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# Introducing a Graduate Student Counseling Psychology Journal: A Vision Realized

Marc A. Silva & Marisa B. Green

We are pleased to present the premiere issue of the *Graduate Journal of Counseling Psychology (GJCP)*, an academic psychology journal created by and for graduate students within the Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology (COEP) at Marquette University. The mission of *GJCP* is two-fold: (1) to encourage junior level counseling psychology graduate students to conduct research and present their findings in a peer-refereed journal; and (2) to disseminate conceptually- and empirically-based research on topics relevant to the field of counseling psychology. Current, submissions are accepted solely from COEP students. However, the goal of *GJCP* is to expand to include submissions from counseling psychology programs nationally as well as diversify the *GJCP* staff with editors from counseling psychology programs nationwide.

Engagement in and dissemination of research are considered essential components of professional development among psychologists (Aspenenson & Gersh, 1993; Kazdin, 2003). Publishing in academic and professional journals is a common and well-established avenue for disseminating research. As stated by Kazdin (2003), the process of journal publication employs the process of peer review to provide acceptance of the research in question by using peers to attest that there is merit for the work completed. Moreover, publication through journals represents the primary outlet for scientific research.

It has been suggested that research productivity is relatively low in the field of counseling psychology (Betz, 1997; Phillips & Russell, 1994; Royalty & Magoon, 1985; Royalty & Reising, 1986). Kazdin (2003) identified three barriers that prevent students from pursuing publication: (1) lack of early involvement as a student; (2) feeling inefficacious; and (3) misinterpretation of the science-practitioner model.

Given the importance of research productivity and dissemination via publication to the professional development of counseling psychologist

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psychology students, creating a graduate student journal was a logical and potentially valuable avenue for reducing barriers to pursuing publication. *GJCP* seeks to weaken these barriers by (1) encouraging early involvement by directly soliciting to first year students; (2) increase feeling efficacy among junior level graduate students by providing constructive feedback and by providing a relatively less competitive vehicle for publication; and (3) enhancing experiential-based understanding of the scientist-practitioner model through graduate student driven practice-relevant research which in turn aims to enhance practice via research engagement.

## DEPARTMENTAL INTEREST IN A GRADUATE JOURNAL

During the initial phase of *GJCP*'s development the two authors and another graduate student surveyed COEP graduate students to assess interest in the development of a psychology journal created especially for graduate students. The survey consisted of seven questions regarding students' opinions about research and publishing, such as "How important is it for you to conduct and publish research" and "What is the likelihood you would submit an article to the journal?"

### Respondent Characteristics

The survey was distributed via university email to all COEP students ( $N = 125$ ). The final sample was 52 resulting in a 42% response rate. Respondents were mostly female (71%) followed by male (17%), while 12% did not report their gender. Responses were received from both master's students (54%) and doctoral students (44%), while 2% did not report their degree program. Among the master's students, respondents were distributed fairly evenly among the program's four specializations (15% Adult Community, 14% Child Community, 14% Addictions Counseling, and 12% School Counseling). Although doctoral students were slightly overrepresented, the sample was largely consistent with the COEP graduate student population.

### Survey Highlights

Most COEP students (62%) believed research and publishing was an important part of their graduate career. More than half (54%) indicated that they would submit an article to a graduate student psychology

journal. Over two-thirds (69%) would read a graduate psychology journal containing their peers' published research.

Although it is suggested that counseling psychology generates relatively lower research (e.g., Betz, 1997; Phillips & Russell, 1994; Royalty & Magoon, 1985; Royalty & Reising, 1986), many COEP graduate students believed that research was important and were interested in pursuing publication outlets. It is the authors' hope that *GJCP* will stimulate early involvement, enhance self-efficacy, and increase generation of psychological research among counseling psychology students.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT OF ISSUE

This issue includes 12 articles organized within four sections. Section A represents the Research Proposals section. These two articles represent projects that are currently in progress. Holtz, Barber, and Jarrett describe their development of a parent-rated child behavioral assessment instrument, the *Toddler and Preschooler Behavior Scale (TPBS)*. Notably, the *TPBS* is designed specifically for use with urban families. While many psychological assessments are normed on White, middle-class participants, this article outlines the development of a culturally-sensitive rating scale. Next, DeWalt presents a convincing research proposal aimed at ameliorating sexual victimization via primary prevention. While prevention programs typically aim to reduce risk among potential victims, DeWalt's primary prevention initiative seeks to reduce the incidence of sexual victimization via a multi-system, ecological approach.

Section B of this issue contains three review articles focusing on diversity issues. Love begins by discussing group intervention strategies for African-American youth. Next, Orecchia discusses important issues for treating lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. Love wraps up the section by describing interventions for homeless youth.

Section C contains three theoretical and conceptual articles. First, Deitz discusses factors related to binge drinking behavior among college students. Next, Para described the roles of family and peer social support in identity development. Perry concludes this section with a discussion of underachievement in gifted youth and provides recommendations for counselors and educators.

Section D includes four review articles focusing on assessment and intervention. Silva (the first author) begins by providing an overview of the WAIS-III and describing its history and development. Gutzwiller

discusses the mental health consequences of divorce in children and adolescents and reviews intervention strategies. Bol analyzes and describes the research on trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy for sexually abused children with posttraumatic stress disorder. Finally, Para evaluates the empirical literature of cognitive-behavioral therapy for depression.

Each article selected for publication meets the following criteria (a) the topic is relevant to the field of counseling psychology; (b) the writing is concise and accessible to graduate students; and (c) the article contains an adequate review of the conceptual and empirical literature.

The authors are delighted to present the premiere issue of GJCP. We believe that this journal serves a vital purpose – encouraging research productivity and disseminating research among counseling psychology graduate students. We hope you find the series of articles in this issue interesting and thought provoking.

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**Marc A. Silva**

*Marc Silva obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from the University of Central Florida and is currently in his fourth year of the Counseling Psychology PhD program at Marquette University. His clinical and research interests include (1) psychological assessment; (2) PTSD; and (3) masculinity and its relationship to mental health, healthcare utilization, and help seeking. His career goals include providing psychological services to veterans in a VA hospital setting, conducting applied research aimed at improving mental and behavioral health among male veterans, and supervising psychology trainees.*

**Marisa B. Green**

*Marisa Green received her B.A. from Winona State and is currently finishing her M.A. in Counseling at Marquette University. She will be completing her PhD in Clinical Psychology through Marquette with clinical and research interests of: (1) barriers to treatment; (2) health & medical psychology; and (3) cultural influences to the therapeutic process. Her career goals include entering into academia within a university setting as well as working within a hospital.*