Before We Get Started…
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Remember: Our system works best with Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox
ZERO DEGREES OF SEPARATION
THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS

Economic Stability  Health & Healthcare
Neighborhood & Environment  Social & Community Context
Education
Historical Trauma and Race

James Rodriguez, PhD, LCSW
Jayson K. Jones, LMSW
Agenda

1. Historical Context
2. Terminology
3. Historical Trauma Response
4. Mechanisms
5. Addressing Historical
Poll

Do you ever discuss the impact of historical trauma within your work?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Unsure
Traumas of Human Design

ZERO DEGREES OF SEPARATION: THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS
Japanese Internment Camps and Disenfranchisement
African American Slavery, Segregation, Jim Crow Laws, and Imprisonment
Jewish Holocaust and Anti-Semitism
Trail of Tears

In June 1838, the first three detachments of Cherokee warriors were forced to depart from their ancestral homelands in the southeastern United States. Despite the hardships and suffering, they arrived in the West in late winter and early spring of 1839. It is estimated that from 4,000 to 5,000 Cherokees died as a result of the forced removal. The true story of the forced removal on the Cherokee people is one of survival. In spite of their hardships, they adjusted and rebuilt their homes and communities. Cherokee families opened on these grounds as the first public institution of higher learning for females west of the Mississippi River.
Forgetting

- Long history of being told to forget or “get over” oppression against people of color but remember other atrocities
In other parts of the world...

- Australia - National Day of Healing - May 26th
- To remember and apologize for how indigenous people were treated throughout the history of the country

- In 2015, Pope Francis apologized to indigenous people of Bolivia for the “grave sins” of colonialism
America tells us to...

**NEVER FORGET**

**NEVER FORGET**

**NEVER FORGET**

**JUST GET OVER IT**
In the United States

- Apologized for Slavery and Jim Crow in 2008
- Acknowledged the impact that these transgressions, yet we are still told to get over it and move on
- Refusing to validate the systemic and intergenerational impact of these traumas places blame on those who have to live with the trauma
- In 2007, Frank D. Hargrove of the Virginia House of Delegates stated that slavery was over 140 years ago and “our black citizens should get over it.”
Terminology
Situational Trauma

Cumulative Trauma

Historical Trauma

Intergenerational Trauma
What is Unique About HT

› Trauma of Human Design
› Core beliefs that can develop:
  • Questions about the limits of human decency
  • Questions about limits of human fairness
  • Strip people of culture, identity and humanity
Historical Trauma Response

Classic symptoms
- Anxiety and impulsivity
- Psychic numbing and poor affect tolerance
- Depression
- Withdrawal and isolation
- Guilt
- Unresolved grief

Historically Based Symptoms
- Perceived obligations
- Compensatory fantasies
- Elevated mortality rates
- Identification with ancestral pain and deceased ancestors
- Intrusive historical imagery, including nightmares

Braveheart and DeBruyn, 1998
Case Example

“I just can’t talk to my parents, I don’t want to burden them with my problems and feelings. They have so much pain of their own. I just can’t bring myself to do that, but I feel like I had no one to talk to. That’s why I took those pills—I just felt so tired. I wish I could take away their pain. They have suffered so much themselves in boarding school. I’d like to go away to college but I can’t leave them. I feel so guilty, like I have to take care of them.”

G. - 15 year old Pueblo Indian girl

Braveheart and DeBruyn, 1998
Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

‣ Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (Joy Degruy, 2005)

‣ M + A = P
  • Multigenerational Trauma +
  • Absence of Opportunity =
  • Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome
Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome - Symptoms

‣ Three Distinct Patterns of Behavior
  1. Vacant Esteem
  2. Ever Present Anger
  3. Racist Socialization
Mechanisms
Mechanisms - Transmission

- Conspiracy of Silence
- Biological/Physiological
- Psychosocial Mediators
  - Attachment security
  - Emotional Regulation and Availability
  - Parenting Styles
“Had we started to speak, we would have found it impossible to stop. Having shed one tear, we would have drowned the human heart. So invincible in the face of death and the enemy, we now felt helpless...we were mad with disbelief. People refused to listen, to understand, to share. There was a division between us and them, between those who endured and those who read about it, or would refuse to read about it...We thought people would remember our experiences, our testimony, and manage to suppress their violent impulses to kill or hate.”

Elie Wiesel (cited in Bergman & Jucovy, 1990)
Conspiracy of Silence

“A lot of times you assume that your parents do not have a past when you’re little and because you live in the present so much. The older I got…I would ask more about their lives-how they got married and how they met. Through those discussions,… discussions of camp were conspicuously absent…So I never really learned about the camps through my parents. I got bits and pieces…never a coherent story.”

- Adult participant in the Sansei Research Project

Nagata, 1993
Forms of Traumatic Memory

1. Not Knowing
2. Screen Memories
3. Fugue States
4. Fragments
5. Transference Phenomena
6. Overpowering Narratives
7. Life Themes
8. Witness Narratives
9. Trauma as Metaphor
10. Action Knowledge

Auerhahn & Laub, 1998
Biology and Parenting

**Biology Mechanisms**
- HPA Axis $\rightarrow$ cortisol release
- ACES related to HPA dysfunction
- Cortisol dysregulation seen in trauma survivors.
- Problems can be reversible

**Parenting mechanisms**
- Genetic risk
- Parental mental health
- Attachment security
- Shared trauma exposure
Therapeutic Considerations
Addressing Historical Trauma

1. Therapeutic – Culturally Competence
   ✓ TAU with an anti-racist/anti-oppressive lens
   ✓ Building and trust relationship and therapeutic alliance (e.g. TIC)
   ✓ Beware of TIBs
   ✓ Acknowledge and confront historical trauma

2. Sociocultural
   ✓ Remember!!! Never forget!!
   ✓ Fight oppression- become an ally

3. Culturally specific approaches
   ✓ Understanding racial/ethnic identity development
   ✓ Understanding of historical context and salience
   ✓ Create a new narrative
Teaching women how to get grounded. There’s a woman who came to see me a few years ago... sometimes when she would talk about her sexual violence in her childhood ...we would do some visualizations. She didn’t like me to call ‘em that, so we just called it ‘That thing we do’. ‘That thing we do’ was about bringing her to a lake and washing herself off. Like washing the child, drying her off, using the light from the Creator...the heat from the Creator’s light to dry her, and then to get her to dress in her regalia and put on her little moccasins and her hairpieces. She had them in her daily life, but she would put them on this little girl that she was taking care of - which was her - or her spirit. It was definitely her spirit that she was caring for.”

Tina Vincent – Algonquin Counsellor
Resources:
Annotated Bibliography
Measures

  - This article provides research on the development and test of the psychometric properties of the Danieli Inventory of Multigenerational Legacies of Trauma, a 60-item measure of the impacts of multigenerational trauma on children and Holocaust Survivors. The measure tests Danieli’s hypothesis regarding 3 types of posttrauma adaptational styles: victim style, fighter style, and numb style. The article includes a list of each of the sixty items.

  - This article reports on the conceptualization and testing of 2 measures related to the impact of historical trauma on American Indian people. Results suggest good internal reliability and validity. Results suggest that feelings of historical loss are associated with emotional distress.
Biological Measures

  - This is a research review of long term psychobiological consequences of early childhood trauma. It includes good summaries on the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and its relationship to dysregulation of cortisol, genetic factors that influence this system, and issue of plasticity in this system.

  - This article is similar to the one above that provides a brief review of the biological mechanisms that contribute to PTSD and stress related health and mental health problems.
Biological Mechanisms

  ◦ This is an early study by Rachel Yehuda examining the transgenerational effects of cortisol dysregulation among victims or survivors of trauma.

  ◦ Additional work by Rachel Yehuda establishing an association between parental trauma exposure and low cortisol level in their children.
Additional Materials

  - This book builds the case for Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, a set of symptoms and characteristic features that reflect the extensive history of slavery and ongoing oppression that African Americans have faced since African slaves were first brought to this country. She outlines the enduring effects of oppression and its current manifestations among African Americans.

  - This edited volume, part of the Plenum Series on Stress and Coping, is a comprehensive examination of the intergenerational transmission of trauma. It covers a full range of etiological factors, including examples of historical trauma experienced by many groups in the United States but intergenerational trauma of human design around the world. It also examines a variety of perspectives about intergenerational transmission processes, including psychodynamic theory, family systems theory and neurobiological theories about intergenerational transmission.
Upcoming Offerings!

September 7, 2016 | 12:00pm-1:00pm

Strength in Numbers: Voting & Social Work
Presenter: Tanya Smith, Louisa Hackett and Lindsey Hodel

Substantial differences tied to income, age, racial and ethnic disparities play a significant role in impacting voter turnout - even in the most voter-friendly states. There is an important relationship between individual and community well-being and the practice of voting. Voting is an essential responsibility of citizenship and is pivotal to the health of our democracy. This webinar will discuss how nonprofit human service providers are poised to play a significant role in narrowing the gap in participation in communities that have traditionally been underrepresented - the groups to which social workers often have direct access.
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Contact Us!

James Rodriguez, PhD, LCSW
jr4139@nyu.edu

Jayson K. Jones, LMSW
jayson.jones@nyu.edu
c tacny.com
THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Economic Stability
Neighborhood & Environment
Health & Healthcare
Social & Community Context
Education

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