Centering Latinx Perspectives in the Clinical Process
PRESENTERS
Clarita Kell, MA, ADC-T & Psychotherapist

- Born and raised in Puebla, Mexico, mestiza (Indigenous/Spanish descent)
- Graduated from Saint Mary's University with BS in Psychology and MS in Counseling and Psychological Services with Addiction Studies
- First year working as a Psychotherapist at CLUES
- Founder of a Latinx teen pregnancy prevention Comadres/Compadres Program in Rice County
- 20 years of experience in various roles at schools and non-profit organizations working with Latinx youth and families
- Director of Kalpulli Ollin Ayacaxtly Aztec Dance in Rice County
- Mother of 3 amazing humans and 4 furry babies
Ceci Organista

• Born and raised in Guadalajara, Mexico. (Mestiza Indigenous/Spanish heritage)
• Psychotherapist at CLUES
• MSW from the University of Minnesota
• Bachelor of Business and Master in Human Resources.
• Previous work experience includes college counselor and Supervisor of community service in rural communities (Mexico), school social work, and CTSS worker (USA).
Brenna Batres MSW, LICSW

- White/Anglo (Irish/German/French-Canadian/English)
- Psychotherapist at CLUES ~8 years
- Lived in Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and El Salvador
- MSW from University of Chicago
- Previous experience includes: bilingual social work with DV survivors, and pregnant and parenting teens in Chicago, bilingual case-manager at family homeless shelter in CA, bilingual health educator at clinic in CA, and working at a shelter for sexually abused adolescents in Bolivia.
- Live in a bilingual-bicultural household (Salvadoran/white American)
Liz Franklin, MSW, LICSW

- White Anglo (English/Irish/Scottish/Swedish/German heritage) from Iowa
- Associate Director of Behavioral Health at CLUES (4+ years at CLUES)
- MSW from the University of Minnesota
- BAs in Spanish (studied in Spain) and American Studies
- Previous work experience includes school social work, Children’s Mental Health Case Management, School-Based Therapy, and private practice, with Latinx and other BIPOC kids and parents
Agenda

1. Introduction of presenters
2. Exploring Latino culture
3. Framework for understanding culture
4. Psychosocial Impacts of Immigration
5. Presence of historical trauma in Latino communities
6. System and organizational strategies
7. Service adaptations

**10 minute break at 10am and 5 minute break at 11am**
Orientation

• Where’s the research?
• Language used today
• Today’s first disclaimer about expecting intragroup diversity
When you hear “Latino culture,” what comes to your mind?
What countries can you name from Latino America?
How many languages are spoken in Latino America?
Exploring Latino America

41 countries AL y El Caribe
https://www.cepal.org

420 languages

Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Guarani, Quechua, Mam.

Religions: Christian, majority Catholics, Indigenous religions. Depending on the conquest Country
What is “Latinidad”?

- Concept of Latinidad
  1. Condition or character of the Latin.
  3. Latin cultural tradition.

https://dle.rae.es/latinidad
What is “Latinidad”?

**Latino**
Geographical aspect. It refers to the place where they or their ancestors came from.

**Hispano**
Linguistic aspect. It refers to the language. People who speak Spanish.
Latino nationalities in Minnesota

- More than 350,000 people who identify as Latino in Minnesota
- 6% of the state population
- Population has increased 38% since 2010 compared to 8% growth for state

Statistics from Minnesota Compass, mncompass.org
Diversity in Latino populations

- Countries/regions of origin
- Socio-economic status
- Race/color
- Education level
- Language
- Age
- Level of acculturation
- Reason/path for immigration
Immigration

- Voluntary immigrant vs. Refugee or Asylee
- Limited paths to legal immigration: Family petition, student visa, work visa, asylum, U visa, T-visa, VAWA and DACA
- Additional barriers: fraud by attorneys, cost, and fear of denial
- Do not assume status and evaluate if you have to ask
- “Generation” of immigration
FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING CULTURE
The Iceberg Concept of Culture
Like an iceberg, nine-tenths of culture is below the surface.

Surface Culture
Above sea level
Emotional load: relatively low

Deep Culture
Unspoken Rules
Partially below sea level
Emotional load: very high

Unconscious Rules
Completely below sea level
Emotional load: intense

courtesy • contextual conversational patterns • concept of time
personal space • rules of conduct • facial expressions
nonverbal communication • body language • touching • eye contact
patterns of handling emotions • notions of modesty • concept of beauty
courtship practices • relationships to animals • notions of leadership
tempo of work • concepts of food • ideals of childrearing
theory of disease • social interaction rate • nature of friendships
tone of voice • attitudes toward elders • concept of cleanliness
notions of adolescence • patterns of group decision-making
definition of insanity • preference for competition or cooperation
tolerance of physical pain • concept of “self” • concept of past and future
definition of obscenity • attitudes toward dependents • problem-solving
roles in relation to age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, and so forth
Iceberg Connections

• In the chat: Thinking about your role, what jumps out at you as possible areas of disconnection between you and clients from other cultural communities?
Common Dynamics in White-Organized Institutions

- Perfectionism
- Urgency
- Defensiveness
- Quantity over Quality
- Worship of the Written Word
- Only One Right Way

- Paternalism
- Either/Or Thinking
- Power Hoarding
- Individualism
- Progress is Bigger, More
- Objectivity
- Right to Comfort

https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html
Iceberg Connections

• Contextual Conversational Patterns + Concept of Time
  – Gets at structuring interactions to show respect, connection
  – Also touches on definition of “normal” for tone, volume, pace of communication
  – Differences in expectations can lead to boundary sensitivity (intrusive vs. cold)
Iceberg Connections

Patterns of Handling Emotions

- Respect
- Normal
- CRY
Iceberg Connections: Childrearing

- Tendency towards authoritarian parenting style
- Physical affection and closeness
- Notable differences of expectations between genders
- Expectation of helping the family system and activities with the family
Iceberg Connections

• Theory of Disease + Definition of Insanity
  – Limitations of the medical model
  – Importance of frameworks like Developmental Psychopathology for conceptualization
  – Listen for assumptions about cause, severity, prognosis for diagnosis
Iceberg Connections

Attitude toward Elders + Notions of Adolescence

- Unmeasurable Respect
- Family takes care of
- Families ask for their blessings

Elders

- Start working at age 16
- They take care of younger siblings
- They take the role as parents of their parents

Adolescent
Heterogeneity of Latinx Identity Model
P. Arredondo and Santiago-Rivera (2000)

Iceberg Connections

Concept of “Self”

A DIMENSIONS
- Age
- Generational Status
- Culture/Euro/Mestizo/Indigenous
- Gender/Machismo/Marianismo
- Language/Regional Accents
- Physical/Mental Status/Phenotype
- Sexual Orientation
- Social Class

B DIMENSIONS
- Acculturation Status
- Citizen Status
- Educational Background
- Geographic Location
- Family Relationship
- Status/Familismo
- Religion/Spirituality/Folk Beliefs
- Work Experience
- Health Care Practices/Beliefs
- Identity Status (self-referent labels)
- Economic Status

C DIMENSIONS
- Personal/Familia/Historical
- Eras/Events
- Sociopolitical Forces
Iceberg Connections (...self)

Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory

- **Chronosystem**
  - Changes Over Time

- ** Macrosystem**
  - Social and Cultural Values

- **Exosystem**
  - Indirect Environment

- **Mesosystem**
  - Connections

- **Microsystem**
  - Immediate Environment

**CHILD**

**SELF**

Implications Latinx Identity Development

- Historical events such as immigration, higher education
- Religious value system
- Social services to access medical care for family
- Connect the family to their religion/spiritual community
- Include the extended family as comadres/compadres (coparents)
Iceberg Connections (…self)

Mestizo Identity
Indigenous and European heritage

Chicano/Latino Identity
U.S. citizens with Mexican decent

Multiple Heritage Identity
Biracial and Multiracial
Iceberg Connections

Roles in relationship to race, gender, class...

- Latinx Family Hierarchy
  - Elders
    - Unquestioned Authority
  - Parent/s
    - Authority, Respect, Provider
  - Children
    - Knowing Roles, Rules, Responsibilities, Respect
  - Extended Family
    - Comadres, Compadres
PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACTS OF IMMIGRATION
System Familiarity and Trust

- No familiarity with the system
- Everything is new
- Cultural impact
- Language barrier
- Lack of trust
- Fear of authorities because of their own cultural experiences
Language Use and Preferences

- Spanish may not be a Latino immigrant’s first language
- Different language preferences within one family
Effective Collaboration with Interpreters

Do:

✓ Look directly at the person you want to communicate with
✓ Use a trained interpreter
✓ Check in with interpreter if there is a large discrepancy
✓ Check in with interpreter with questions about the way things are phrased
✓ Understand it will take twice as much time (at least)
✓ Remember bilingual participants hear the content twice
✓ Try to have the same interpreter at multiple appointments
✓ Watch body language
✓ Explain concepts and jargon (including diagnoses)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st generation</td>
<td>Searching for a better life. Imposters Strong traditions Fear Language barrier 2-3 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 generation</td>
<td>Children immigrate before 14 Bicultural Identity Fear Ambiguous loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd generation</td>
<td>Identify the US as their land. Speak English Lack of understanding with their parents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acculturation Differences between Family Members, cont.

• Anticipate each person in family will have their own degree of connection to different communities
• Remember importance of positive ethnic and racial identity for resilience
• Honor code-switching skills in generations 1.5, 2, and later
Impact of Stigma

- Lack of understanding of mental health services
- People who see therapist are “crazy”
- Pass their traumas to other members of their families
PRESENCE OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA IN LATINO COMMUNITIES
Intergenerational trauma

First-generation/Immigrant generation (poverty, war, job loss, violence). Real and ambiguous loss.

1.5 generation. High expectations, they need to make the family proud.


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IntYjsU8Kkl min 13:45
When Services Bump up against Families’ Survival Strategies

• Remember intense emotional load of traditions that enabled survival
  – Openly discussing problems, questioning authority, expressing distress has often been unsafe across levels of the ecomap

• Go slow and be curious
  – How is this working for your family? This person?
  – What are the +/- of doing it this way?
  – How does context influence this math?
SERVICE ADAPTATIONS
• Build in psychoeducation about the assessment and planning process ("therapy" doesn’t start now)
Framing Roles

- Need for flexibility with “case management” tasks
- Importance of family involvement even in individual services
- Consider the impact of your perceived expertise
Importance of Cultural Guides

• Collaborate with existing providers whenever and however possible
  – Can supplement reporting
  – Can interpret/provide framing for cultural perspective on functioning, symptoms, roles
  – Will likely be supporting next steps in services
Diagnostic Formulations

- Symptom framing, prioritization will vary
- Distress expression will vary
- Information distribution in assessment will vary
- Importance of conservatism when diagnosing in unfamiliar cultural contexts
- Understand equity connections in diagnoses
- Remember to screen for trauma
Psychological Testing/Assessments

• Examine your instruments
  – Have they been translated into Spanish and other languages?
  – Were they translated well?
  – Have they ALSO been normed for Latinx folks?

• Are you considering trauma?

• Are you aprovechando de collateral information?
Psychiatry

• Concerns about addiction
• Concerns about side effects
• Concerns about being “crazy”
• Need for psychoeducation!
Ongoing Intervention

- Honor bilingualism and biculturalism as strengths for clients AND staff
- Start the family’s story 500 years ago
- Built in translation of concepts, processes, roles
  - Collaborate with translators on “sticky” terms
- Educate clients about rights
- Engage each person as a member of a family
Ongoing Intervention

• Check in FREQUENTLY about how you’re doing
  – Assume your feedback is skewed positively
• Keep explaining what you’re doing, and why (i.e. why we play with child clients)
• Invite family into meetings
• Make new concepts bilingual
• Help family members understand new skills, strategies
Discharge Planning

• Are you checking for real buy-in?
• Is the set of recommendations feasible?
• Share recommendations and referral progress with collaterals
• Psychoeducation about options if new needs emerge
SYSTEM AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES
Provider Role Expectations

- Do productivity demands allow for collaboration, consultation, information sharing?
- Do roles support providers helping with resource navigation?
- Do processes have timeline flexibility when interpreters are needed?
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Organization-level Strategies

- Explore how privilege impacts clients’ abilities to follow policies
- Use consultants that represent a variety of experiences and perspectives
- Bring a critical lens to ethics
Organization-level Strategies

- Ensure correct name writing and pronunciation
- Ensure staff know how to access interpreters
- Consider grants and Crime Victims Reparations Board funds to increase service access
- Allow (and give productivity for) more time that is needed to work with interpreters and collaborate with existing providers
QUESTIONS
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- Department of Health and Human Service, “Cultural insights, communicating with Hispanic/Latinos”
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The Iceberg Concept of Culture
Like an iceberg, nine-tenths of culture is below the surface.

**Surface Culture**
Above sea level
Emotional load: relatively low

- food
- dress
- music
- visual arts
- drama
- crafts
- dance
- literature
- language
- celebrations
- games

**Deep Culture**

**Unspoken Rules**
Partially below sea level
Emotional load: very high

- courtesy
- contextual conversational patterns
- concept of time
- personal space
- rules of conduct
- facial expressions
- nonverbal communication
- body language
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- eye contact
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