learning trajectories could run together rather than in parallel.

As I grew aware of my own learning and transformation within the CNRP team, I also recognized that the project was having transformative effects on the individuals and groups around me. I became increasingly interested in studying the ways in which the narrative and participatory methodologies undergirding the CNRP were shaping project stakeholders (within the team, in connections with the Bonner Program, and in the university more broadly). I was encouraged to capitalize on this interest by completing an honors thesis to intentionally evaluate our practice. I conducted in-depth interviews with all members of the CNRP, focus groups with Bonner Scholars, and an analysis of Bonner narratives to triangulate understanding of the effects of the project on learning. I emphasized connections between learning and action, identifying opportunities

for CNRP methods to promote change within the team and the Bonner Scholars program.

Overall, findings identified strengths with the CNRP. However, findings also supported a need for stronger connection with the larger Bonner Scholar community. Bonner Scholar participants reported feeling disconnected from the research process, while Bonner Scholars research team members felt overconnected to the research process (e.g., uncomfortable about access to data about their peers, unbalanced power and knowledge about the research). When I presented my findings to the research team, they served as a catalyst for collaborative change. We began formal discussions with the Bonner Community to brainstorm effective ways to restructure our process, ultimately creating a new advisory board for the project. We also began to discuss future processes for reflexive practice within the CNRP, opening the door for future evaluative projects. For the first time in my academic history, I was able to envision both actual and potential impacts of my work.

F. New Forms of Participatory Practice

Adele's honors project led us to create a new advisory committee that enabled Bonner scholars to participate more fully in the research processes without working directly with data. In keeping with the community psychology practice competency of Ethical Reflective Practice, we consulted with them extensively around data collection and the ethics of our practice (Dalton & Wolfe, 2012). Confidentiality is something we have always taken very seriously. Stories are stripped of the author's name and assigned a number instead. But as new Bonner Scholars joined the team, we were not sure what measures would be adequate to make sure that students were not reading peer stories and identifying authors. The advisory committee helped us to think about an appropriate time delay, so that the stories we are reading are

not written by students currently on campus with us.

The greatest aspect of the CNRP continues to be the diversity of the team. It is important to have Bonner Scholars on the research team, especially Bonners who hold positions in leadership, such as the Bonner senior interns. Not only do Bonners provide nuanced insight into the program, but they use the CNRP data to inform how they make steps to improve the Bonner Scholars program as a whole. Challenges that students experience and observe in the sites of their community engagement emerge clearly in the narratives. Yet the narratives do not provide instructions for how to address these challenges. This requires nuanced, contextual understanding. For example, sexual harassment emerged as an issue that many students grappled with in community sites. In the university context, there are clear policies and procedures that can be enacted to create safer campus climates and adjudicate violations. This is a much more complex thing to navigate with multiple community partners and sites, and it requires cultural humility and sensitivity. Karina, a member of our research team and a Bonner Senior Leader, shares how the work of the CNRP has been taken up by the Bonner Program in her account below.

Bonner student leadership: experience of a second-year team member and graduating Bonner senior leader. Due to confidentiality requirements, I (Karina) was unable to read the narratives written by my current Bonner peers. Despite this, I found reading the narratives from past Bonners helpful, more so than I initially expected. As a senior Bonner intern, I have extensive knowledge of the nonprofits Bonners work with in Memphis. It was easy for me to recognize which service sites the Bonners wrote about in their narratives, even when the site was not explicitly named. I became interested in looking at the ways in which Bonners interact with their service sites and

site supervisors. After reading only a few waves of data collection, I found consistent patterns of students at particular service sites having similar conflicts, typically conflicts involving site supervisors and/or the patrons. One such conflict concerned sexual harassment experienced by Bonner students. As an intern, I used these patterns from past Bonners to explore whether or not current Bonners were having the same conflicts. Many current Bonners were experiencing or had experienced some form of sexual harassment or uncomfortable situation at the service site I recognized from the data. Using the data as support, I was then able to work with the Bonner director to develop programming to address the problem. Together, we led a meeting for Bonners to discuss how to report sexual harassment or assault on campus, as well as how to handle such a situation at their service sites. As a result of my work with the CNRP, the Bonner Scholars program will now have a mandatory training on sexual harassment and assault during first-year Bonners' orientation week. While such an issue should be addressed regardless of supporting data, the narratives made it easier to locate which sites were having the most problems. As a result, the Bonner director knew which service sites to schedule meetings with to speak with their executive directors in order to further investigate the issues.

Our participatory model continues to evolve. Since the Bonner program at Rhodes recently hired a new director, collaboration with the CNRP will give the new director a sturdy foundation. Collaboration in the future will stress the importance of maintaining relationships with Rhodes's community partners. Patterns in data have already indicated that there are common themes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within specific service sites. Support from the CNRP data on service sites has, and may continue to, improve the Bonner Scholars program's relationships with its partners. Finally,

through the support of the CNRP, the college has evidence of the importance of the Bonner Scholars to the campus and the greater Memphis community.

Challenges and Supports Needed to Sustain Our Work

Karina's student leadership provides an example of how the CNRP connects to organizational learning and change in our campus community. The CNRP continues to work with Bonner staff and student leaders to strengthen community partnerships in Memphis and strengthen support for the Bonner scholars and the scholarship program at Rhodes. Yet sustaining the project can be a challenge.

Undergraduate students are often introduced to research or find their own interests in research as juniors or seniors. To faculty and students alike, it can feel like just as we get going, it is time for graduation. We are challenged to make sure that knowledge and skills that are developed in the team are passed down through peer mentoring and training. In the CNRP, for example, students on the team develop nuanced understandings around coding written narratives, and they come to make expert judgments around reliability issues. This expertise must be passed down in structured and regular practice between students to be a sustainable model for research.

Undergraduate research is valued at our primarily undergraduate liberal arts college. Yet the models of undergraduate participation in research in our home department have not included qualitative methods or action research strategies. Interpretive and participatory strategies, while core to the field of community psychology, challenge norms for faculty scholarship and undergrad psychology research at our institution. We have struggled to make our work legible to other faculty and students, and our curriculum currently is limited in how it prepares students to think about the practice of science in complex social and political contexts. Our research methods courses utilize post-positivist epistemologies and value internal validity in laboratory experimentation above all other standards by which research may be judged. I (Elizabeth) am the only community psychologist in the department, and I believe that the ongoing interdisciplinary collaboration between myself and a developmental psychologist (Marsha), along with strong student leaders in the department, are making space for new conversations. I do not know that I could have facilitated this change on my own; I know it would have been lonely and isolating. As our team presents work at departmental research seminars and at national and international conferences, we are experiencing recognition and growing respect for the work. We feel hopeful that our department is becoming a more welcoming place for diverse research programs.

Larger institutional barriers to undergraduate action research exist as well. Colleges and universities are deeply hierarchical, and our work presents challenges to existing structures. As community psychologists, we work in ways that include power sharing between professors and students and encourage collaboration over individual competition. Additionally, there have been challenges related to turning the lens of our action research on our own campus. Even as we generate insights that are deemed useful by stakeholders on the campus, there are role tensions when offering recommendations. The information we disseminate is not neutral, and it is certainly not perceived that way. As an associate professor and professor (Elizabeth and Marsha), we have some important protections. Assistant professors and administrative staff are less insulated, and we know that at other institutions,

sharing data about students' experiences around power, race, and social class on campus has been perceived as threatening (Langhout, 2015). Assistant professors are told regularly to "wait" to do this kind of integrative work that combines engaged teaching and scholarship, even though this is the creative work that feeds our souls, pushes us to continue to learn and innovate, and contributes directly to setting and organizational change.

Student and faculty voices contributing to organizational learning and change within the university are both a challenge and opportunity. We are encouraged by community psychologists who are more frequently speaking about our own institutional hierarchies and structures and interrogating our own social positions and relationships within the academy (Langhout, 2015; Lichty & Palamaro-Munsell, 2017). Universities themselves are community contexts that are critical as locations of knowledge production. We have a long way to go to more fully realize our potential as empowering settings and sites for enacting democratic practice. Community psychologists have much to offer in interdisciplinary, campus-wide efforts to support learning and scholarship for social justice and change efforts.

Conclusion

In our detailed account of our participatory community narrative research project, we offer perspectives and practices that may be adapted to other undergraduate research contexts. Adaptation is a key theme of our work, as we continue to evolve our model over time. In the context of constant change, the community of practice serves as a center of gravity, providing continuity and a sense of belonging to the team and its mission. The multi-semester nature of the research project is key, and it has many benefits for students and faculty. Moving beyond a single course

enables us to live more fully our educational philosophy of shared critical and engaged inquiry. As a high impact practice, it enables strong contributions and supports an integrated academic identity for undergraduate students. For faculty, it provides a space for ongoing interdisciplinary collaboration and creates a sense of belonging for those of us who are the only community psychologist working in a psychology department or interdisciplinary program.
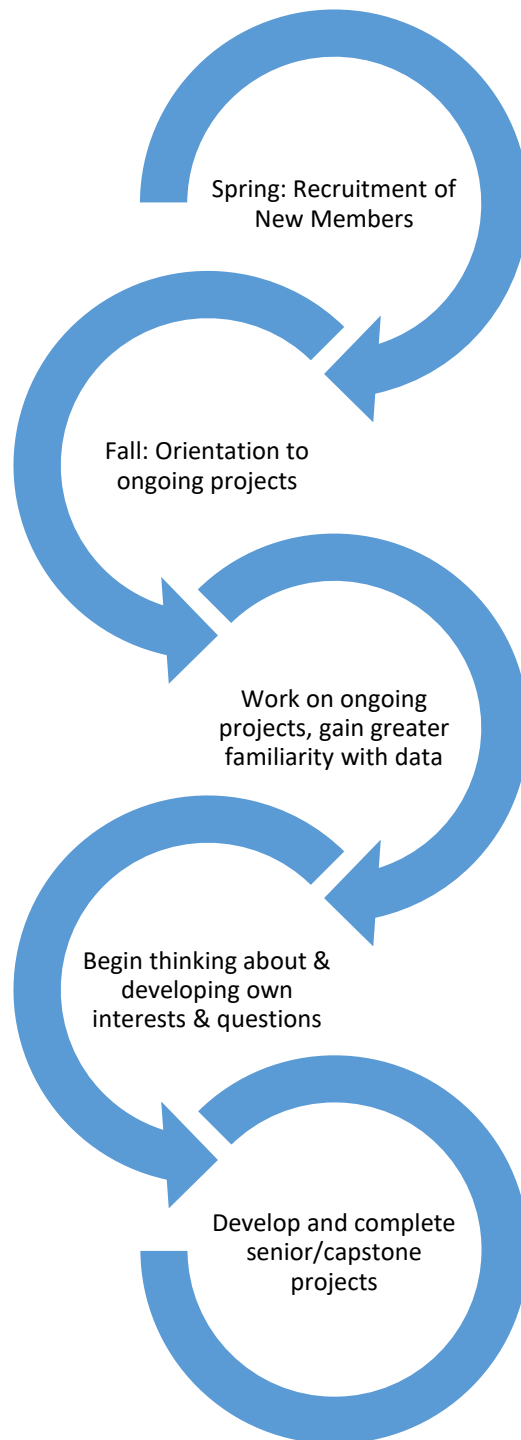
Our discussion of specific aspects of our data analysis process, including our work around coding and reliability, illustrates the methodological work that undergraduates can perform in a community of practice that is scaffolded by more experienced faculty and senior student researchers. Typically understood as part of graduate student development, undergraduate students are able to ask creative research questions informed by their unique and shared experiences, as well as their deep understanding of the data. In the language of community psychology research competencies, they are able to develop foundational skills, as well as research design skills, data analysis skills, and research theories and perspectives. Undergraduate students in community psychology should be recognized as knowledge producers, change agents, and leaders on campus, in communities, and in the field.

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Appendix A
Student Participation in the CNRP over Time

Spring: Recruitment of
New Members

Fall: Orientation to
ongoing projects

Work on ongoing
projects, gain greater
familiarity with data

Begin thinking about &
developing own
interests & questions

Develop and complete
senior/capstone
projects

Appendix B
Collaborative Agency Coding Manual

I.   Coding process:

Begin coding by reading the entire story through, just listening to the author's meanings. It is better not to code anything on the first reading. Ask yourself what problems the author addresses in the story. What conflict, tension, discomfort, or uncertainty is driving the story?

In a second reading, focus on the presence of collaborative agency as a frame or concern for the narrator. The author may or may not perceive collaborative agency to be achieved in the story. Ask yourself: Does this story concern itself with collaborative agency?

After coding for the presence of collaborative agency framing in the story, note also the category of persons with whom the author is in relationship. Place in one of two categories:

        Students/Bonner Scholars
        Community Partners

Keep a paper copy of the coding instructions in front of you as you code, and stop to re-read them after every ten stories. (This is necessary to avoid drifts in the way we understand the categories.) Please do not code when you are tired or distracted! Make sure you take regular breaks and stay alert.

Make notes about especially difficult coding decisions and about especially atypical cases or interesting examples. Note especially cases in which our coding system does not seem to 'capture' what is actually going on in the story – that is, where the authors' key meanings seem to be misrepresented by our coding. These stories are very important to us, so hold them aside for discussion with the team.

II. Coding definition:

Collaborative agency emerges in the coordinated activity of individuals with both shared and conflicting interests who engage in genuine dialogue. This dialogue includes sharing, listening, reflection, and a willingness to be changed by the communication. It is marked by a sense of intersubjectivity, shared commitments that are not superimposed by others, and perceptions of collective efficacy or group accomplishment.

We will code for the presence of collaborative agency as a frame or concern for the narrator. The author may or may not perceive collaborative agency to be achieved in the story.

1. stories include a description of "we" or "us" – this is necessary, but not sufficient.

2. stories include a discussion of how responsible and/or effective we are in pursuing our shared
    commitments, goals, or projects
        a. The author may be posing the questions, "Can we really do this? Can we be effective?"
        b. The author may be struggling over whether others share my sense of "we"-ness. "Are
            we really in this together and accountable to one another?"

3. A story about a relationship with a single individual (e.g., how to define the relationship or what
to do about the relationship) will not be coded unless the author is describing the relationship with
an individual to illustrate a broader point about creating new forms of "we" relationships and new
    forms of collaboration or community.