

Voices in Family Psychology

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edited by

Florence W. Kaslow

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Foreword

SANDRA B. COLEMAN

There are rare and special moments in growing up when we experience a unique surge of pride in our parents or our siblings, a feeling that makes us want to shout to the entire universe, "That's *my* Mom, (Dad, sister, brother)." Similarly, what I want to do now, having just completed reading the final manuscript for *Voices in Family Psychology*, is raise my voice and yell, "These family psychologists are my colleagues! Aren't they brilliant, creative, thoughtful, and simply marvelous?" With such an enthusiastic response how can I even begin to write an objective, unimpassioned opening to a contribution that is bound to be a bookshelf treasure? I suppose, however, that I must momentarily "unpuff" my chest and exchange my affective response for a more cognitive one which, though certainly more sober, will still be imbued with an upbeat hum.

The two volumes of *Voices in Family Psychology* present a multilevel range of information. Although each chapter offers a personal and professional chronicle of each contributing family psychologist's life, taken together the volumes offer an historical account of the field of family psychology as well as the contributions that have been conceived and developed as a consequence of our work. The result is a massive compendium that is heavily weighted with knowledge. A one word descriptor is *impressive!*

Interconnecting themes pervade the chapters providing the reader with an enriching experience that transcends each individual biography. It is obvious that family psychologists are diverse and individualistic yet they share many common basic roots. The theoretical underpinnings that provided our early

nurturance are largely derived from individual psychoanalytic and behavioral schools of thought. As we developed ourselves we grew into the more diverse realms of the structural/strategic and systemic schools of family therapy, while many of us are now "fellows" in more integrative theoretical models. Another common theme is that family psychologists are still dedicated to their original training in traditional psychology and thus honor the Boulder Model in maintaining a scientist-practitioner stance. The family psychologists represented here impart an attitude of openness and flexibility that has allowed each one to create either an instrument, a methodological approach to treatment, a major research study, or a novel project. Clearly, none of us has been content to merely practice family therapy. Each one of us has presented multiple offerings to the field and there is no indication that, regardless of age or number of years of being in the profession, anyone is winding down. There is an unrelenting sense of energy that pervades each chapter and it is my guess that the reader is in serious danger of being infected by the zealotry that pervades these pages.

It is interesting that family psychologists represent so much diversity. From linguistics to genocide to cults, addiction, forensics, divorce, fatherhood, and gender — there is an endless list of topics and issues that we address. Although one could undoubtedly find prolificacy and divergency among many other groups of family therapists, we whose origins are in psychology appear to have a uniqueness identifying us as a somewhat different breed. This is the scientific attitude that is embedded in our foundation in classical psychology. It is the commitment to research, to scrutiny and assessment, that forever questioning attitude that says, "Show me," "Prove it," "Replicate it," "Refine it . . ." For anyone who promotes a heterogeneous profession called "Family Therapy" a sound reading of *Voices* should demonstrate the value of having traditional psychology underpinnings. The educational benefits of such a competency-laden background are brilliantly made obvious here.

Aside from the shouting, when I finished reading all the manuscripts my tendency to respond to stimuli with graphic representations was piqued. All I wanted to do was draw genograms of "us." I kept seeing family psychologists as having networks of interconnecting genograms that stood parallel to the idiosyncratic blood-related personal genogram of each contributing author. We have genograms that connect us to our theoretical parents, some that fasten us together by topical themes and interests and there are other genograms that link us to our personal experiences of marriage, divorce, child-rearing, and often, remarriage. Finally, perhaps one of the most powerful genograms I see is the one that connects us to our dreams, for as an optimistic lot we all believe in a future world for family psychologists — a world that is far more expansive than the present one in which we all grew up. And that chorus of expressive hope should form a stereophonic circle around Florrie Kaslow who choreographed the opportunity for us to share our lives and our knowledge by harmonically raising our "voices."

Preface

FLORENCE W. KASLOW

In August 1987, when I began preparing my Presidential Address for presentation at the membership meeting of the Division of Family Psychology (number 43) of the American Psychological Association (APA), I anguished over what I might have to say that was new, different, and — I hoped — significant. While I was on the plane to New York, the fearsome lightning outside finally ignited a spark inside my thoughts. What flashed into consciousness were such questions as: (1) Why had the treatises on the history of family therapy (including my own) chronicled the field *as if* the contributions of the major pioneers to the field of family therapy came mainly from male psychiatrists (Ackerman, Bowen, Boszormenyi-Nagy, Jackson, Lidz, Minuchin, Whitaker, and Wynne — among others) and female social workers (namely, Satir)? (2) Why was the significant work of psychologists unsung or underplayed? (3) Why when psychologists and psychiatrists coauthored books and chapters did psychologists' names almost always come second? (4) Did the psychologists' grounding in research mean that, as a group, we wanted a data base to undergird the reliability and validity of our hypothesis, theories, and techniques before going public in writing and speaking with global statements that imply "I say it, therefore it is so"? (5) Had we almost voluntarily avoided the limelight accorded the "gurus" because of the lack of "provability" of some of the operating assumptions and/or some personality factors more characteristic of psychologists? For me, these were provocative and disturbing questions that had to do with identity and power issues.

Like many others who entered the family field in the later 1960s and early 1970s, I found the activity and excitement was in the interdisciplinary nature of the evolving "specialization" of marital and family therapy. APA, like other national one discipline organizations, was not receptive to a practice that legitimated treating several members of the same family conjointly. The American Association for Marriage Counseling (AAMC), founded in 1942, and renamed the American Association for Marital and Family Therapy (AAMFT) in 1978, beckoned to all mental health and pastoral counseling professionals interested in family theory, dynamics, and treatment—regardless of discipline of origin or degree. It offered a forum for dialogue and education, the comradery was easy and open, and the organization spawned a fine journal in 1974 (now the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*).

In 1977 a second interdisciplinary organization emerged—the American Family Therapy Association (AFTA). Its founders' vision was that it would remain relatively small (up to 1,000 members, which it has) and be geared to experienced teachers, trainers, researchers, and highly skilled clinicians. Like many of the other contributing authors of *Voices in Family Psychology*, I have been and remain an active member of both organizations and have derived wonderful benefits and friendships in each. I too went through years of focusing on the similarities between family therapists of all professional backgrounds and seeking to obliterate the differences. For I was and remain "loyal" to my extended family therapy family; it is a very rich and meaningful aspect of my professional heritage.

Yet something was troublesome. What this was remained baffling until a group of people who belonged to the Academy of Psychologists in Marital, Sex and Family Therapy began to work toward the formation of the Division of Family Psychology in the early 1980s. All were periodically disturbed by the loss of their identity as psychologists for this is also a vital part of our inheritance; it is the other family from which we are descendants.

With this significant development and the accompanying recognition within the larger field of psychology that it heralded, we could proudly claim and feel part of both professional families of origin. I respect each tradition and want to remain connected to both as do many of my family psychologist colleagues. We also want to proclaim our shared identity.

Thus it seemed essential for me to utilize the forum of the Presidential Address to highlight the contributions of psychologists to the colorful tapestry known as the family field. I quickly made a list of those whose contributions immediately crowded into consciousness. They were all individuals whose work I was familiar with through the literature; I also was fortunate to know all of them personally from my involvement in professional organizations, through our mutual service on journal boards, and/or from our writing chapters for each other's books. My speech contained allusions to and

a brief summation of main contributions of the following prominent family psychologists:

James Alexander
 Carolyn Attneave
 John Bell
 Arthur Bodin
 Israel Charny
 Sandra Coleman
 Paul Dell
 Charles Figley
 James Framo
 Harry Goolishian
 Alan Gurman
 Chris Hatcher
 Neil Jacobson
 Diane and Sam Kirschner

David Kniskern
 Luciano L'Abate
 Kitty LaPerriere
 Howard Liddle
 Rachel Hare Mustin
 Augustus (Gus) Napier
 William (Bill) Nichols
 David Olson
 William Pinsof
 Margaret Singer
 M. Duncan (Duke) Stanton
 Lenore Walker
 Gerald Zuk

The presentation was greeted with an enthusiastic response. One of the first reactions from the audience was "This will no doubt become the basis for Florrie's next book." And, at that moment, through a groundswell consensus of support, it did.

Almost all of those present who had been mentioned agreed to write chapters. They also recommended others who merited inclusion and I realized there were others I had overlooked in my first list. Many indicated that they thought such a book was long overdue and would be destined to become a major textbook in graduate and professional schools, family institutes, and an important historical reference book for use by family practitioners.

In my letters of invitation to potential contributing authors, I tried to be as inclusive as possible. Unfortunately, many of those whose voices should be included here were already overcommitted. I deeply regret that their significant work is not part of these volumes and want them to know they are missed. No doubt there were some involuntarily omissions: to those eminent individuals — my apologies.

My goal was to provide a comprehensive volume on family psychology, spanning the four generations of the field's existence, from the experiential and evolutionary vantage point of those who have created, enlivened, and enriched the research, theory, and practice in the extant literature. Each author was asked to follow the same "outline" so that there would be a consistency in the flow of the chapters. As becomes obvious, the majority of the authors are innovators; conformity is not typically a personality trait they exhibit. Some departed from the guidelines to, as usual, "do their own thing."

Some found it difficult to share aspects of their personal heritage and odyssey. The format and content of each turns out to be consistent with the authors' theoretical preference and therapy style; it is told in their most resonating voice.

The majority of authors conveyed that the experience of writing for this book was unique—compelling, reflective, illuminating, and sometimes very distressing. Many reported struggling with how to write in the first person and cite mostly their own work without sounding extremely narcissistic. Most had never before attempted anything this autobiographical and personally revealing. Some felt very stirred up and went back into treatment. Others encountered unexpected defenses. All reported that the request to pull the threads of their personal heritage and professional work together provided a fine opportunity for review and integration as well as the thinking through of directions for the 1990s.

Because in the family field we are concerned about progression through the generations, the legacies bestowed, the intergenerational transmissions, indebtedness, and loyalties, it seemed important to try to group the authors according to the generation in which they first made their contribution. Thus this became the guiding rationale of the organizational structure. Because in the growth of our profession, developments—including the entry of new leaders—have occurred with great rapidity, we are not using the classic definition of a generation as twenty years. My selection of the cut-off years (pre-1969, 1969-1976, 1977-1982, and 1983 into the future) was perhaps somewhat arbitrary, but these seemed congruent with the evolution that has transpired in the field.

Each author was given the dates and section description headings and asked to place himself or herself in this historical context. The main determinant of where someone fit was when he or she first became known through publications and presentations beyond his/her local community. As the book evolved, there has been some reshuffling to have professional peers grouped together. There is certainly some overlap: some of the authors span all four generations; most have made substantial contributions through at least two of the generations. One's generational alignment is not necessarily related to chronological age. There are some who became family psychologists after spending years in other careers; others made their debut on the national scene quite young. Within each part of the book, the chapters are organized alphabetically by the first author's last name.

Each volume has an Epilogue. That for Volume 2 attempts to tease out *themes and patterns*, to dispel some of the popular myths in the field, to draw some *conclusions*, and to make some prognostications about the next decade.

This book is a testament to the work of several dozen leading theoreticians, researchers, teacher/trainers, and clinicians who classify themselves under

the broad rubric of family psychology. Family therapy is one of several activities we engage in; it is not the totality of what we do. Our roots are diverse. The authors travelled many paths en route to the self-definition of family psychologist—including but not limited to social psychology, experimental psychology, child clinical psychology, educational or school psychology, and family sociology. All are multitalented, ingenious, tenacious, exceedingly bright, and successful. My sincerest appreciation to each of these busy “V.I.P.’s” for taking time out to be a contributing author to these volumes.

Sincere appreciation is also expressed to Terry Hendrix at Sage Publications who eagerly accepted the book for publication when I first approached him about it. Because Sage is publishing Division 43’s *Journal of Family Psychology*, it seemed a fitting connection. To Scott Ripple at Sage who awaited receipt of all parts of this massive volume, my thanks for your patience and support.

And most of all, thanks to our families of origin that gave us the gift of life, to our families of creation with whom we intimately share our adult years, to our professional families who share our trials and triumphs, and to our patients and students who keep our work vital and “on track.”

Florence W. Kaslow
West Palm Beach, Florida
May 1989

PART III

THE THIRD GENERATION: THE CHALLENGERS, REFINERS, AND RESEARCHERS, 1977-1982

The contributors of the third generation are a hearty breed. They have led the way in and reflect the increasing emphasis on (sub)specialty areas of research, knowledge, and practice within family psychology. As the field has expanded and matured and the literature covering it has exploded in all directions, it has become virtually impossible to be conversant with the totality. For example, until the mid-1970s there were only three or four journals focusing on family-related issues and topics. By the late 1970s, in the United States alone, there were more than a dozen. Our current count, including relevant foreign journals, shows more than 30. Thus this group is more focused than those of the earlier generations. Yet they too are daring in their challenging of the establishment of psychology broadly and the family field more specifically. They have made great breakthroughs in areas that heretofore were not prominent in family studies and family literature. And they have come to share the mantle of leadership in all realms with their more senior colleagues.

