Collaborating for Social Change: The Black Psychologist and the Black Community[1]

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Several prominent Black scholars have argued that the predicament of Black intellectuals is inseparable from that of Black communities (C. West, 1994), and that Black psychologists should be at the forefront in developing culturally relevant psychological interventions (J. A. Baldwin, 1989). Yet, for Black psychologists there are a number of challenges to conducting successful interventions in Black communities, including historical abuses of Black communities by the "helping" professions and divergences in values, goals, and behaviors of professionals as compared to community members. In order for community psychologists to design interventions that are respectful of the cultural traditions and norms of Black communities, these obstacles to collaboration need to be addressed. This paper outlines some of the challenges faced by Black community psychologists, as well as the unique strengths they can mobilize when collaborating on research and interventions in Black communities. The paper also addresses methods of empowering Black communities and improving the training of community psychologists.

KEY WORDS: community psychology; collaboration; Black community.

Since the 1960s, psychologists have been encouraged/challenged, by various segments of the Black community, to engage in more culturally relevant research and implement programs that are more responsive to the needs of Black people. Black psychologists have been called to take a lead

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role in the development of theories and techniques that capture the cultural and psychological realities of Black life, and that reflect a movement toward proactive intervention or social change (Baldwin, 1989). Although significant advances have been made in this regard, unresolved ethical and practical dilemmas continue to undermine the viability and efficacy of psychological interventions in the Black community. Black psychologists, being uniquely situated as both "insiders" and "outsiders" (Zavella, 1993), face unique challenges when collaborating on research and interventions with Black communities

This review highlights some of the contextual barriers to collaboration in Black communities. Focusing on the community psychology and Black psychology literatures, this paper describes some of the historical and contemporary challenges to effective collaboration, explores the unique strengths of the Black psychologist, and offers suggestions for improving the quality of community collaboration, service, and training of Black psychologists.

DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATION

Constructive dialogue has been identified as the cornerstone of successful collaboration between community-based agencies, community residents, and academics conducting community-based interventions and research (cf., Glaser & Taylor, 1973; Hatch et al., 1993; Kelly, Munoz, & Snowden, 1979; Lefley & Bestman, 1991; Reed & Collins, 1994). However, collaboration is a term that has diverse meanings and manifestations ranging from complete passivity to complete domination by the "collaborator." Wood and Gray (1991), writing from an organizational psychology perspective, argue that the only true collaborations are those in which "a group of autonomous stakeholders of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide on issues related to that domain" (p. 146). In these collaborations, "parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible" (Gray, 1989, p. 5).

In community research, true collaboration involves discussions focused on "defining the problem of interest, designing the research methodology, discussing data analysis and data dissemination, and planning for the continuation of those interventions which prove useful and important" (Bogat & Jason, 1997, p. 135). Effective collaboration can lead to important benefits for the target community, including mobilization of resources—both human capital and instrumental—, building local capacity through education and training, improving the community's reputation, and creating empowering

narratives at the organizational and individual levels (Altman, 1995; Rappaport, 1995). Because the field of community psychology values the opinions and expertise of all community shareholders (including designated "experts" or professionals, indigenous leaders, and residents) and upholds the principle of cultural pluralism, it necessarily advocates active, participatory collaborations (Kelly et al., 1988). Participatory methods of collaboration are particularly relevant to Black communities and other communities in which issues of power are a central concern (Whyte, 1991).

Obstacles to Dialogue and Collaboration

Community psychologists have identified epistemological differences (i.e., researcher–participant discrepancies over ways of knowing) and contextual barriers as two of the most important factors determining the success or failure of collaboration (cf., Foster-Fishman, Perkins, & Davidson, 1997). In terms of epistemology, the values, goals, and needs of community psychologists, community-based organizations, and community residents can be widely divergent, leading to conflicts, antagonistic attitudes, and deliberate sabotage of projects. In Black communities, contextual barriers can also pose formidable challenges to successful collaboration. In this paper, we discuss three contextual barriers that are particularly salient in Black communities: the historical context of research in Black communities, the interpersonal context created by social class differences of Black professionals and community residents, and the organizational context of agencies serving the Black community.

The Historical Context

In Black communities, breaking down communication barriers may be particularly challenging because of historical experiences that have resulted in negative community narratives (Rappaport, 1995) regarding researchers and members of the helping professions. Due to historical abuses by "helping" professionals, many Black people maintain a realistic distrust of psychologists and others whose services and interventions have often intruded into the most private aspects of their lives. For example, Bell (1965) recounts the stories of Black women on public assistance whom social workers subjected to midnight raids, looking for men in their closets. In school settings, culturally-biased assessments have increased the odds of Black children being labeled as learning impaired or emotionally disturbed and placed in special education or "vocational" programs (e.g., Duran, Guillroy, &

Villanueva, 1990; Kozel, 1991). Unwelcome interventions such as these have caused some Blacks to feel stigmatized, discriminated against, dehumanized, and exposed in their most private environments. Although some of the most damaging practices have ceased, others continue. Midnight raids are no longer accepted practice in social work with poor women, but abuses in diagnosis and treatment of Black children are still common. Communal knowledge of these abuses has led many Blacks to distrust mental health professionals and to view them as voyeuristic and ill-intentioned (Hatch et al., 1993; Williams, 1980).

Researchers have acquired similarly negative reputations in many Black communities, albeit for different reasons. First, compared to many other communities (e.g., middle-and upper-class White communities, Native American communities, etc.), low-income Black communities are more likely to be the subject of research projects designed to explore the "pathologies" emanating from them (Williams, 1980). Second, Black community members are knowledgeable about research studies in which participants have been deceived and damaged. So, when members of Black communities express the sentiment that "we have been researched to death" (Singer, 1993), the interpretation may be literal in some cases. A prime example is the widely cited Tuskegee Study in which hundreds of Black men suffering from syphilis were told that they were receiving treatment for "bad blood" when, in fact, the researchers were simply observing the long-term effects of a medically treatable disorder (Thomas & Quinn, 1991). The numerous preventable deaths and injuries that resulted from this project have aggravated Black fears about research participation.

Third, while the Tuskegee Study is often cited as an extreme example of researcher malfeasance, the more endemic problem faced by low-income and minority communities is that research often does not benefit the residents of the communities researched (Green & Lezotte, 1973; Williams, 1980). In fact, research is often perceived as a waste of strategic resources and a further expression of external domination and control of the community (Singer, 1993). Historical experiences with academics and research have led many activists, local agency personnel, and residents to question the ultimate purpose of the studies conducted in their neighborhoods. Some researchers have had to wrestle with this question within themselves as they approached distressed communities for the purpose of initiating research projects. One Black researcher in Washington, DC, reflecting on his own need to convince the community of the relevance of research participation, comments that

> Perhaps if one can build a good case for the importance of one's research to the community where it is being conducted it might be a good strategy to give emphasis to the role and convince people to go out of their way to be cooperative for their own

sake. However, knowing that black people's situation is what it is despite decades of social science findings which could have been helpful, I did not feel that I could honestly claim that what I did would make much difference in the future of the community. (Hannerz, 1969, pp. 204–205)

Other researchers proceed with their investigations regardless of the relevance or impact on the target population. The persistence of "researcher-centered" investigations fosters community perceptions of research as benefitting someone other than community residents, that is, someone from outside of the community (the researcher) who will take information, data, experiences, stories, etc., from the community and use it for his/her own advantage (Singer, 1993).

Although much criticism has been targeted toward White professionals, Black professionals often find themselves struggling with the same dilemmas, as the comments of Hannerz suggest. In addition to concerns about the relevance of their work, Black psychologists often find themselves being confronted with the distrustful attitudes of community residents. Residents of Black communities are often suspicious of Black researchers because of their connections with universities—public and private institutions that have historically exerted undue, and sometimes (as in the case of the Tuskegee Study) abusive influence over the lives of Blacks. Although Black Americans have historically valued educational attainment and perceived it as a pathway to individual and social advancement, they have also viewed the specific ideologies and methods promoted by educational institutions (especially, predominantly White institutions) with a measure of suspicion. Consequently, many Blacks are suspicious of individuals with higher education and tend to assume that the allegiance of the Black professional is with Whites, particularly the White educational institution (cf., Kaufman, 1994; West, 1994). Differences in social class and lack of familiarity with community norms become evidence of the Black professional's "outsider" status, and may serve to heighten the community's suspicions of them (West, 1994).

The Interpersonal Context: Social Class Discrepancies in Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors

Disparities in social characteristics such as race, class, and culture pose some of the most challenging obstacles to effective collaboration (Gibbs, 1985; Reed & Collins, 1994). Although Black professionals working in Black communities share racial/ethnic background with community residents, there may be substantial differences in racial identity (Cross, 1971) and affinity with Black cultural values and practices (Gibbs, 1980). Black professionals often express values, attitudes, communication styles, and behaviors that are atypical in Black communities, particularly low-income communities.

Black psychologists trained in mainstream educational institutions have, out of necessity, usually adapted some White middle-class values. (At a minimum, they have had to learn to become bicultural, able to adapt to both mainstream White settings and to settings predominated by Blacks. Biculturality can be utilized as a strength for the Black psychologist, as will be discussed later.) These mainstream, middle-class values can influence the choice and style of intervention advocated by the community researcher. Valuing rugged individualism, competition, progress and future orientation, possessions and credentials as indicators of power and status, adherence to rigid time schedules, and use of communication styles more common to White middle-class culture may lead to interventions that are not congruent with the cultural values and interpersonal styles of Black community residents (Katz, 1985).

For instance, because of the stigma associated with Black English, or Ebonics (Smitherman & McGinnis, 1980), many Black professionals have expended great effort to adapt their communication patterns to conform to standard, middle-class English. Although many Black professionals develop proficiencies in both standard English and Black vernacular, their level of comfort with Black vernacular and their capacity for "code-switching" is largely influenced by their primary cultural context. Spending more time in a mainstream cultural context can result in loss of proficiency in Black vernacular, similar to the loss of proficiency experienced by foreign language speakers domiciled in the United States.

For Black psychologists conducting community-based research or interventions, use of standard, middle-class English may pose difficulties and erect unnecessary barriers to working with members of low-income communities who may be more comfortable using Black English (Jackson, 1986). Differences in the use of nonverbal communication may create similar barriers. In many Black settings, gesturing, intonations, and facial expressions are more important than the actual words spoken (Scheffler, 1969). Communication between Blacks in these settings is characterized by a high level of emotional expression, animation, and variability (Jackson, 1986). Blacks trained in mainstream institutions learn that a hallmark of professional demeanor is to present information in an unemotional manner. But when working with residents of Black communities, messages conveyed in such an unemotional manner may be perceived as disingenuous, unimportant, or simply not interesting. These simple differences in communication styles may impede the success of community-based interventions and cause participants to drop out.

Similarly, whereas the hierarchy in mainstream educational/training institutions is based on conferred degrees and titles, this is often not the case in Black communities. Failure to elicit input and approval from the eldest or

most experienced persons within the agency and those who have acquired the respect of community residents due to years of service is not only antithetical to Black cultural norms, but will likely lead to difficulties with program implementation in the long run. Black community psychologists must be aware of these issues and strive to conduct scientific inquiry and interventions using methods that are appropriately in sync with the language, customs, values, and beliefs of Black communities (Nobles, 1985).

Although the importance of culturally relevant interventions is often discussed in academic forums, a review of published books and articles from the past 10 years reveals few reports in which authors describe how they tailored their interventions to the cultural norms and values of the community. Some advances have been made in the Black psychology literature. For instance, a special issue of the *Journal of Black Psychology* addressed the need for culturally relevant HIV and AIDS education in Black communities. In this issue, Foster, Phillips, Belgrave, Randolph, and Braithwaite (1993) present a model of AIDS education in which Black psychologists are trained to deliver services within the African-centered conceptual frameworks of NTU and Nguzo Saba.[3] The psychologists trained in this model were able to incorporate African American rituals, prayers, storytelling, and other culturally specific practices into their programs. They also collaborated with local healers, clergy, and other community members to develop a program that was responsive to the community's needs and values (Foster et al., 1993).

The Organizational Context

Black community-based organizations, with whom Black academics may want to collaborate, are faced with numerous challenges that can interfere with successful collaboration. Black social service agencies tend to be chronically underfunded, understaffed, and overtaxed by the multiplicity and severity of community needs (Mincy, 1994; Wiener, 1994). Many community-based organizations tend to rely heavily on government funding, which was sharply curtailed by the Reagan administration in the 1980s and has not increased substantially thereafter (Wiener, 1994). The fiscal concerns of Black community organizations are exacerbated by limited community resources. Residents of poor communities usually cannot afford to pay fees for services, nor can they make large donations to support the activities

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[3]NTU is a Bantu (Central African) concept that loosely translates as "the essence of life." Key principles of NTU Include: harmony, interconnectedness, authenticity, and balance. Nguzo Saba is a Kiswahili word meaning seven pillars or principles, which from the basis of the African American ritual celebration of Kwanza.

of community-based organizations. Even well-planned fundraisers in poor Black communities tend to be only marginally successful, because of the lack of financial resources among community residents.

Financial instability and inadequate personnel resources often induce a crisis mode in Black community organizations, in which they simply try to meet the basic service needs of their communities. Agencies faced with these circumstances are likely to favor action rather than research (Snowden, Munoz, & Kelly, 1979). Agency staff may perceive research projects, primary prevention initiatives, and rigorously designed scientific projects as luxuries for which they simply do not have time. Also, given the perception that research projects often do not result in measurable benefit to the community, agency administrators and staff are often reluctant to divert their limited resources to such activities (Singer, 1993).

Finally, agency personnel often are not interested in collaborating with academicians, because of feelings of alienation from research and interventions initiated by "outsiders." They are typically not asked for their opinion on critical decisions; research questions and methodologies are formulated without their input; and they may have only a vague understanding of the project goals and activities. Under such circumstances, eliciting their genuine support and cooperation is a formidable challenge (Schilling, Schinke, Kirkham, Meltzer, & Norelius, 1988). In addition, research can create a real or perceived competition for clients, whose participation in research projects may preclude their involvement in programs designed and implemented by agency staff. In these instances, a power struggle can ensue with agency staff deliberately controlling access to clients in order to preserve their own power and influence (Reed & Collins, 1994).

The challenges to collaboration with community-based agencies often require concerted effort on the part of the Black psychologist: (1) to lay the groundwork for establishing trust with agency personnel, (2) to mobilize resources that will increase the capacity of local agencies, and/or (3) to include other, more stable and influential community organizations (such as local churches, tenant/homeowner associations, parent associations, and civic organizations) in the collaboration process. Successful collaborations with Black community-based organizations may require that Black psychologist engage in efforts to enhance the capacity of those organizations, as a necessary first step in the process.

Overcoming the Barriers: Assets of the Black Community Psychologist

Despite the numerous challenges to collaboration with Black communities, the Black community psychologist can be a uniquely valuable asset to

local Black communities. First, having come from a Black cultural background and having had direct personal experience with similar environments, the Black psychologist is an "insider" by history and often by current affiliation with Black cultural and social institutions (e.g., churches, civic organizations, etc.). The Black psychologist is thus likely to have a better understanding of both the strengths and the challenges facing Black communities. Understanding the essentials of Black life and culture, she or he will be less likely to pathologize Black communities or to distort the realities of the situation at hand (Jones, 1991). Although not necessarily expressing identical cultural norms and values, the Black psychologist will likely have had experience with them and can therefore respect the variability of Black cultural expression. She or he is more likely to be aware of symbolisms used in Black communications, and to understand the cultural meanings of certain expressed behaviors, feelings, and values (Nobles, 1985). The Black psychologist will be less likely to interpret the suspicious feelings of Black males as diagnosable mental disorders, less likely to associate single-parent families with pathology, and less likely to interpret Black women's involvement in the church as religious fanaticism. Finally, the Black psychologist's expressed allegiance to and understanding of the community will often allow him/her access to situations that would typically be closed to Whites (Jones, 1991).

In terms of their research endeavors, Black psychologists can utilize their understanding of Black communal norms and values to aid the development of theoretical formulations that move the field beyond the usual orientations to Black experience: the poverty acculturation, deficit- centered, and victimization orientations (Nobles, 1985). Accordingly, Black psychologists have been instrumental in establishing theoretical frameworks that are consistent with the socio-political, cultural, and psychological realities of Black life. Often, they have initiated areas of research that would not likely have been initiated by their White colleagues, for example, research on racial identity and its relation to adaptive psychological functioning (cf., Clark & Clark, 1939; Cross, 1991; Parham, 1989; Nobles, 1991). This work has informed education and clinical practice, leading to the incorporation of more culturally sensitive materials in settings that serve Black families. Contemporarily, Black psychologists are actively engaged in research that will have implications for the future directions of community psychology, including research on the relationship of poverty to parenting and child development (McCloyd, 1990); the cultural ecology of competence among Black inner-city children (Ogbu, 1985), and the development of culturally relevant interventions with Black children (Brookins, 1996). Although the list of contributions by Black psychologists can be enumerated endlessly, perhaps the most important thing Black psychologists have done is to initiate a discourse on culture which has sensitized psychologists to the importance of

attending to ethnic and cultural differences whether they work with African Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, or European Americans.

Besides their contributions to the more epistemological concerns of science, Black psychologists possess invaluable skills and experiences that can translate into practical contributions to local communities. Skills in problem-solving and conceptualization, data collection and data analysis, grant-writing, and public presentation of results can be valuable contributions to communities that do not have these resources. Exposure to mainstream values and styles, although an obstacle to community engagement, can become an asset when utilized to enhance public relations and advocate for communities. In these instances, the Black psychologist's biculturality may be viewed as an asset to the community. The Black academic psychologist positioned inside the academy, yet retaining ties with political organizations and cultural institutions within the community, can begin to function as what Dr. Cornell West describes as "critical organic catalysts" (1991, p. 34), utilizing their skills and resources to institute critical changes in both settings. The skills and experiences of the Black academic psychologist can thus be mobilized to access resources for local communities (e.g., assisting with grant writing), to improve existing infrastructure (e.g., providing training and services that might not otherwise be available in low-income neighborhoods), and to create opportunities for political action (e.g., conveying well-articulated policy recommendations to important power brokers)—all of which will result in long-term, positive outcomes for Black communities.

BUILDING POSITIVE, CULTURALLY-RELEVANT COLLABORATIONS

In order for the potential of Black professionals to be more fully realized, a concerted effort to open dialogue and to pool existing resources between Black professionals and Black community members is needed. The first step in this dialogue is for Black community psychologists to create a foundation of trust with Black communities. Kelly et al. (1979) identify two types of trust that are critical for effective community-based collaboration: (1) trust in the professional competence of the intervener and (2) trust in his/her allegiance to the community's goals and values. Because of the historical abuses of Black communities, the second type of trust is probably the most important, and perhaps the most difficult, to establish.

In fact, Gibbs (1980) suggests that in Black communities, the interpersonal aspects of the consultation relationship may be more important

than the instrumental aspects or the intervener's professional competence, at least in the early phases of intervention. Gibbs' experiences in working with both Black and White consultees suggest that Blacks focus more on the process of interaction, both verbal and nonverbal, with the consultant. They are more attuned to the consultant's personal characteristics (e.g., personal authenticity), egalitarianism, ethnic identification and involvement with the sociocultural environment, and expressed acceptance of the consultees. Gibbs' work led her to formulate an interpersonal orientation to consultation in Black communities. In this model, the consultant's demonstration of knowledge and skills is only salient during the phase of engagement, after the consultees have established a reasonable level of trust and have made a commitment to work with the consultant based on their evaluation of his/her personal attributes. The Black psychologist's commitment to work with Black communities will be fostered, first, by internal resolution of issues of ethnic identification, and second, by clearly expressed allegiance to the communities with which they are working. Allegiance to the community is often expressed behaviorally (e.g., by affiliation with local Black churches and other community organizations, attendance at important social events in the community, involvement or at least awareness of political events shaping the community, etc.) as well as verbally (e.g., by expressing interest and allegiance to causes affecting the community, discussing racial identity and culturally-relevant topics with community members, etc.).

Another important way in which Black psychologists can contribute to an environment of trust and collaboration with community members is by being flexible in their professional orientations. In communities where resources are limited, community interveners must be willing to try alternative or unconventional approaches to solving community problems (Foster et al., 1993) Interdisciplinary collaboration on community interventions can be helpful in this regard (Kelly, 1990). Though trained in particular methodologies, community psychologists need to be reflexive[4] and self-critical in evaluating the success of any particular research or intervention method (Vega & Murphy, 1990). Reflexivity and self-criticism challenge the notion of value-free research and discourage researchers from approaching communities with preconceived notions derived from unrelated experiences in other settings.

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[4]The literal definition of "reflexivity" is "bending back on itself" (Mead, 1962, cited in Steier, 1991). Using reflexive methods, the researchers (1) examine the extent to which their findings derive from their own involvement in the research and (2) assess the utility of the intervention in the specific context to which it will be applied. This establishes validity of the intervention, that is, construct validity or ecological validity.

Using reflexive methodology, Black psychologists may be at the forefront in designing programs that are part of the dynamic processes of Black communities—programs that are action-oriented and contribute to the goals and needs of the target communities (Pierce, 1980). In the discussion that follows, we suggest four ways in which psychologists can make community-based research and interventions more relevant and meaningful to Black communities: (1) focus on the community's needs; (2) establish forums for community feedback and involvement; (3) create autonomy, not dependence; and (4) improve training of Black psychologists. Table 1 summarizes these recommendations and gives examples of activities related to each objective.

Table I. Methods of Promoting Collaboration with Black Communities

Task	Examples of enabling activities
Create foundation for trust	Express allegiance to community goals and values Demonstrate professional competencies Show flexibility in professional orientation Assess utility of research/intervention methods with target community
Focus on community needs	Identify important historical & contemporary events shaping community Talk with local representatives re: issues relevant to the community Identify contextual factors that could affect collaboration
Establish forums for community feedback & involvement	Help establish community-based research review committees & advisory boards Conduct community focus groups during planning and development Hold follow-up meetings to discuss results and implications
Create autonomy	Increase community access to external resources such as grants & contracts Provide education and training to increase local capacity Explore means of institutionalizing initiatives Help promote interagency collaboration Support empowering experiences and community narratives
Help train future professionals	Develop courses on research & interventions in Black communities Create practica with local Black community-based organizations Involve Black community members in training initiatives Promote social & intellectual climates that meet the needs of Black students

Focus on the Community's Needs

First, Black researchers can design programs that are more pertinent to the needs of the particular communities in which they work. Although funding agencies tend to support research agendas of national, rather than local concern, national initiatives may or may not be appropriate to the concerns of the local community with whom the Black psychologist may be working. Each community will have its own unique history, resources, and needs. The Black psychologist's awareness of important historical events shaping Black communities nationwide, along with their background research on the specific community they are working with, will help in this regard. Time spent talking with key agency administrators and personnel, as well as leaders of the community, and long-term residents will ultimately pay off in projects that address the most relevant issues/problems of the community (Schilling et al., 1988; Walsh, 1987; Wood & Gray, 1991). In addition, reviewing literature on prior research conducted in the community may provide helpful insights. Having this information a priori will enhance the researcher's ability to design a relevant intervention for that particular community. For instance, a psychologist interested in conducting substance abuse prevention programs in a Black community will need to be aware of the history of substance abuse interventions in that particular community—especially the factors that contributed to their successes or failures. She or he would need to talk with community residents, leaders, and agency personnel to get their perspectives on the causes of substance abuse in the community. Finally, the researcher would attend to contextual factors related to drug activity in Black communities such as unemployment and economic distress, for-profit gang activity, inadequate recreational outlets, accessability of drugs and alcohol, and alcohol advertisements in the community (Gibbs, 1989; Mincy, 1994; Scott, Denniston, & Magruder, 1992; Staggers, 1989).

Establish Forums for Community Feedback and Involvement

Second, Black community researchers can establish forums in which community members become significantly involved in research and interventions (Bowman, 1991; Green & Lezotte, 1973). The principal of "significant involvement" calls for community members to be involved in the entire research process, from planning and conceptualization to dissemination of results (Bowman, 1991). Not only do participatory methods benefit the community, they also enhance opportunities for future collaboration with those communities.

One commonly used method of including local communities in research is the advisory board, composed of academicians, agency administrators, and selected members of the community. Although the advisory board method is a step in the right direction, it often fails to produce true collaboration. Researchers usually hold an inordinate amount of power over decision-making on these "advisory" boards by virtue of the fact that they have professional degrees, they have greater socioeconomic status, they have practice in publicly arguing their perspectives, and they may be primary or sole connection to external funding of the project. Furthermore, advisory boards are often established *after* a proposal for funding has been developed and/or submitted and the major program components already established, without the community's input or approval.

To remedy these problems, some Black communities have established research review committees, giving community members the power to veto projects that are antagonistic to the needs and interests of Black people. One such committee was established in 1970 by the residents of a Black community in Boston (Williams, 1980). The residents coordinated a Community Research Review Committee (CRRC) whose main function was to review research proposals prior to implementation, to determine whether the proposals were in the best interest of their community and whether they were sufficiently grounded in a Black perspective, that is, to establish the "functional relevance" of proposed research projects (Bowman, 1991). The CRRC also required that the research teams include Black personnel in key positions, including a Black co-investigator. Although this committee was only in operation for a few years, it prevented the implementation of two research projects deemed harmful to the Black community. Although the CRRC functioned primarily as a veto group, such groups could also be proactive in attracting culturally-sensitive researchers to the Black community.

Another approach to ensuring the integrity of research through community evaluation is the "adversary hearing" (Levine, 1974; Levine et al., 1978). The adversary hearing usually occurs after data collection, but prior to dissemination. Using this approach, research participants and agency personnel meet researchers to hear the quantitative results of the evaluation. Participants then discuss whether their own experiences validate the research findings. The adversary hearing approach can be highly structured, for example, resembling a "trial by jury" (Wolf, 1975, as cited in Tebes & Kramer, 1991), or, in the model advocated by Tebes and Kramer (1991), "an informal town meeting." Such an approach has obvious utility for all collaborators.

"The adversary hearing pits two sorts of knowledge claims against one another: the professional knowledge of the researcher versus the experiential

knowledge of the program participant. Experiential knowledge is pragmatic and concrete, and is derived from 'lived experience'; whereas professional knowledge is university-based, analytical, and theory-driven . . ." (Tebes & Kramer, 1991, p. 750)

The adversary hearing approach gives community members a chance to discuss the implications of the research, and provides a foundation for evaluating the worth of future research initiatives.

Create Autonomy, Not Dependence

A third way in which Black psychologists can serve Black communities is by ensuring that their presence does not result in an increase in dependency upon professionals to resolve local issues. Hatch et al. (1993) discuss the problem of research projects and interventions that produce beneficial changes within the community, but fail to create an infrastructure for continuation once the researcher leaves. Building the infrastructure to support beneficial programs is an important, but often neglected, method for maintaining community support, trust, and interest in future initiatives.

Flick, Reese, Rogers, Fletcher, and Sonn (1994) describe a collaborative process in which the university representatives' primary role was as resources to the community. These authors employed several methods for increasing the capacity of the local community, including writing grant proposals with the community advisory board, which was listed as the grantee. This served to empower the local group and enabled them to establish a track record that could be used to secure future funding, even if the university representatives decided to discontinue their involvement.

Black professionals can also promote community autonomy by providing training in assessment, evaluation, and intervention skills through in-services with agency personnel and community residents, thus bringing new resources to the community. They can also take an active role in promoting interagency collaboration, thereby helping the community to capitalize on its own strengths. For instance, Black churches are often the storehouses of tremendous human capital, as well as financial resources of the community. They have historically been active in mobilizing communities for social action, providing both spiritual and instrumental support to important causes. In recent years, Black churches have begun to take an active role in working with social service providers and academicians to address problems of concern in their communities, including teen pregnancy, drug dependence, gang violence, and HIV/AIDS. Collaborations of this sort have the potential for powerful and lasting effects because they maximize the use of existing resources; they are sustainable by the community, and they promote a

sense of self-empowerment among community residents. By promoting such collaborations, Black community psychologists can play an active role in creating new, more adaptive narratives in Black communities (Rappaport, 1995), amplifying narratives of strength and empowerment over those of dysfunction, inadequacy, and dependency.

Help Improve the Training of Future Black Psychologists

A final arena in which Black community psychologists can have a significant impact is in the training of future Black psychologists. Many of the problems impeding effective collaboration are reflections of the professional competencies of community workers (Kelly, 1979), and academic training which has not prepared them for work in Black communities. Most Black psychologists have been trained in Eurocentric theories and methods, which are assumed to be culturally blind, but would lead them to treat Black people as if they were "White people in Black skin" (Baldwin, 1989). Therefore, they often are not prepared to implement interventions that are theoretically sound and culturally relevant or meaningful to Black communities.

Many Black psychologists and Black professional organizations have been actively challenging the traditional tenets and practices of psychology for their irrelevance or harmfulness to Black communities (Green & Lezotte, 1973). Although advances have been made in terms of the importance that mainstream professional organizations (e.g., APA) and granting agencies (e.g., NIMH) attach to cultural competence in professional training programs and research investigations, still there are no formal standards for training ethnic minority psychologists or others who will work with minority populations (Jones, 1990). Some writers have indicated that treatment of culturally different clients/communities by professionals lacking specialized expertise or training in cross-cultural theories and methodologies is unethical (Bernal & Castro, 1994; Green, 1981; Korman, 1974).

The response of many training programs and organizations has been to intensify training efforts toward cultural competence. In the past decade, several books and journal articles on cross-cultural issues in graduate training have appeared, graduate programs have added courses on diversity to their rosters, and there has been a proliferation of cultural diversity training workshops (Aponte & Clifford, 1995; Bernal & Castro, 1994; Ridley, 1985). Most of the initiatives taken thus far have utilized multicultural sensitivity training approaches, focusing on training and sensitizing White students or professionals to basic cross-cultural differences. This type of diversity training is not tailored to the needs of non-White participants (especially those for whom identification with their racial/ethnic group is a central part of their

self-concept, Sellers, Chavous, & Cooke, 1998) and is unlikely to lead to true cultural competence regarding any particular ethnic community. Much work still needs to be done before the ideal of cultural competence for both White and non-White professionals is realized.

As it stands, most graduate training programs would require multi-level structural changes to adequately meet the training needs of Black students and others who plan to conduct research and interventions in Black communities. In order to promote the generation of culturally relevant theory and research and enhance the educational process for these students, several curricular changes are needed: (1) coursework promoting the acquisition of knowledge of Black cultures, (2) direct practical experience working with Black communities, and (3) training in innovative and culturally-appropriate intervention strategies (Highlen, 1994; Jones, 1990; Sue, 1980). Black faculty will likely take a lead role in teaching courses that examine the conceptual systems and ecological context of research and practice in Black communities. Courses taught by Black faculty may provide forums in which the appropriateness of traditional research methods applied to the problems and circumstances of Black communities can be carefully evaluated (Akbar, 1991), and students can begin to examine the ways in which their social conditioning and world views may influence their choice of theoretical formulations and research methodologies. Black faculty may also take a lead role in developing practica with local agencies serving the Black community so that Black graduate students can be immersed in community activities from the beginning of their training programs. Through their connections with Black community organizations, they may also bring in professionals from the Black community to act as training consultants, providing seminars on community interventions and serving as co-facilitators or supervisors of practicum experiences. This would provide students with access to the informal knowledge base of community dynamics and a guided tour of the day-to-day realities of working in a particular Black community.

By spearheading these types of initiatives, Black community psychologists and university faculty can take a lead role in ensuring that the next generation of Black students will be better prepared to provide effective and relevant services to Black communities. As more Black psychologists are recruited into university departments, their contributions may also involve enhancing the social and intellectual climate of academic departments, making them friendlier to minority students. Duran et al. (1990) highlight the importance of establishing multicultural academic contexts that are "safe places for critical analysis" (p. 217) and intellectual exchange at the faculty and administrative levels. To the extent that academic departments are able to create and maintain such an environment, Black students and other

students of color will be attracted by the cultural relevance of these training programs, and their training experience will be enhanced.

CONCLUSION

Although psychologists have been conducting research and interventions with Black communities for more than six decades, the development of a psychology that is relevant to Black communities remains a formidable challenge. The ethical imperative for Black academicians and helping professionals to be at the forefront of efforts to remedy this situation has been discussed before (cf., Baldwin, 1989; Gibbs, 1989). Yet the methods by which this can be accomplished are not clear. Given the complexity of mental health issues facing Black communities and the evaporation of funding streams for mental health programs (Mincy, 1994; Wiener, 1994), it seems evident that Black professionals cannot do the job alone. The development of effective collaborations is essential to the process.

This paper has outlined some of the challenges faced by Black psychologists collaborating with Black communities. Although the challenges are numerous, there are also many ways in which the unique assets of Black psychologist can be used to mobilize social change in their communities, both their ethnic/cultural communities and their academic communities. As members of the Black community, Black community psychologists can contribute to community empowerment by developing psychological interventions and research that are in sync with communal norms and values, and that will actually make a difference in the lives of Black people. They can also mobilize resources, both internal and external to the community, to enhance the capacity of local communities. Finally, they can utilize their bicultural skills to advocate for more ethical treatment of Black communities. These efforts will benefit Black communities directly, and academic institutions indirectly—by creating adaptive community narratives regarding research, thereby increasing the potential for success of future collaborations with those communities. As members of the community of scholars, Black psychologists can inform psychological literature by publicizing their work, particularly that which describes how research and interventions are tailored to the cultural norms and values of Black communities. In addition, they can contribute to the training of students, so that the next generation of psychologists will have the skills and expertise required to conduct culturally relevant research and interventions with Black communities. To the extent that Black community psychologists bicultural skills are used in the service of both community empowerment *and* scientific advancement, the "insider/outsider" dilemma can be traversed.

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