

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

**SPARK**

---

Art Therapy Counseling Final Research Projects

Art & Design

---

Spring 5-8-2020

## Examining Black Art Therapy Graduate Students' Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue

Marilyn Holmes

Follow this and additional works at: <https://spark.siu.edu/atcfinal>



Part of the [Art Therapy Commons](#), [Counseling Psychology Commons](#), and the [Counselor Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Holmes, Marilyn, "Examining Black Art Therapy Graduate Students' Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue" (2020). *Art Therapy Counseling Final Research Projects*. 6.  
<https://spark.siu.edu/atcfinal/6>

This Final Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Art & Design at SPARK. It has been accepted for inclusion in Art Therapy Counseling Final Research Projects by an authorized administrator of SPARK. For more information, please contact [magrase@siue.edu](mailto:magrase@siue.edu), [tdvorak@siue.edu](mailto:tdvorak@siue.edu).

Examining Black Art Therapy Graduate Students' Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue  
by Marilyn Holmes, Bachelor of Arts

A Research Project Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
in the field of Art Therapy Counseling

Advisory Committee:

Jayashree George, DA, ATR-BC, LMFT, SEP, Chair

Megan Robb, MA, ATR-BC, LCP, NCC

Shelly Goebel-Parker, MSW, ATR-BC

Graduate School  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
May, 2020

# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

## GRADUATE STUDIES

WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED

BY Marilyn Holmes

ENTITLED Examining Black Art Therapy Graduate  
Student's Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue

PRESENTED ON 5/8/2020

BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR

THE DEGREE OF \_\_\_\_\_ Master of Arts \_\_\_\_\_

WITH A MAJOR IN \_\_\_\_\_ Art Therapy Counseling \_\_\_\_\_

### RESEARCH PROJECT COMMITTEE:

Jayashree George, DA, ATR-BC, LMFT, SEP

Megan Robb

Chairperson

Shelly George

We certify that, in this research project, all research involving human subjects complies with the Policies and Procedures for Research Involving Human Subjects, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Edwardsville, Illinois.

For research projects involving animals or biohazardous material, including recombinant DNA, we certify that the research complies with the Policies and Procedures established by the Animal Care Committee on the University Committee Biosafety, respectively, of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville; Edwardsville, Illinois.

@ Copyright by \_\_\_\_\_ Marilyn Holmes \_\_\_\_\_ May, 2020 \_\_\_\_\_

All rights reserved



## ABSTRACT

Examining Black Art Therapy Graduate Student's Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue

by

Marilyn Holmes

Chairperson: Jayashree George, DA, ATR-BC, LMFT, SEP

*Racial Battle Fatigue* (RBF) is a term used to describe the psychological and physiological symptoms Black students experience after repeated exposure to microaggressions in higher academic settings (Smith, Yosso, & Solorzano, 2006). In this study, I sought to explore the specific experiences with RBF of current and former Black art therapy in their graduate programs and supervision. Supervision is an essential and necessary aspect of art therapy education that involves power dynamics that can be complicated by race. I also sought to explore the strategies these current and former graduate students are using to cope with RBF. Further, if art is one of those strategies, this inquiry seeks to explore the art experience. This research project used semi-structured interviews with art therapy students and emerging professionals to examine their graduate educational experience. This study found that Black art therapy graduate students do experience RBF both in the classroom and in their internship/practicum experiences and use art among a myriad of other strategies to alleviate their symptoms. The people who participated in this study also provided ideas and strategies to mitigate and prevent the symptoms of RBF for future Black art therapy graduate students.

*Keywords:* race, racial battle fatigue, art therapy, art therapy students, emerging professionals



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	i
LIST OF FIGURES.....	iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Problem Statement.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	2
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	4
Black AT Graduate Students and Their Experiences of RBF.....	4
Coping Strategies for Racial Battle Fatigue.....	6
Coping Strategies for Black Art Therapy Graduate Students.....	7
III. METHODOLOGY.....	10
Semi-Structured Interview Method.....	10
Participants.....	11
Materials.....	12
Procedure.....	13
Stance as Researcher.....	13
Data Analysis.....	15
Thematic Analysis.....	16
Artmaking.....	16
Analysis of Voice.....	16
IV. RESULTS.....	18
Findings.....	18
Thematic Analysis.....	18
Isolation.....	18
Validation vs. Invalidation.....	20
Responsibility to the Field.....	22
Artmaking in Response to RBF.....	25
Ameliorations.....	27
Analysis of Voice.....	28
Liz.....	28
Sam.....	29

	Rachel.....	30
	Laurel.....	31
V.	DISCUSSION.....	32
	Findings.....	32
	Thematic Elements.....	32
	Ameliorations for RBF.....	33
	Artmaking.....	33
	Implications for the Future of Art Therapy Education.....	34
	Limitations.....	36
	Disclosure of Funding.....	36
	Suggestions for Further Research.....	36
	Conclusion.....	37
	REFERENCES.....	38
	APPENDICES.....	42
	A. Interview Guide.....	42
	B. IRB.....	43
	C. Participant Notification Form.....	44
	D. I-Poems.....	45

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1.	Key Research Concepts .....	4
2.	Research Stance.....	14
3.	Fishbowling .....	15
4.	Validation V. Invalidation.....	22
5.	Responsibility to the Profession.....	25



**CHAPTER I**  
**INTRODUCTION**

In the highly politicized world of today, universities across the United States have become the battlegrounds for several hot-button issues. Race, in the United States, is a particularly dynamic topic to discuss, given its long and violent history as the basis for centuries of systemic and systematic oppression of citizens. This reality, compounded with the nature of universities serving as microcosms for the greater world around them, provides fuel for the flaring of racial tensions on campuses. While universities provide a mirror for the world around them, they are also affected by events that happen beyond the borders of their campuses. Universities are integrated communities that are affected by the university's greater context (Hurtado, Alvarez, Guillermo-Wann, Cuellar, & Arellano, 2012). Predominantly white institutions (PWI's), or universities that historically have admitted only or mostly white students, are a hotbed for these tensions.

This context is bound to influence the students existing amid these tensions. An article published in the *Atlantic* by Adrienne Green noted that many minority students do not feel connected to their greater college communities and that systemic racism leads to feelings of separateness from other non-persons of color (POC) students and faculty (Green, 2016). That feeling of separateness is emphasized in the work of Smith, Allen, and Danley (2007), who found that African American males on college campuses faced higher rates of policing than their white counterparts and reported symptoms of psychological distress including helplessness, hopelessness, and aggression. They also found that overall, PWI's were more inhospitable to Black males than they were to any other group (Smith, 2007).

What does this mean for the mental health of Black students existing on college campuses? Dr. William Smith coined the term *Racial Battle Fatigue* (RBF) in 2006. He defined this as the physiological symptoms experienced by POC after enduring recurring microaggressions in a higher education setting (Smith, Yasso, & Solórzano, 2006). Smith and authors examined some of the effects of RBF, including increased anxiety, intense physical symptoms like chronic pain, and a racing heartbeat, as well as insomnia and social withdrawal. These symptoms, which stem from what may be generally viewed as an innocuous form of racism, lead to severe physiological consequences.

This experience can be narrowed even further to the experiences of graduate students. Research shows that graduate students have high rates of anxiety and depression, along with other negative emotions (Hyun, Quinn, Madon, & Lustig, 2006; Evans, Bira, Gastelum, Weiss, & Vanderford, 2018). Black graduate students specifically are often left feeling separate from their peers, unsupported and report feeling both isolated and invisible within their graduate communities (Cleveland, 2004; Haskins, Whitfield-Williams, Shillingford, Singh, Moxley, & Ofauni, 2014). Black graduate students pursuing counseling degrees have reported feeling like they need to code-switch or behave in ways that they would not normally in order to fit into their program dynamic (Henfield, Washington, & Woo, 2013).

The present research, however, seeks to explore the experience of these experiences in a precise context. The experience of Black art therapy graduate students and Black emerging professionals who recently graduated from accredited or approved art therapy programs is a subject that is being discussed more in professional and research circles in art therapy and the mental health profession at large (Awais & Yali, 2013;

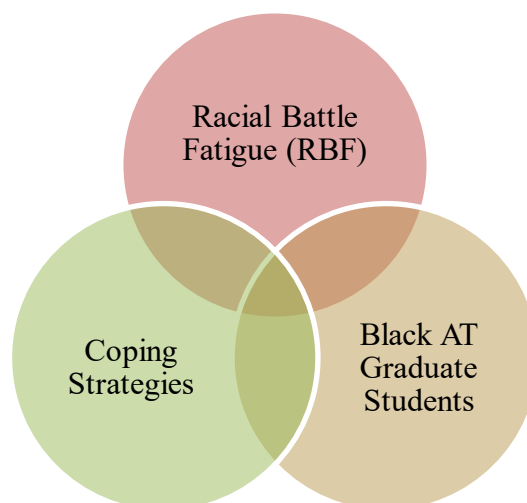
Awais & Yali, 2015; Hamrick & Byma, 2017; Gipson, 2015). Currently, the conversation centers on a deepening of cultural competency, but, as Gipson (2015) noted, what art therapy programs teach as “cultural competency” may not be enough. These questions need to be answered because art therapy education is expanding, and the field is growing. With accreditation boards pushing for the recruitment of more Black students in the mental health professions, the quality of their educational experience needs to be examined from more than just an academic lens (Haskins et al., 2013). Examining the lived experiences of Black art therapy students and emerging professionals experiencing RBF could be beneficial in developing ameliorations for Black students in the future.

Since RBF occurs, the present research seeks to explore four questions: 1. Do Black art therapy students, and emerging professionals believe they are experiencing RBF? 2. If so, what is their experience of RBF? 3. How do they cope with it? 4. In the event artmaking is included in that coping process, how does it manifest as a coping strategy?

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature will examine the key research terms indicated in Figure 1. The alternate search terms that were used are provided in Table 1. This literature review will explore the intersections between RBF and the various coping strategies used by Black art therapy students and emerging professionals. For this research, alternate search terms, listed in Table 1, were used to search the databases JSTOR, NIH, SAGEPUP, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, Taylor & Francis Online, and Research Gate.



*Figure 1.* Research Venn Diagram. This figure illustrates the intersections of the central terms used in this literature review.

### **Black Art Therapy Graduate Students and Their Experiences of RBF**

In examining the literature, I noted that much of the research around diversity and cross-cultural exchange centers on the teaching and experiences of white therapists working with non-white clients (Lumpkin, 1998; Price, 2015). There seems to be substantially less empirical research on the experiences of clinicians of color, specifically

Black clinicians, working with white clients despite the challenging historical context and confusing power differentials therein (Price, 2015). Moreover, many of these sources do not focus specifically on art therapy. There are noticeable differences in how counseling trainees of color consume multicultural education materials as compared to their white counterparts (Coleman, 2006). When undergoing multicultural education, students of color cited didactic experiencing as more beneficial than physically interacting with people from differing cultural backgrounds, while white students tended to favor the physical experiential (Coleman, 2006). This is a small illustration of how different educational measures might need to be taken when teaching multicultural competency within a culturally diverse program.

Venturing into the classroom, Gipson's (2015) work examines the relationships between white and non-white students from a faculty perspective and, while she notes that the field is overwhelmingly white, she notes that the otherness of non-white students may unintentionally and unconsciously threaten the field's internal system of white supremacy. This alienates Black students and leaves them feeling further isolated (Gipson, 2015). The lack of support geared directly towards students and emerging professionals of color leaves those individuals open to negative consequences (Potash, 2015). This disparity is compounded when examining the power differentials inherent in faculty/student and supervisor/supervisee relationships and the fact that supervisors are more likely to be white while supervisees are more likely to be non-white (Hiscox & Calisch, 1998).

The quality of trainee supervision can be dependent on the supervisor's level of cultural competency. Some supervisors are more open to discussing issues of diversity

and inclusion with their supervisees than others, which means, depending on the supervisor, a supervisee's needs may not be met (Wang et al., 2019). In supervision, racial and ethnic minority supervisors spent more time discussing cultural issues with their supervisees and supervisors who were more comfortable and in tune with their own racial identity who were paired with students similarly comfortable rated their supervisory alliance as better (Hird et al., 2001; Bhat & Davis, 2007). Supervisors being open to discussing issues of race and culture would allow both white and non-white supervisees more time and space to discuss relevant cultural issues. However, the lower numbers of supervisors of color make it difficult to analyze the effects of race on the supervisory alliance (Bhat & Davis, 2007).

### **Coping Strategies for Racial Battle Fatigue**

When anticipating a racial conflict, Black students may experience anxiety-like symptoms such as rapid breathing and digestive issues along with bouts of insomnia and mood swings (Smith et al., 2011). Black students use many strategies to mitigate potential damage RBF causes, such as isolating themselves from non-Black peers, seeking community with other Black students and faculty, or finding non-black allies to aid them when dealing with racially toxic environments.


Isolation as a coping strategy sometimes manifests as Black students purposefully missing student organization meetings specifically to avoid potential racial microaggressions (Hotckins & Dancy, 2015). This course of action is termed “reactive invisibility,” a step that Black students take to intentionally make themselves less visible and shield them from the effects of RBF (Hotckins & Dancy, 2015 p. 40). Reactive invisibility as a form of self-isolation and should not be confused with feelings of

isolation caused by being othered by one's peers. Isolation caused by feelings of being “the only one” in a program can lead to a lack of connectedness to one's campus community and an inability to feel comfortable or feeling “out of place” (Brunsma, Embrick, & Shin, 2017; Harris & Linder, 2018). Instead of mitigating RBF, Isolation through othering can compound it (Harris & Linder, 2018).

Black students take assertive stances to combat feelings of social isolation (Henfield et al., 2012). Some students engaged in what is termed “responsive interest preservation,” where Black students allied themselves with non-Black students who were dedicated to racial equality (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2015). Taking the idea of responsive interest preservation even further, Black graduate students may even select their graduate program based on the program's perceived dedication to diversity and inclusion (Harris & Linder, 2018). Black students on college campuses also seem to find solace in their culturally specific college communities, such as fraternities and other Black student organizations (Hotchkins & Dancy, 2015; Smith et al., 2007). Safe spaces where they can be their authentic selves by connecting with others and discussing their experiences are helpful to these students (Quaye, Karikari, Allen, Okello, & Carter, 2019).

### **Coping Strategies for Black Art Therapy Graduate Students**

There is a notable lack of diversity in most art therapy graduate programs (Lumpkin, 1998; Awais & Yali, 2015). These programs may also be isolating to Black students even though there is a purported increased interest in multicultural competency (Lumpkin, 1998; Gipson, 2015). For Black art therapy graduate students, the effect is two-fold as they must also contend with the racism that exists outside of their programs (Gipson, 2015).

Hamrick and Byma (2017) tried to  confront this issue of art therapy as an overwhelmingly white field at its source in their research. They noted that the nature of art therapy as a predominantly white field harms not only art therapists of color but white art therapists as well by limiting their view of the world around them and inhibiting their ability to work productively with diverse populations. The overwhelming whiteness of the field inhibits therapists and limits the self-awareness of white practitioners. To help alleviate this, these authors insist that white art therapists must listen to therapists of color when they are describing their lived experiences.

In order to survive their education, Black students must develop ways to cope. Reflecting on Hotchkins and Dancy's (2015) idea of responsive interest preservation, art therapists of color actively seek community with one another to advocate for themselves and increase their visibility within the field (Potash et al., 2015). This would make sense considering that the field of art therapy has ignored the contributions of therapists of color in their curriculum and history (Potash, 2005). Some black art therapy graduate students find safety and support with their families or religious groups and feel comfortable disclosing their experiences to them (Lumpkin, 1998). These same students did not feel as comfortable disclosing their experiences to their non-black peers or faculty (Lumpkin, 1998).

Black students in graduate school for other mental health professions are faring similarly. Black students in graduate counseling programs face similar feelings of isolation and tokenism as well as feelings of invisibility (Haskins et al., 2013). One method that Black students in counseling education seemed to favor was mentorship from both Black and non-Black mentors (Bhat, Pillay, Hudson, & 2012). The American Art



Therapy Association also noted that mentorship was valuable in retaining Black students but admitted that the mentorship program had become disorganized (Potash et al., 2015).


## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Semi-Structured Interview Method**

The semi-structured interview method is best used for the investigation of the observations and attitudes of participants regarding complex issues while also gaining a new understanding of certain phenomena (Barriball & While, 1994; Kallio, Pietilä, Johnson, & Kangasniemi, 2016). The semi-structured interview style also allows for a more conversational style of discourse than structured interviews as well as the opportunity to probe for more information and clarification of participant responses (Barriball & While, 1994; Harrel & Bradley, 2009). The semi-structured interview methodology also allows for an interchange between the researcher and participants as the researcher can ask follow-up questions and delve into the participants' experiences (Kallio et al., 2016). This allows the researcher to focus on the material that is meaningful to the participant (Kallio et al., 2016).

To conduct a semi-structured interview, the interviewer creates an interview guide containing questions and topics that must be covered (Harrel & Bradley, 2009). The interview guide usually consists of different types of questions: descriptive questions which result in the participants describing a narrative, structural questions that result in participants creating a list, and contrast questions that differentiate items on that list (Harrel & Bradley, 2009). Questions on the guide rely on previously gained knowledge on the interviewer's part to create a framework for the interview that allows for productive participant responses that uncover participant's stories and personal feelings

(Kallio et al., 2016). The interview guide  this research contained questions from all of the categories mentioned above (see Appendix A).

## **Participants**

For the purposes of this research, participants were purposefully selected based on their reported experience of RBF, their current or previous attendance in an art therapy program, and their self-identification as Black or African American. Students included those participants who are still currently in school pursuing their art therapy degree and undergoing university supervision and or on-site supervision. Student participants were snowball sampled from art therapy graduate programs accredited by ACATE or approved by the American Art Therapy Association. The goal was to recruit 5-25 participants for a clearer understanding of this lived experience (Polkinghorne, 1989).

Emerging professionals included those who are in the process of or have recently obtained licensure and are undergoing art therapy supervision, be it on-site or off-site. Emerging professionals were also purposefully sampled using the snowballing method. Contact was made with various emerging professionals and students by disseminating a recruitment document on Facebook and the American Art Therapy Association's provided forum.

Semi-Structured interviews were conducted with four self-identified Black female participants. Two of the participants identified as emerging professionals who had graduated and were working in the field. The other two identified as students and were working as interns under both university and onsite supervision. Participant names were changed to protect participant anonymity. Below is a short description of each participant to provide context:

Liz was a student from the northeastern United States at the time of this interview. She has since graduated and is currently pursuing licensure. Throughout her interview, Liz was introspective and spoke about the importance of understanding herself in relation to others.

Sam was a student from the southwestern United States at the time of her interview. She was in the middle of her internship and had both university and onsite supervision. She has since graduated. Sam often spoke about handling social issues from a systemic point of view.

Rachel is an emerging professional working in the midwestern United States who recently graduated and is currently working in the field and pursuing licensure. Rachel spoke about understanding her position as a biracial woman and how that affects her experience.

Laurel is an emerging professional from the northeastern United States who recently graduated and is currently working in the field and pursuing licensure. She described herself as someone who will always open her mouth in the face of oppression.

## **Materials**

When conducting interviews, I used a device to audio record the conversations. These recordings were stored on a device that could be connected to a computer using a mini USB cord but otherwise had no internet access and therefore could not be hacked. This device was stored in a lockbox in my desk, and all recordings will be deleted in 7 years. For this research, I wrote notes directly after interviews. For my response art-making, I required yarn, denim, and my iPad. My iPad was not be used to record or store participant data and did not come into contact with participant recordings.

## **Procedure**

I approached this research project from a critical paradigm.

IRB approval for this study was obtained (see Appendix B). When beginning interviews, I obtained the informed verbal consent to record interviews from each participant and disseminated a participant notification form (Appendix C) before engaging with them in the semi-structured interviews.

These interviews were conducted over the phone and recorded using a recording device. Data collection took place during the summer of 2019. To begin these semi-structured interviews, I asked a series of open-ended questions that made up my interview guide to gain insight into participants' experience of RBF. Questions about identifying demographic information other than race, gender, and general geographic location were not asked in order to maintain participant anonymity. I continued to engage in my own art-making in response to participant interview responses as a form of reflective commentary to add to stance as the researcher (Shenton, 2004).

## **Stance as Researcher**

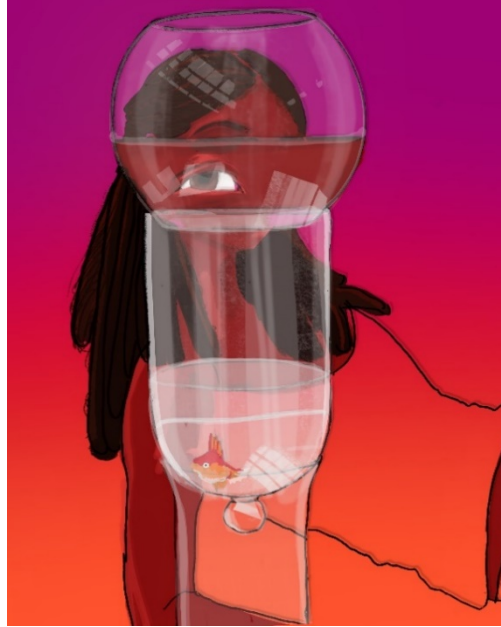
When beginning this research, I drafted a stance as a researcher. I am opting to include a brief overview of that stance. I myself am a cisgender female Black art therapy student currently undergoing supervision. I have experienced Racial Battle Fatigue both inside and outside of the classroom during my tenure as an art therapy student, and that influenced my decision to pursue research on this topic. It is my stance that research on the topic of RBF is necessary in order to better art therapy education as a whole and provide stable and safe opportunities for future Black students. This involves taking the stance that art therapy education should be informed by the ideas of harm reduction,

social justice, and challenging white supremacy. In order to examine these ideas for myself and separate them from participant responses, I created my own artwork (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* Research Stance. This figure illustrates the researcher's response to the query of creating a stance as a researcher.

Figure 2 was created when analyzing my identity as the researcher and speaks to my own preferred coping mechanisms for RBF. I created this piece when asking myself about my own thoughts and opinions about RBF and how it affects me in my daily life. Figure 2 exhibits my normal response to instances of RBF and microaggression, which is to reflect what the other person is saying and seek escape.



*Figure 3.* Fishbowling. This figure illustrates the researcher's response to the query of creating a stance as a researcher.

Figure 3 reflects my anxiety as a researcher. Figure 3 speaks to the further bracketing of my experience from that of the participants in this study. This piece reflects on the fact that this research would be read by more than just me and that how I chose to write or not write it would be analyzed by those higher than me. Conversely, it also places my participants in the position of being analyzed, something I did not feel comfortable with.

### **Data Analysis**

Three forms of analysis were used for the collected data:

1. Thematic analysis
2. My own artmaking
3. Analysis of voice

In the process of transcribing the interviews, I wrote notes about my own stance on RBF in the margins and continued to create my own artwork in response. I made a

note of my various reactions and feelings experienced during the listening process in order to engage in reflective commentary and maintain accountability with my research stance (Shenton, 2004).

### ***Thematic Analysis***

Recordings generated from these semi-structured interviews were then transcribed verbatim, and the transcriptions were then imputed into NVivo. Following every two interviews, I reviewed all transcripts and used Creswell's (2007) method of highlighting key statements to looking for thematic elements that lent insight into the participant's experiences of RBF.

These analytic memos served the purpose of aiding in the drafting of the final document. Throughout this process, I engaged in participant check-ins. When questions arose regarding participant responses or clarification was needed, I called to check in with participants and inquire as to their intent. Participants were apprised of this possibility during the participant notification process and informed consent process at the beginning of each interview. Transcripts were coded line by line using NVivo, and themes were generated from these codes. These themes were then defined, and a thematic write up was produced.

### ***Artmaking***

Artmaking was conducted alongside the thematic analysis. After narrowing down the major themes apparent in the participant interviews, I created artwork around each theme and my perception of the experience of that theme. These artworks were created via digital illustration.



### *Analysis of Voice*



The participants' voices were analyzed using the method outlined by Woodcock (2016) using a listening guide. This method of analysis was used to gain a deeper understanding of participant voice and lived experience. Woodcock's (2016) method was informed by the work of Gilligan (2015) on constructing and using listening guides to understand the perspectives of participants. Woodcock's (2016) method strove to allow researchers to gain an understating of the participant's first-person voice. This method was used to gain an understanding of how participants speak about themselves in relation to themselves and others. This form of analysis of voice was chosen over Gilligan's (2015) because it involves the interaction of the participant and others around them rather than solely their internal voice. The poems used for analysis will be included in the appendix (see Appendix D). This method of analysis involves highlighting statements that begin with "I," "you," and "they" in order to explore the participant's internal conversations regarding RBF (Woodcock, 2016). Once this is done, the statements and the participant's tone are analyzed.

## **APTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

#### **Findings**

This study found that the four participants interviewed all reported experiencing RBF. Each participant described their experiences as both psychological and physiological. The major themes of their experiences were isolation, validation vs. invalidation, and responsibility to the field. Each participant reported using art as a coping strategy for RBF, as well as a number of other strategies.

#### **Thematic Analysis**

After a thorough review of the interview transcripts, the themes that were discovered are 'Isolation,' 'Validation vs. Invalidation,' and 'Responsibility to the Field,' based on the participant's experiences. These themes were chosen because they frequently appeared across the four participant's responses.

##### **Isolation**

The theme of *Isolation* can best be explained as the participants' feelings of being "the only one," as in, the only African American, in various settings including in the classroom, in supervision (both onsite and on-campus), and the workforce. Participants spoke freely about this experience. One of the participants, Liz, a student, spoke about how merely noticing her status as the only Black art therapist in training at her site was enough to evoke feelings of RBF:

*"The isolation. It's nothing that they're [her co-workers] doing. They're not doing anything that I feel is negative, but I think it's just noticing. Being more aware like, 'Okay, there are really not a lot of black people here.'"* - Liz, line 153-

155

The trend of being “the only one” continued in Laurel’s interview as she lamented the lack of diversity in her program as well as overall in the region in which she practices:

*“You don’t see many people of color in our field. I mean, I’m in [location] [north east], and I think, as far as I know of students of color - like it’s very, very, very white. Like in my class that graduated, we were the most diverse.”* – Laurel, line 75-78

This experience was echoed by the other three participants as well.

Rachel spoke more specifically about her experience of RBF and how isolation acts as a catalyst for her feelings of fatigue:

*“I feel it the most when I have to speak up, and there’s no one else that looks like me and thinks like me.”* – Rachel

These responses seem to speak to isolation through *otherness*. Sam’s description of when she feels RBF appears to be a particularly salient response to isolation through otherness. She talked about a fear of being late to class and later, being late to work. Her feelings of RBF were activated by the anxiety of how her lateness would be perceived differently because of her Blackness:

*“No, I’m not going to do it. Because I’m the black person, it will become an issue.”*  
*I could be completely inaccurate about that, but that’s how I hold it. As THE*  
*black person, I don’t get to be lax like the rest of them do.”* – Sam, line 156-159

This feeling of isolation appears as a primary contributing factor to feelings of RBF for all four participants. The feelings of isolation seem to be activated by a

perception of being alone in a particular space (be it academics or professional) and the responses from others that that aloneness might evoke.

### **Validation vs. Invalidation**

The theme of *Validation vs. Invalidation* encapsulates the different responses participants had to having their lived experience either validated, respected, and heard regarding their feelings of RBF or invalidated both by supervisors, teachers, and peers by being dismissed and left unheard. All four participants identified points of both validation and invalidation in their education and or careers.

Laurel spoke passionately about her feelings of invalidation, specifically in the classroom. She described herself as someone who “won’t not speak up” and described herself as feeling RBF when her experiences were invalidated in the classroom:

*“I’ve had professors where they say to me like, “You shouldn’t be so hot-headed about it” or like pulled aside because I didn’t want to make a comment, but they pushed me to make a comment.”* – Laurel, line 196-198

Laurel then spoke about how these mixed messages left her feeling invalidated and made her not want to share as much in her courses in a way that resembles reactive invisibility:

*“I see something, and I speak my mind, and I’m not responded to or validated or anything really, challenged, anything really. Do you think I’m going to keep talking in class?”* – Laurel, line 203-206

Conversely, Laurel was able to identify her second internship experience as a productive space where she did not feel RBF. This seems to resemble responsive interest preservation:

*“...it was a trauma-focused, culturally competent site and had conversations with my supervisor about having it feel like I was always the one who had to say something in the room and the fact that I was with people who were conscious of what that experience was like, actually gave me the opposite effect and just was like I don't have to justify myself in this space at all.”* – Laurel, line 147-152


Like Laurel, Sam also focused on the idea of finding spaces that allow for validation when speaking about her experience at her first art therapy conference:

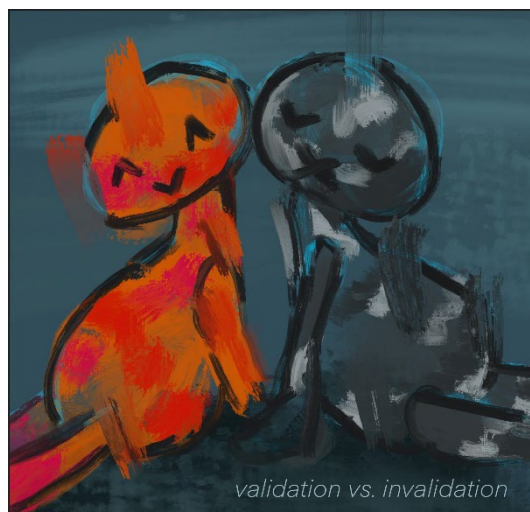
*“...I met them at the conference and seeing other black students who were in school, that was helpful. The support is coming together, like meeting other people who are in the profession like me, seeing my reflection.”* – Sam, line 319-322

Finally, Rachel also centered on this theme:

*“And I feel it [RBF] the least probably when I'm around other people of color, or especially now one of my bosses is a person of color, so being in a space that already understand racial dynamic and how racism works and how it's a system”*  
– Rachel, line 107-109

When looking at all of the participant responses as a whole, it becomes clear that, to them, validation consists of more than just words but also defines their experiences of the space they inhabit both in the classroom and in their professional capacities. When participants felt they were in a validating area, they expressed that their feelings of RBF decreased. Conversely, when they found themselves in more oppressive spaces, those feelings increased. The racial makeup of a space seems critical to how validating a space

feels as well. Being given the opportunity  be in spaces that include other Black people seems to have a validating effect for these participants.



*Figure 4.* Validation vs. Invalidation. This figure illustrates the researcher's response to the thematic element of validation vs. invalidation.

In responding to this theme, I created this artwork. The two figures presented are representations of the feelings of being either validated or invalidated. The figure that is experiencing the feeling of validation is warmer in tone, signifying that it is healthy. The figure that is experiencing invalidation is in black, white, and shades of grey, signifying that it has lost its color and is not very healthy. They are presented as very similar forms and, even though they are turned away from each other, they are still linked at the hand as they are so closely related. It is very easy for a validating space to become invalidating and, thus, for the validated figure to lose its color as well.

### **Responsibility to the Field**

The idea of Responsibility to the Field of art therapy is the most difficult to define. For this research, this theme will revolve around the idea of a feeling of responsibility for future art therapists of color, both students and emerging professionals, as well as clients of color. It encompasses the idea that the participant *must* do something,

not for themselves but for the larger collective regardless of whether it causes them to feel RBF.

This was most obvious in the discussion with Sam, where she spoke about tackling diversity in her program from a structural standpoint. Sam spoke about her willingness to go to conferences and meet Black potential students face to face to aid in recruitment and retention even when her chances of meeting future Black students was limited:

*“I was willing to be the face, like so when I was a graduate assistant. I would go to conferences and sit at the table... I was going to conferences that were predominantly white, so that's not really helping.”* – Sam, line 387-389

Sam spoke about the field as a whole and the lack of overall diversity as well as what she believes her role is in increasing diversity, again, from a systemic standpoint:

*“My personal commitment is to really increase access to art therapy services to people in marginalized communities and to really advocate for the increased retention in enrollment of people of color into the art therapy profession. That's what we need to do.”* – Sam, line 360-363

Rachel said that her feelings of RBF increased when she had to step into her advocacy role while also dealing with the effects of isolation:

*“...I think what I think, and I believe what I believe, and I'm here to do the work in my community. And so I think I feel it [RBF] the most when I have to advocate for other people of color and when they're absent from that place.”* – Rachel, line 104-106

Rachel's voice sounded exhausted when she described the balancing act of managing her own needs while also feeling that she must act on behalf of others who are not in the room.

The theme of responsibility to the profession seems to boil down to the idea of trying to be present for others when participants aren't feeling present themselves. Even if the action taken seemed futile, like in Sam's example, there was a refusal to give in. Students and emerging professionals seemed to take on the responsibility of increasing diversity within the field, even if it put them at risk for higher feelings of RBF.

This theme can be best summarized by Laurel when describing a situation where she was no longer in a position to advocate for a client of color in a primarily white facility:

*"If I was there, I would have said something. But at that point, I was so far removed that there was nothing I could do. So, feeling that helplessness of like, ah, why is this still a site that we're actually catering to"* - Laurel, line 141-144

Even in a situation where she had no power, Laurel still felt responsible to speak for her client, who could not. It led to feelings of "hopelessness." Laurel took a more defeated tone when describing this.





*Figure 5.* Responsibility to the profession. This figure illustrates the researcher's response to the thematic element of Responsibility to the Profession.

This art piece was created in response to the theme of responsibility to the profession. It is depicted as a figure with several legs being pulled in different directions but a body that has limited control over them. This figure also has no arms and is not able to reach out for help. Finally, this figure has no mouth and, therefore, cannot speak. So this figure has the appearance of capability, maybe even more than others, but little actual power to do what it wants.

### **Art Making in response to RBF**

I also asked participants to discuss whether or not they used artmaking to process their experience of RBF. While there was little overlap in their choice of media, all four participants reported using artmaking to process the various aspects of RBF and reported it as a positive coping mechanism. There is a trend amongst these participants of artmaking as a method for the externalization and processing of these negative feelings. While some participants did share their artwork with me, they did not consent to have their artwork used in this writeup. Participants seemed to focus on the process of artmaking and the externalization of complicated feelings, as explained by Liz:

*“It helps a lot, making the art because sometimes for me, it's really hard for me to think of the words that are coming in my mind. It's so hard to come out of my mouth. But it's so much easier to visualize it, and I'm like, "Okay, I can actually tell you exactly what's going on in this artwork that I made."” - Liz, line 247-251*

Experiences of RBF seemed to be challenging to verbalize for Liz. Her artwork made it easier for her to communicate her lived experience with others.

Sam also spoke about her artwork as a place to sift through and find relief from feelings surrounding her experience of RBF:

*“Yeah, because it [RBF] brings up these feelings in me, and I need to process the feelings.” – Sam, line 225-226*

And Laurel:

*“I can put all my aggression, all my anger, all my sadness into this piece and like feel better about it.” – Laurel, line 482-484*

Both Liz and Laurel presented artmaking as their central coping skill for RBF while Sam and Rachel presented artmaking as a technique combined with others such as community work, yoga, and finding social supports. All of the participants agreed that artmaking was one of their primary tools in relieving their symptoms of RBF.

Laurel was the most specific in her art process:

*“I think one of the biggest things I learned while I was in school, like El Duende process painting is amazing.” –Laurel, line 485-486.*

She spoke clearly about how El Duende process painting aided her in processing her difficult emotions:

*“I was feeling all these things and this is my process of how I was going through these things.” – Laurel, line 502-503*

Laurel used this art process to comb through the feelings surrounding her lived experience. Liz also spoke about how her artmaking allowed her to communicate her lived experience with people even outside of her program who may not be aware of RBF:

*“And I feel like a lot of people really talk about that with their art, even if they're not in the art therapy program, I've seen it all over, in certain areas of New York. So it's important. I think it stops people and it helps people to see, like, “Oh wow, this actually... I didn't know this was happening. That seems really interesting.” Because I've met people who will stop and look at an art piece rather than listening to someone talk for hours and hours.” – Liz, line 257-263*

Communicating the lived experience of RBF through artwork seems to allow Liz to engage in conversations that she found beneficial regarding her feelings and the experiences of other people like her. This is a connecting thread for the use of artmaking as a coping mechanism for the experience of RBF. Laurel’s method of process painting is where this shows itself most potently, but the theme underlies all four participants’ artmaking processes.

### **Ameliorations**

Three of the participants provided ideas for specific remedies for RBF in the art therapy education system and the field as a whole. They proposed ideas about creating spaces for discussion of complex issues as well as providing resources for students and emerging professionals to be exposed to cultural differences. Sam focused on systemic change, a thread that exists in all of her responses:

*“...we need more people, more black professors, teachers. We need more students enrolling into the program. There's so many features as to why that's not happening, like access, and resources, but that comes to mind.” – Sam*

Laurel continued the systemic notion:

*“...give me the space to like feel like I'm being heard, at least. I think it's the biggest thing. I think another thing is like having access to resources that actually expose people to differences and then that could also create the dialogue.” –*

Laurel, line 353-365

Creating spaces where Black students can be “heard” and seen seemed to be the biggest amelioration proposed. The ameliorations that participants proposed for RBF seem involve a culmination of the themes mentioned prior. Creating these spaces involves increasing spaces that, by these participant’s definitions, would decrease feelings of isolation and invalidation.

## **Analysis of Voice**

### **Liz**

In Liz’s interview, she took an introspective tone. Liz described her efforts to adjust for and modify her own biases. With the line “I will not lie,” Liz took accountability for prior instances of misperception regarding the racial and ethnic identities of others. That being said, Liz still acknowledged that there is a history of inequity in the field of art therapy. Her tone, when describing this, however, was observational. Almost clinical. It is less a judgment and more of a statement of fact. In a short passage, Liz displayed the ability to recognize her own misjudgments while also not

discounting the validity of her observation<sup>15</sup>. This would seem confusing if it were not for Liz's ability to parse between the two. She was able to question her own biases *and* acknowledge that the inequity she is observing is real.

Two voices appeared in Liz's transcript:

**The analytical voice** – When Liz uses this tone, she speaks only to the facts. She appears unemotional and observational. When she speaks this way, she appears nonjudgmental.

"Yeah, there are a lot of white people in this field." This was said with very little inflection. It is an observation rather than a condemnation.

**The wistful voice** – This voice appears in short bursts alongside the analytical voice. It is emotional. It often does not speak in full sentences and frequently pauses, relaying what would appear to be a lack of hope.

### **Sam**

In a segment of Sam's interview, she described her response to a particularly salient experience of microaggression and her chosen method to process the emotions it evoked. She spoke to the experience from the perspective of her body with statements like "I could feel it in my body," and "I was very activated." Even with the salient feelings of "disgust," Sam manages to evoke a proactive tone when describing her choice to "come home." In this, Sam takes control of her experience. Sam's equating of her usage of the art as a spiritual process underscores the relief it is able to provide her. This short example of Sam's experience illustrates how she has managed to develop her artmaking as a method to cope with her lived experience. The overall tone was proactive. Sam had taken steps to analyze how art could be effective for her and, moreover, took steps to purposefully use the art to alleviate her symptoms of RBF.

Two voices appeared in Sam's transcript:

**The action-oriented voice** – When using this tone, Sam was focused on finding relief and alleviating distressing symptoms of RBF. This voice appeared when Sam described the formation of a plan to seek relief and externalize her feelings.

**The distressed voice** – When using this voice, Sam seemed keenly aware of her emotions and bodily focused. Her voice took on a heightened tenor as if she was reliving the feeling all over again as she described it. The distressed voice feels deeply.

### **Rachel**

In a segment of her transcript, Rachel took on a thoughtful tone when answering questions regarding her lived experience. Her responses were not rushed and involved an analyzing her own identity and place. This continued when describing her needs from the people around her: "I don't have to explain what happened and then explain again why it's racist or hurtful or not okay." Her tone was knowing and demonstrated a clear understanding of her sense of self and her boundaries.

Two voices appear in Rachel's transcript:

**The contemplative voice** – When using this voice, Rachel often used the phrase "I think..." before completing a statement. Many of the statements using this tone were introspective and self-focused, centering on her own experience. Rachel used this tone of voice when describing her own identity.

**The relational voice** – Rachel used this voice when speaking about her relationships with others. Her voice was light in tone; she appeared sure in her description of her needs in relation to others. She used this tone to describe what she wanted from others and what she was willing to give others.

**Laurel**

In a segment of her interview, Laurel's tone was passionate and adamant. There were moments when she spoke quickly. These tended to be when she was describing instances of what she perceived as injustice regarding her clients or others that she cared about. Her tone was clear when describing what she wanted from the field, and what she thought was right. She acknowledged her own emotional responses to injustice in distinct terms. "I was pissed. I was livid." When speaking about her emotions, her tone was ardent and left little room for misunderstanding.

Two voices appear in Laurel's transcript:

**The righteous voice** – When using this voice, Laurel appeared adamant. Her tone was heightened and sure. She spoke this way when describing instances of injustice regarding people she cared about. She used this voice when seeking justice and fairness while also describing what she believed made up injustice.

**The compassionate voice** – Laurel used this voice when describing her relationships with people that she cared about. This voice is softer but no less passionate. When using this voice, Laurel's tone was protective.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Findings

Each participant's lived experience of RBF was different and nuanced, but, as presented in this report, there were overarching themes that colored all of their experiences. Participant's coped with their feelings of RBF in many ways, but all identified artmaking as one of their primary coping mechanisms.

#### Thematic Elements

The themes found in this study were isolation, validation vs. invalidation, and responsibility to the profession. Two of these themes were echoed in similar research. Particularly, the theme of isolation appears across the spectrum (Henfield et al., 2012; Harris & Linder, 2018; Quaye et al., 2019). More specifically, the idea of being "the only one" (meaning the only African American) in an academic seems to be an overarching theme. This notion is echoed in statements made specifically by Sam.

The theme of validation also appears as an overarching theme in the literature, specifically in the relationships between Black students and non-Black faculty as well as between in supervisee/supervisor dynamics (Franklin, 2016; Harris & Linder, 2018).

The theme of responsibility to the field does not appear in the literature as it is presented in this report. This makes sense, given the difficulty in naming and defining this particular theme. Lumpkin (1998) comes the closest when describing Black art therapy students' feelings of responsibility to address multicultural issues in the classroom, even when faculty and other non-Black students do not. There are echoes of it in other places, however, like Black students feeling of needing to code switch



specifically give off an appearance of professionalism acclimation to meet faculty expectations even when Black students don't want to (Henfield et al., 2012).

Most notably, these thematic elements seem to interact with one another. Feelings of validation versus invalidation seem to interact with feelings of isolation, and one's feeling of responsibility to the field. There are similarities in how participants discussed their feelings of isolation and their feelings of validation versus invalidation. When reviewing the results, it would appear that increased feelings of invalidation could lead to feelings of isolation. In order to stave off feelings of invalidation and isolation, students seem to increase their feelings of responsibility to the field.

### **Ameliorations for RBF**

The participants' ideas about giving space for open discussion were congruent with the ameliorations proposed by the literature. Finding people and spaces that allow for the discussion of the symptoms of RBF and microaggressions are shown to be a strategy to ameliorate these symptoms (Cueva, 2014). There may be a benefit in making these spaces homogeneous in terms of racial identity as it may be less traumatizing to students of color and less shaming to white students (Wang et al., 2019). Acknowledging the struggles that Black students face and allowing them space to speak about them without fear of retribution seems to be beneficial.

### **Artmaking**

Artmaking manifests profoundly as a coping strategy for these particular students and emerging professionals. All participants cite artmaking as one of their primary resources in coping with feelings of RBF. Media differs from participant to participant, but all who spoke explicitly about their artmaking spoke about the externalization of negative feelings as the primary focus of their artmaking. It can be beneficial for students

and emerging professionals who are experiencing RBF to process their lived experience and name what they are feeling (Franklin, 2016). Laurel's discussion of El Duende process painting warrants more research for its potential as a specific art process for RBF. There is research that suggests that El Duende process painting can aid in self-disclosure from supervisees to supervisors (Robb & Miller, 2017). Perhaps analyzing this from a racial standpoint could lend itself to further supervisory ameliorations for RBF.

### **Implications for the Future of Art Therapy Education**

There is an awareness in the field of art therapy (and the mental health profession at large) that there is a need to recruit a more diverse coalition of art therapy students into the various graduate programs spread across the country (Henfield et al., 2012; Awais & Yali, 2013). If these students are going to be recruited, examining their experiences is paramount to student retention and overall positive outcomes (Franklin, 2016). These students are faced with a Eurocentric curriculum that does not always reflect people who look like them, and may leave them feeling separate from their communities (Talwar, Iyer, Doby-Copeland, 2004; Franklin, 2016). Graduate programs of all kinds have a responsibility to make *all* of their students feel safe and accepted (Green, Pulley, Jackson, Martin, & Fasching-Varner, 2018).

The literature supports the idea that it should not fall on Black students but instead on faculty and administrators to educate themselves and white students about the history of white supremacy and develop safe spaces for Black students and students of color (Harris & Linder, 2018; Franklin, 2016). Spaces for Black students with other intersectional identities (such as gender identity and sexuality) may be even more unsafe as spaces that are racially safe for them may be unsafe for their compounding identities

(Quaye et al., 2019). There may also need to be a shift in how multicultural competency is taught in counseling education (Wang et al., 2019). Even though the responsibility of combating racist systems perpetuated by universities should not fall on Black students, it often does (Quaye et al., 2019).

Universities are trying to recruit Black students, but critical work needs to be done on a systemic scale for actual retention (Henfield et al., 2012; Franklin, 2016). Sam's insistence that there needs to be a focus on the retention of Black students in art therapy programs, as well as the hiring of faculty of color, is also congruent with the literature (Henfield et al., 2012; Cueva, 2014; Franklin, 2016;). Graduate students of color sometimes choose programs based on the program's professed position on diversity and inclusion, as well as the availability of faculty members of color (Harris & Linder, 2018). Faculty of color can be seen as potential allies for Black students, but even that may pose a challenge if faculty of color are also behaving in an unintentionally oppressive manner (Cueva, 2014).

The literature supports the importance of between students and faculty/advisors in navigating counseling graduate programs by providing mentorship (Bhat, Pillay, & Hudson, 2012). For this to be possible, faculty training in multicultural competence is important (Bhat et al., 2012). Supervisors providing services to both students and emerging professionals may need to receive even more supervision regarding these issues (Bhat & Davis, 2007).

## Limitations



In this study, only four people were interviewed using a specific set of participant criteria. A more extensive study would ideally interview more participants and reach more people in the field – art therapy faculty and practicing art therapists in various types of settings. The participants in the present were also homogeneous in terms of gender. It would be interesting to gain insight into the art therapy education experiences of Black men and nonbinary individuals. Examining how different intersectional facets of identity impact the effects of RBF could be an interesting place to take this research.

## Disclosure of Funding

This research project was funded by the American Art Therapy Association's Pearlie Roberson Scholarship.

## Suggestions for Further Research

Avenues for future research would be further investigating the burnout and retention rates of Black art therapy students compared to their white counterparts in art therapy graduate education. Studying the rates of burnout or dropout rates of Black students could lead to the development of further ameliorations and increased diversity in graduate programs. Continuing research on further ameliorations for Black students experiencing RBF could also be beneficial for Black art therapy students in the pursuit of their education.

Is decreasing the number of microaggressions Black students experience possible. With information about RBF, are there more ways for non-Black faculty to intervene when microaggressions are happening and provide resources for student processing?

## Conclusion

For the participants in this study, RBF was a part of their lived experience. They were all able to identify times in their education and beyond where they experienced RBF. For each of them, artmaking was a constant, a method used to cope with the feelings RBF evoked in their lives. How graduate programs teaching the skills of the profession choose to handle the retention of Black students will determine how the field of art therapy looks in the future. For a field that is concerned with its issues with diversity, beginning at the foundational level provides an opening for real change. For myself, a Black female art therapy graduate student on the cusp of my own graduation, I am hopeful for the future and for the Black art therapists who will follow me.

## REFERENCES

- Awais, J., & Yali, M. (2013). A call for diversity: The need to recruit and retain ethnic minority students in art therapy. *Art Therapy, 30*(3), 130–134. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2013.819284>
- Awais, J., & Yali, M. (2015). Efforts in increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the field of art therapy. *Art Therapy, 32*(3), 112-119. doi:10.1080/07421656.2015.1060842
- Barriball, L. K., & While, A. (1994). Collecting data using a semi-structured interview: A discussion paper. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 19*(2), 328-335. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.1994.tb01088.x
- Bhat, C. & Davis, T. (2007). Counseling supervisors' assessment of race, racial identity, and working alliance in supervisory dyads. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 35*, 80-91. doi:10.1002/j.2161-1912.2007.tb00051.x
- Bhat, C., Pillay, Y., & Hudson, D. (2012). Supporting African American females in doctoral counseling programs at predominantly white institutions. *VISTAS Online*.
- Byma, C., & Hamrick, C. (2017). Know history, know self: Art therapists' responsibility to dismantle white supremacy. *Art Therapy, 34*(3), 106-111. doi:10.1080/07421656.2017.1353332
- Cleveland, D. (Ed.). (2004). *A long way to go: Conversations about race by African American faculty and graduate students* (1st ed.). New York, NY: Peter Lang Inc.
- Cook, D. A. (1994). Racial identity in supervision. *Counselor Education & Supervision, 34*(2), 132. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.1994.tb00320.x
- Cueva, B. (2014). Institutional academic violence: Racial and gendered microaggressions in higher education. *Chicana/Latina Studies, 13*(2), 142-168.
- Evans, T., Bira, L., Gastelum, J. Weiss, L. T., & Vandeford, N. (2018). Evidence for a mental health crisis in graduate education. *Nat Biotechnol, 36*, 282–284. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nbt.4089>
- Franklin, J. (2016). Racial microaggressions, racial battle fatigue, and racism-related stress in higher education. *Journal of Student Affairs at New York University, 12*, 44-55.
- Gipson, L. R. (2015). Is cultural competence enough? Deepening social justice pedagogy in art therapy. *Art Therapy, 32*(3), 142-145. doi:10.1080/07421656.2015.1060835

- Gilligan, C. (2015). The Listening Guide method of psychological inquiry. *Qualitative Psychology*, 2(1), 69–77. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000023>
- Green, A. (2016). The cost of balancing academia and racism. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/01/balancing-academia-racism/424887/>
- Green, D., Pulley, T., Jackson, M., Martin, L. L., & Fasching-Varner, K. (2018). Mapping the margins and searching for higher ground: Examining the marginalisation of black female graduate students at PWIs. *Gender and education*, 30(3), 295-309. doi:10.1080/09540253.2016.1225009
- Harrell, M. C., & Bradley, M. A. (2009) *Data collection methods: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups*, Santa Monica, CA.: RAND Corporation
- Harris, J., & Linder, C. (2018). The racialized experiences of students of color in higher education and student affairs graduate preparation programs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 59(2), 141-158.
- Haskins, N., Whitfield-Williams, M., Shillingford, M.A., Singh, A., Moxley, R. and Ofauni, C. (2013). The experiences of black master's counseling students: A phenomenological inquiry. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 52, 162-178. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6978.2013.00035.x
- Henfield, M., Woo, H., & Washington, A. (2013). A phenomenological African American counselor education students' challenging experiences. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 52, 122-136. doi:10.1002/j.15566978.2013.00033.x
- Hird, J. S., Tao, K. W., & Gloria, A. M. (2004). Examining supervisors' multicultural competence in racially similar and different supervision dyads. *Clinical Supervisor*, 23(2), 107–122. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J001v23n02pass:\\_J07](https://doi.org/10.1300/J001v23n02pass:_J07)
- Hiscox, A. R., & In Calisch, A. C. (1998). *Tapestry of cultural issues in art therapy*. Philadelphia, PA.
- Hotchkins, B. K., & Dancy, T. E. (2015). Black male student leaders in predominantly white universities: Stories of power, preservation, and persistence. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 39(1), 30–44. Retrieved from <https://login.libproxy.siu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=103197076&site=ehost-live&scope=site>
- Hurtado, S., Alvarez, C., Guillermo-Wann, C., Cuellar, M., Arellano, L. (2012) A model for diverse learning environments. In: Smart J., Paulsen M. (eds) *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research*. Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research (pp.41-122). Springer, Dordrecht

- Hyun, J., Quinn, B., Madon, T., & Lustig, S. (2006). Graduate student mental health: Needs assessment and utilization of counseling services. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(3), 247-266. doi:10.1353/csd.2006.0030
- Kallio, H., Pietilä, A. M., Johnson, M. & Kangasniemi, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 72(12), 2954– 2965. doi: 10.1111/jan.13031
- Lumpkin, C. L. (1998). We wear the masks: A study of black art therapy students. In A. Hiscox, & A. Calisch (Eds.), *Tapestry of cultural issues in art therapy* (pp. 221 -228). London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Potash, J. S. (2005). Rekindling the multicultural history of the American art therapy association. *Art Therapy*, 22(4), 184-188. doi:10.1080/07421656.2005.10129522
- Potash, J. S., Doby-Copeland, C., Stepney, S. A., Washington, B. N., Vance, L. D., Short, G. M., ... Ballbé ter Maat, M. (2015). Advancing multicultural and diversity competence in art therapy: American Art Therapy Association Multicultural Committee 1990–2015. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 32(3), 146–150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2015.1060837>
- Quaye, S., Karikari, S., Allen, C., Okello, W., & Carter, K. (2019). Strategies for practicing self-care from racial battle fatigue. *Journal Committed to Social Change on Race and Ethnicity*, 2(2), 95-131.
- Robb, M., & Miller, A. (2017). Supervisee art-based disclosure in El Duende process painting. *Art Therapy*, 34(4), 192-200. doi:10.1080/07421656.2017.1398576
- Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, 22(2), 63-75.
- Smith, W. A., Allen, W. R., & Danley, L. L. (2007). "Assume the position . . . you fit the description": Psychosocial experiences and racial battle fatigue among african american male college students. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 51(4), 551-578. Retrieved from <http://login.libproxy.siu.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/214767954?accountid=13886>
- Smith, W., Yosso, T., & Solorzano, D. (2006). Challenging racial battle fatigue on historically white campuses: A critical race examination of race-related stress. *Faculty of color: Teaching in predominately white colleges and universities*. 32, 299-327.
- Tummala-Narra, P. (2007). Conceptualizing trauma and resilience across diverse



contexts: A multicultural perspective. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 14, 33–53. Retrieved from  
<https://login.libproxy.siu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=24772492&site=ehost-live&scope=site>

Wang, S. C., Hubbard, R. R., & Dorazio, C. (2019). Overcoming racial battle fatigue through dialogue: Voices of three counseling psychologist trainees. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tep0000283>

Woodcock, C. (2016). The listening guide: A how-to approach on ways to promote educational democracy. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 15(1) 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406916677594>

## **APPENDIX A**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. “What does the term *Racial Battle Fatigue* mean to you?”
2. “The literature provides \_\_\_ definition of RBF. What is your response to this definition?”
2. “Do you experience RBF in your setting (s)?”
3. “What is your experience of RBF in this setting?”
4. “In what settings do you feel RBF the most? The least?”
5. “What is your experience of supervision?”
6. “What is your experience RBF in on-site supervision? On campus supervision?”
7. “Where would you like support?”
8. “What methods do you use to cope with RBF?”
9. “How do you feel about artmaking in relation to RBF?”
10. “In the event you engage in artmaking, would you be willing to share your art and discuss the imagery?”

## **APPENDIX B**

### **IRB**

## #311 - Black Art Therapy Students and Emerging Professional's Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue

Review Type	Status	Approval Date	Continuing Review Date	Expiration Date
Exempt	Exempt	Apr 05, 2019		Apr 05, 2022

### Feedback

---

#### Approval Comment

PI: Marilyn Holmes Protocol # 311 Approved by the IRB on 4/5/19, your protocol was designated exempt from further IRB review according to the federal regulations on human subjects research as allowed in 45 CFR 46.104 (b) (2).

#### General Information

**Complete the following protocol if you are conducting research with human subjects.**

Research is defined as a systematic investigation designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. (Generalizable knowledge is described as activities intended to be presented at regional, national, or international meetings and/or published in an academic/peer-reviewed journal or a non-peer reviewed format intended to influence behavior, theory or experimental design). This definition has been updated so that the following activities are deemed NOT to be research:

- Journalistic activities such as oral history, journalism and biography
- Public health surveillance activities
- Collection and analysis of information for criminal justice purposes
- Activities in support of national security missions

For a more detailed description of research definitions, click [here](#).

#### Principal Investigator

Holmes, Marilyn

#### Lead Unit

Art and Design (71050)

**Study Title**

Black Art Therapy Students and Emerging Professional's Experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue

Preliminary Review Type: Exempt

Are you a student?

Yes

---

**People**

Click "add line" to add Co-Investigators, Faculty Advisors, or Student Investigators. You must also edit your information by clicking on the pencil icon.

**SIUE Personnel**

---

**Person**

Holmes, Marilyn

**Home Unit**

Art and Design (71050)

**Email Address**

marihol@siue.edu

**Phone**

618-650--336

**Researcher Role**

Principal Investigator

**Contact Roles**

Admin

**Permissions**

Full Access

#### IRB Training Records

Marilyn Holmes has no training courses on file.



#### Date of Human Subjects Training Completion

If you do not see your human subjects training certificate listed above, please upload or drag and drop your certificate here.

[CITICOMPLETIONREPORT3803279.PDF](#)

#### Person

George, Jayashree

#### Home Unit

Art and Design (71050)

#### Email Address

[jaygeor@siue.edu](mailto:jaygeor@siue.edu)

#### Phone

618-650-3109

#### Researcher Role

Faculty Advisor

#### Contact Roles

Admin

#### Permissions

Full Access

#### IRB Training Records

Jayashree George has no training courses on file.



#### Date of Human Subjects Training Completion

October 23, 2018

If you do not see your human subjects training certificate listed above, please upload or drag and drop your certificate here.

[CITICOMPLETIONREPORT4614988 2.PDF](#)

Does this project include a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) who is not employed by SIUE?

No

---

### General Questionnaire



Please indicate your use with human subjects data.

Select All the Apply

Interaction with human subjects (e.g. survey, interview, focus group)

Does your research involve deception (the participant is unaware of the purpose of the study)?

No

Does your research involve

**prisoners**

?

No

Does your research involve children (subjects under the age of 18)?

*This includes survey or interview procedures. This does not include observation or research being conducted in commonly accepted educational settings involving normal educational practices.*

No

Are your subjects identifiable either through direct interaction or through your data collection form AND does the collection of information include sensitive data (e.g. protected health information, illegal activity, etc.)?

No

Are you conducting research involving the use of drugs and/or a medical device (e.g. monitoring blood pressure)?

No

Are you collecting blood samples or biological specimens?

Example: saliva, hair or nail clippings, teeth, etc.

No

Are you planning to use physical sensors that will be close to or applied to the body?

No

Does your research involve having participants exercise, or test the participant's muscular strength, body composition assessment, flexibility, etc?

No

Is this a clinical trial? Please review the [Clinical Trial Determination](#) for assistance.

No

Are you a faculty member teaching a class where students conduct research to learn about research methods with human subjects and you want to complete a single IRB for the entire class?

Please see [SIUE's Classroom Protocols Guidelines](#) for more information.

No

Based on the answers to the general questionnaire your protocol may qualify for exempt status. You may not begin your research until you receive confirmation that the research meets exemption criteria and this protocol is approved by the IRB office. Also, please note that any revision to the research must be approved by the IRB before its implementation to determine its effect on the exempt status of your study.

### Protocol Description

Based on the answers to the exemption screening questions your protocol may qualify for exempt status. You may not begin your research until you receive confirmation that the research meets exemption criteria and this protocol is approved by the IRB office. Also, please note that any revision to the research must be approved by the IRB before its implementation to determine its effect on the exempt status of your study.

Project Start Date: Upon IRB Approval

I agree

Anticipated Project Ending Date

May 1, 2020

Indicate which of the following are expected sites of investigation:

SIUE Main Campus

Is any of the investigation to be conducted at other institutions or locations off campus?

No

Provide a brief statement regarding the purpose of the research. (Why are you doing this research?)

The purpose of this research is to explore how Black art therapy students and emerging professionals cope with and manage feelings of racial battle fatigue. This study also seeks to explore if art therapy students and emerging professionals use art in their coping with racial battle fatigue.

In lay language, describe how the research will be conducted.

Step by step process of your research with the human subjects

First, I, as the researcher, will draft a stance as researcher to bracket my own experience of this phenomenon. Following this, I will obtain IRB approval for this study. When beginning interviews, I will use a digital request to obtain the informed consent of each of my participants using a consent form before engaging with them in semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be conducted digitally using an app such as Zoom or over the phone as technology and distance allow. To begin these semi-structured interviews, I will ask a series of open-ended questions (see attachments) to gain insight into their experience of this phenomenon. In the process of transcribing the interviews, I will write notes about my own stance on RBF featured during the listening process so that I can maintain accountability with my research stance. I will do this to maintain my trustworthiness as the researcher. I will engage in my own art-making in response to participant interview responses to bolster my stance as the researcher. In order to analyze this data, following every two interviews, I will review the recordings and highlight key statements. I will then use these key statements to draft a textual description or analytic memo of my participants' experience of RBF. These analytic memos will serve the purpose of helping me write up my final report. Throughout this process, I will engage in member checking. When questions arise with participant responses or clarification is needed, I will check in with participants. participants will be apprised of this possibility during the informed consent process.

In lay language describe the role of subjects interaction with the individual or the use of their data/specimens.

Interaction with subjects will occur through semi-structured interviews. Participants may also be contacted a second time as a part of member checking which may be necessary for clarification of participant responses. Participant data will be used to construct a textual description of their shared experience in a final report.

Explain the use of any educational test or procedure, interview, or survey. Explain how information will be recorded.

Information will be collected using the semi-structured interview style. The interviews will be recorded using a recorder with a USB or mini USB port but no internet access. These interviews will then be transcribed and analyzed for a final report.

Are the subjects identifiable?

No

State the minimum number of subjects, existing records, or specimens you hope to obtain for your study to have validity and reliability.

The minimum number of subjects is 5.

Are you studying, collecting, or recording data from anyone 90 years or older?

No

Age(s) of subjects you are studying, collecting, or recording data

Participants are expected to be at least 21.

Describe the EXPECTED DURATION of the TOTAL STUDY (i.e. recruitment, data collection, data analysis, etc.), and the

DURATION OF EACH SUBJECT'S participation.

This should correspond to the dates you've listed on the cover page of this application.

The expected ending date of this study is May 2020. Data collection will take place during the summer of 2019. Each subject will be asked to participate in an hour-long interview. Participants may also be contacted following their interview for clarification of their responses. They will be made aware of this possibility in the informed consent.

Specify the risks to the subject(s) and the steps you will take to minimize each risk.

Some participants may find the topic of RBF to be emotionally distressing. This possibility will be mentioned in the informed consent form in order to be transparent and to aid in participants' choice in participating in this research study. Further, because there are so few Black art therapists, their need for anonymity might affect participation. This risk will be minimized by assigning each participant a pseudonym, not naming the State where they practice, and masking identifiable data.

Will demographic information be collected?

Yes

List all demographic information that will be collected (e.g. age, sex, income, etc.)

Race, gender, age, years out of school, and general location (Midwest, Southern, Northwestern)

How will the identities of subjects and/or their responses be recorded?

Anonymous (direct identifiers, such as names of subjects, or indirect identifiers, such as codes, are never recorded with the research data and therefore cannot be linked to the subjects).

Describe how the information will be recorded anonymously.

Data will be recorded anonymously by assigning each participant a pseudonym, not collecting data on what state they're from, and masking identifiable data.

**Explain how subject recruitment is to be carried out.**

Provide copies of letters, media ads, posters, etc. or the Recruitment document in the Attachments section of the protocol with the attachment type 'Recruitment Materials'.

Student participants will be purposefully snowball sampled from ACATE accredited art therapy graduate programs. Emerging Professionals will also be purposefully sampled using the snowballing method. Contact will be made with various supervisees and students using social media such as Facebook and connections made with various faculty and students during the study. A recruitment document will be distributed via email to potential subjects.

**Are subject incentives or payment to subjects offered?**

Examples of incentives include gift certificates, extra credit for a class, etc.

No

**Describe the composition of the proposed study population in terms of gender and racial/ethnic group, and provide a rationale for selection of such subjects.**

Example: If you will include/exclude subjects based on gender or racial/ethnic group, explain.

This study seeks to include specifically Black students/supervisees who have either recently graduated from or are still attending an art therapy program accredited by or in the process of being accredited by ACATE.

**Describe how you have access to this study population (e.g. superintendent at the school, instructor of a class, etc.).**

Letters of agreement from cooperating research sites should be included as an attachment.

I have access to study this population via instructor relationships and social media.

**For each investigator and co-investigator, including non-SIUE personnel, who are on this project:**

1) describe their experience/qualifications

2) describe their role on the project

Marilyn Holmes is the lead investigator on this project. She has experience in coding, grant writing, and conducting interviews. Marilyn was project lead on a grant-based research project at Morehead State University.

**Identification of health information to be collected or recorded:**

See [IRB HIPAA forms](#) for more information

No health information

This text box is available for PI and Co-PI or Adviser to comment on the protocol before submission. This is a chance for you to discuss suggested changes to the protocol without making the changes yourself. (e.g. faculty comments to student or Co-PI to PI) These comments will not be included in the IRB review.

If you do not have comments for others listed on the protocol, please type N/A.

N/A

---

## Attachments

Read the instructions below the attachments. They are customized to the answers on this protocol form and will give you guidance on which attachments to upload.  
To add an attachment, please click the +Add Line button on the right.

#### Attachments

---

Name

Recruitment Document

Attachment

[IRB RECRUITMENT DOCUMENT.DOCX](#)

Attachment Type

Comments

Name

Interview Questions

Attachment

[INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.DOCX](#)

Attachment Type

Comments

Name

Participant Notification

Attachment

[IRB RESEARCH PARTICIPANT NOTIFICATION \(1\) \(1\).DOC](#)

Attachment Type

Comments

Name

Faculty Advisor Certification form

Attachment

[DOC04503020190405163538.PDF](#)

Attachment Type

Comments

- If you will recruit participants, upload the [Recruitment Document](#) or other recruitment materials.
- All participants must be notified of their involvement in this study and their rights as a research participant. Please complete the [Research Participant Notification](#) and provide the document to each participant before they begin the study.
- Upload a copy of your [survey or interview questions](#).
- If this is a student project submitted by the student, please upload the [Student Project Faculty Advisor Certification Form](#).
- If this is a student project submitted by the faculty, please upload the [Student Project Certification form](#).

---

### Certification

I have read and do understand the policies and procedures governing research with human subjects, and I fully intend to comply with them. I further acknowledge my responsibility to report significant changes in the procedural summary prior to making these changes.

I accept responsibility and have used the ethical guidelines set forth by the Belmont Report, Declaration of Helsinki, the Nuremberg Code, or the Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association for the research described.

I have the requisite credentials, training and any necessary privileges to carry out all procedures involved in the protocol. Universal precautions will be used in handling all research specimens.

I certify that the above statements are accurate

---

**APPENDIX C****PARTICIPANT NOTIFICATION FORM**





## RESEARCH PARTICIPANT NOTIFICATION

1. Marilyn Holmes, an art therapy counseling master's candidate is inviting you to participate in this research study.
2. The title of this study is "Black Art Therapy Students and Emerging Professional's experiences with Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF)". The purpose of this research is to explore how Black art therapy students and art therapy supervisees cope with and manage feelings of racial battle fatigue. This study also seeks to explore how art therapy students and supervisees use art in their coping with racial battle fatigue.
3. Your participation in this study will involve participating in a semi-structured interview and answering a number of open-ended questions related to the experience of RBF. These interviews will be conducted over the telephone will be recorded. You may be contacted following your interview for possible clarification of interview responses.
4. The risks to you as a participant are minimal. Some participants may find the topic of RBF to be emotionally distressing. You have a choice on whether you want to participate. Your anonymity will be maintained by assigning you a pseudonym, not naming the State where you practice, and masking identifiable data.
5. The results of this study may be published in scientific research journals or presented at professional conferences. However, your name and identity will not be revealed, and your record will remain confidential. Interview recordings will be stored under lock and key with a pseudonym.
6. Participation in this study may/will benefit you by increasing your awareness of racial battle fatigue and methods to cope with it. Participation in this study may not benefit you directly. Your participation may benefit future Black art therapists and art therapy students struggling to find methods to cope with racial battle fatigue. Further, this is a way to add your voice to the field of art therapy.
7. You can choose not to participate. If you decide not to participate, there will not be a penalty to you or loss of any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw from this study at any time.
8. If you have questions about this research study, you can call Marilyn Holmes at 502-544-9379. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you can call the SIUE Institutional Review Board at 618-650-3010 or email at [irbtraining@siue.edu](mailto:irbtraining@siue.edu).

## **APPENDIX**

### **I-Poems**

I think it's only really happened once or twice. A lot of the environments I worked in didn't have a lot of people coming, either as docs or as clients even. But, actually I, when I was at the VA there was a couple of clients of color that I really connected with. After I had left, one of my friends were still there and knows like I'm very passionate about these race issues, stuff like that. He came to me and said to me, so and so that you had a connection with got basically put under the bus because of his color. I was pissed. I was livid. I already had issues with that supervisor already of feeling like she just said whatever came out of her mouth and didn't take into consideration the populations that she was working with or the fullness of the people that she was working with even. It hurt my soul to know that someone that I worked with who was making progress, who was actually benefiting from art therapy was screwed over because he was one of a few. If our job is to be ethical and to have a particular, be unbiased to those that we work for and with then you should do that. If you're not going to do that, you're in the wrong fucking field. Sorry about the obscenity.

I think  
I worked  
I was at the VA  
I really connected  
I had left  
one of my friends were still there  
I'm very passionate  
He came to me  
you had a connection  
I was pissed  
I was livid  
I already had issues  
she just  
she was working  
she was working  
my soul  
someone that  
I worked with  
who was making progress  
who was benefiting  
he was one  
our job is to be ethical  
we work for  
you should do that.  
you're not going to do that,  
you're in the wrong fucking field

In a segment of her interview, Laurel's tone was passionate and adamant. There were moments when she spoke quickly. These tended to be when she was describing instances of what she perceived as injustice regarding her clients or others that she cared about. Her tone was clear when describing what she wanted from the field and what she thought was right. She

acknowledged her own emotional responses to injustice in distinct terms. “I was pissed. I was livid.” When speaking about her emotions, her tone was ardent and left no room for misunderstanding.

**The righteous voice** – When using this voice, Laurel appeared adamant. Her tone was heightened and sure. She spoke this way when describing instances of injustice regarding people she cared about. She used this voice when seeking justice and fairness while also describing what she believed made up injustice.

**The compassionate voice** – Laurel used this voice when describing her relationships with people that she cared about. This voice is softer but no less passionate. When using this voice, Laurel’s tone was protective.

**Commented [MOU1]:** This analysis is the most powerful and original contribution. This needs to be woven in as it deserves to be highlighted in all its power.

I will not lie. I may, in fact, be thinking that without really asking questions about a person's background. But I think sometimes we have on these glasses or these lenses assuming that if they have a particular skin color they must be white, when that's not the truth. So I will say that's my fault and my error in my part. But I don't know, I think, looking into the history of art therapy, if you look into people who have created or started the works through the art therapy program, they were mostly white females. And they were art teachers that promoted this field in a sense, and so... In that sense, if you look, like I said, if you look into the history it starts, for me, I see then a lot more white people are there. And I've had conversations with a lot of white female art therapists that have mentioned, "Yeah, there are a lot of white people in this field." So yeah.

#### **Woodcock, 2016 Method:**

I will not lie  
I may be thinking  
I think sometimes  
We have on these glasses

they have a particular skin color  
they must be white

I will say  
my fault  
my error  
my part  
I don't know  
I think

you look into people

they were mostly white females  
they were art teachers

you look

I said

you look into the history

I see then a lot more white people  
I've had conversations

white female art therapists

In this section of Liz's interview, she takes an introspective tone. Liz describes her efforts to adjust for and modify her own biases. With the line "I will not lie," Liz takes accountability for prior instances of misperception. That being said, Liz still acknowledges a history of inequity in her field. Her tone, however, is observational. Almost clinical. It is less a judgement and more of a statement of fact. In this short passage, Liz displays the ability to recognize her own misjudgments while also not discounting the validity of her observations. This would seem confusing if it were not for Liz's ability to parse between the two. She is able to question her own biases *and* acknowledging the inequity that what she is observing is real.

**The analytical voice** – When Liz uses this tone, she speaks only to the facts. She appears unemotional and observational. When she speaks this way, she appears nonjudgmental. "Yeah,

there are a lot of white people in this field." This was said with very little inflection. It is an observation rather than a condemnation.

**The wistful voice** – This voice appears in short bursts alongside the analytical voice. It is emotional. It often does not speak in full sentences and pauses frequently belying what would appear to be a lack of hope.

Well, I'd like support everywhere. I think, like you said, definitely it's important that supervisors have that because my issue at my last job was with my supervisor. And so I think that those are people ... And as a supervisor, you're supposed to be helping a new professional. So I think that's a very important role. And being fresh out of school or still in school and then also learning new things is hard. So I think that just, yeah, supervisor is very important. Instructor, that's very important too because they need to know what they're talking about and they have to understand these systems. Otherwise, you can't teach it to other people. So you have to really understand, not just like, "Oh, I read about it and this is a thing," actually understanding how it works. I think in your closest relationships, so your family. And for me, I'm biracial, so half my family is white. So it's important that they understand that and understand my experience is really different from their experience. And then your partnership. I'm engaged to a man of color, so that makes it easier for us to understand each other and support each other when stuff happens. If I were to summarize it, it would be any person that you have to go to. I want support in place where I don't have to explain what happened and then explain again why it's racist or hurtful or not okay. So then you can just say that, and then they understand it on this other level.

#### **Woodcock (2016) Method:**

I'd like support

I think

you said

supervisors have that

my issue

my last job

my supervisor

I think

you're supposed to be helping

I think that's a very important role

I think that just

supervisor is very important.

Instructor, that's very important

they need to know

they're talking

they have to understand

you can't teach it

you have to really understand

I think

your closest relationships

your family

And for me,

I'm biracial

half my family is white

they understand that

my experience

their experience.

your partnership.

I'm engaged

man of color

us to understand each other  
I were to summarize it

you have to go

I want support  
I don't have to explain

you can just say that

they understand it

In a segment of her transcript, Rachel's took on a thoughtful tone when answering questions regarding her lived experience. Her responses were not rushed and involved an analyzing her own identity and place. This continued when describing her needs from the people around her: "I don't have to explain what happened and then explain again why it's racist or hurtful or not okay." Her tone was knowing and demonstrated a clear understanding of her sense of self and care needs.

**The contemplative voice** – When using this voice, Rachel often used the phrase "I think..." before completing a statement. Many of the statements using this tone were introspective and self-focused centering on her own experience. Rachel used this tone of voice when describing her own identity.

**The relational voice** – Rachel used this voice when speaking about her relationships with others. Her voice was light in tone she appeared sure in her description of her needs in relation to others. She used this tone to describe what she wanted from others and what she was willing to give others.



Yeah, because it brings up these feelings in me, Like and I need to process the feelings. for example, last week when the front desk person made the comment about my client, I felt completely disgusted by it. I could feel it in my body. I was very activated by it, so I just came home. I came home and did response art to the feeling of disgust, so it's very helpful, which is, and like Bruce Moon. That's Bruce Moon's approach. Bruce Moon's approach is take it to the art, like everything you got going on take it to the art. I've been practicing that for myself because I really like that approach, and coming in as a spiritual life coach I would always take everything to prayer, or to a spiritual process. Now I'm trying to shift it to make the art the prayer for me. This is really, really helpful.

I need to process

I felt completely disgusted  
I could feel it  
I was very activated  
I just came home  
I came home

it brings up these feelings

the front desk person made the comment

Bruce Moon.  
That's Bruce Moon's approach.  
Bruce Moon's approach

you got going on take it to the art.

I've been practicing  
I really like that  
I would always take everything  
I'm trying to shift

In this segment of the interview, Sam describes her response to a particularly salient experience of microaggression and her chosen method to process the emotions it evoked. She speaks to the experience from the perspective of her body with statements like “I could feel it in my body”, and “I was very activated.” Even with the salient feelings of “disgust”, Sam manages to evoke a proactive tone when describing her choice to “come home.” In this, Sam takes control of her experience. Sam’s equating of her usage of the art as a spiritual process underscores the relief it is able to provide her. This short example of Sam’s experience illustrates how she has managed to develop her artmaking as a method to cope with her lived experience. The overall tone is proactive. Sam has taken steps to analyze how art could be effective for her and, moreover, takes steps to purposefully use the art to alleviate her symptoms of RBF.

**The action-oriented voice** – When using this tone, Sam was focused on finding relief and alleviating distressing symptoms of RBF. This voice appeared when Sam described the formation of a plan to seek relief and externalize her feelings.

**The distressed voice** – When using this voice, Sam seemed keenly aware of her emotions and bodily focused. Her voice took on a heightened tenor as if she was reliving the feeling all over again as she described it. The distressed voice feels deeply.