

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND COUNSELING  
CPSY 563: Treatment Issues in MCFT  
Gender and Power: Creating Change in Couple Therapy

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Date: Friday, January 20, 2012

Time: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Place: Lewis & Clark College, Albany Quadrangle Room 220

Instructor of record: Dr. McDowell

Contact Information: [teresamc@lclark.edu](mailto:teresamc@lclark.edu)

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Mutually supportive intimate relationships have the potential to heal old wounds and promote health and resilience. However, gendered power imbalances make mutual influence and emotional engagement difficult, and examples of how to actually achieve mutuality are limited. Most approaches to couple therapy do not directly address these issues.

This workshop by Dr. Carmen Knudson-Martin presents Socio-Emotional Relationship Therapy (S.E.R.T.), a practice model for addressing gender and power issues in couple therapy. Participants will learn how to work with the links between emotion, socio-cultural context, and couple interactions.

The workshop will emphasize therapist development on seven competencies for working with the complex issues of gender and power in couple therapy.

Video illustrations will demonstrate how empathic engagement of a socio-culturally attuned therapist sets the stage for new relational experience by focusing on four conditions foundational to mutual support—mutual influence, shared vulnerability, shared relationship responsibility, and mutual attunement.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will help participants develop a working knowledge of 1) gender and power in couple relationships, and 2) seven competencies for working with the complex issues of gender and power in couple therapy.

### ASSIGNMENT

Your assignment is to apply what you learned in the day long lecture and readings to a couple in popular media, preferably film. Media is an effective way to raise consciousness about power dynamics and is often used in liberation based healing practices in which couples are expected to

address power as part of the change process. Incorporate lecture notes and handouts as well as assigned readings. In addition, use at least two additional articles from the literature to inform and support your analysis. You must include the following:

- 1) Explanation of cultural context of the couple (e.g., race, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status/nation of origin);
- 2) Description of power dynamics that includes influence of socio-cultural context on intimate power relations; and
- 3) Discussion of how a therapist might apply the seven competencies in S.E.R.T. to working with the couple.

This paper should be 4-8 pages long, double spaced in 12 font.

This assignment is worth 100 points and is due on Feb. 6th. Grading will be based on 1) addressing all assigned areas (20 pts), use of references and course content (30 pts), clarity of ideas (20 points), thoroughness (20 pts), and APA writing style (10 pts).

### GRADING

A = 93-100

A- = 90-92

B+ = 88-89

B = 83-87

B- = 80-82

C+ = 78-79

C = 73-77

C- = 70-72

### NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

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### SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructor as soon as possible.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

CLASS WILL TAKE PLACE ALL DAY ON JANUARY 20, 2012. YOU WILL ATTEND THE WORKSHOP LECTURE BY DR. CARMEN KNUDSON-MARTIN THAT DAY FROM 9AM TO 4PM. YOUR PAPER WILL BE TURNED IN ELECTRONICALLY TO DR. TERESA MCDOWELL. ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COURSE SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO DR. MCDOWELL AS THE INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD.

READING TO COMPLETE BEFORE CLASS

Knudson-Martin, C. & Huenergardr, D., (2010). A socio-emotional approach to couple therapy: Linking social context and couple interaction. *Family Process*, 49(3), 369-384.

NOTE: At least two additional articles from the family therapy literature must be used to complete the assignment.