

Ethics Group

Throughout the year, participants in this discussion included:
Lenore Blum, Jazz Fantauzzi, Sharon Lamb, Alexandra Minieri, Leanne
Parker, Dan Walinsky

Process

- Meetings

- Scheduling was a challenge: we are a committed and busy group!
- Our engagement during meetings was quickly deep and meaningful: members seemed to crave discussions around the role of ethical practice.
- The range of issues that we discussed was vast. Group members all spend significant portions of our professional lives thinking about the role of professional ethics. Still, it remained challenging to establish a foothold of where to begin in context of curricular praxis.
- Current legal issues became the focus of many of our discussions as we reflected on the roles of psychologists as practitioners and educators.

Some ongoing discussions

- The legal implications of and - barriers to - what we, as a group, would see as ethical practice have become significantly more challenging and disruptive to our work.
- Differences in state legislation highlights the reality that ethical practice may face different hurdles in different states.
- Connecting with state psychological associations and state boards seems like an increasingly crucial practice.
- Relationships and support among psychologists about ethical issues continues to be essential

Specific Identified Issues

- Implications of recent legal decisions:
 - Texas, where psychologists who support women making autonomous choices about their own bodies might hold legal and financial liability and be at risk of legal action taken against them by any civilian.
 - This type of legal action creates an immediate tug between practice from the perspective of ethical principles such as autonomy, nonmaleficence, fidelity, integrity, justice, & respect for people's rights and dignity and legal liability.
 - TPA response: "TPA is currently working to explore the implications of this decision and develop support resources for our members and the public. It is our goal to gain a richer understanding of the legal and ethical consequences of the SCOTUS decision and to gain clarity on how we can continue to engage in practice, research, advocacy, and legislative effort that promotes human welfare."
 - Florida, HB 7, which requires an objective approach to teaching topics related to power, privilege, and oppression
 - This type of legislation, which is accompanied by significant financial penalties to institutions found in violation, creates significant barriers to teaching from critical pedagogical frameworks.

Foundational Resources to Spark Discussion

- Society of Indian Psychologists Commentary on the APA Ethics Code (2014) and accompanying teaching document.
- Flynn, A. W. P., Domínguez, S., Jr., Jordan, R. A. S., Dyer, R. L., & Young, E. I. (2021). When the political is professional: Civil disobedience in psychology. *American Psychologist*, 76(8), 1217–1231

Outcomes and Ideas for the Future

- Our discussions are ongoing
- We are unable to offer SCP more than a commitment to continuing conversations and curating those conversations through ethically-themed discussion questions throughout the upcoming year (e.g., we do not have a proposed curriculum – but we do have ongoing questions!)
- The ethical issues that we discuss are all living in context of/in relation to systems and structures of white supremacy and anti-Blackness; of legally and financially encapsulated structures of medicine and third-party payment
 - The first APA Code of Ethics (1953) was developed using a critical incident technique to identify ethical issues and themes. The sample of participants represented practicing psychologists in 1953. Perhaps it is time to replicate that strategy with a more intentionally representative sample – with liberation as a primary goal.

Ongoing Questions

- In your current role, what are the legal and political issues that have implications for your practice as a psychologist or student?
- What types of feelings emerge as you consider the ways in which your work in psychology encounters tensions between legal and ethical requirements?
- How to manage ethical decision-making when state law contradicts our ethics code and evidence-based research about what is best for our clients