Author's response to reviews

Title: "That Never Would Have Occurred To Me": A Qualitative Study of Medical Students' Views of a Cultural Competence Curriculum

Authors:

Johanna Shapiro (jfshapir@uci.edu)
Desiree Lie (dalie@uci.edu)
David Gutierrez (dquiter@uci.edu)
Gabriella Zhuang (gzhuang@uci.edu)

Version: Date: 9 May 2006

Author's response to reviews:

May 9, 2006

Dear Editors:

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our manuscript "That Would Never Have Occurred to Me..." We have made the following changes suggested by the reviewers:

1) We have made all seven minor corrections suggested by Reviewer Beagan. Thank you for being such an exceptionally meticulous reader!

2) We have addressed the question posed by Reviewer Beagan regarding tape-recording of the two individual interviews (p. 6, lines 1-3).

3) Reviewer Crosson is still concerned about the use of the term "theoretical triangulation." Perhaps my reading of Denzin's classic article is incorrect, but my understanding is that he distinguishes between "data triangulation," which refers to utilizing multiple data sources; and "theoretical triangulation," which I interpret as indeed referring essentially to the utilization of a multi-disciplinary analytic perspective. If I am mistaken, please confirm, and we will be glad to change the text accordingly.

4) Reviewer Crosson suggests we shorten the Introduction. We have reduced the introduction from 576 to 321 words. As recommended by the reviewer, we have done more summarizing of the various studies, as well as reorganized the introduction in an attempt to make our points more clearly and concisely.

5) In Reviewer Crosson's opinion, the Results section is overly long. His recommendation was to focus only on those concepts that emerged independently from the data. While we seriously considered this approach, we concluded that it would not do justice to the essential findings of our research. Therefore we attempted to chart a middle course. We reduced this section from 2394 to 1337 words. More importantly, we selected the themes we considered of greatest importance, regardless of whether they emerged in response to the interview schedule or completely spontaneously. We believe that all reported findings, regardless of origin, are not simple descriptions of the data, but rely on detailed interpretive analyses. This section has also been restructured. Insofar as possible consistent with a significant reduction in verbiage, we tried to preserve as many direct quotations as possible.

6) Both reviewers had concerns about the Discussion section. Both rightly criticized our unusual (and at the time, what struck us as an innovative) decision to incorporate additional student recommendations. Reviewer Beagan characterized this as "the authors hiding a bit behind the study participants," and this struck us as a very valid comment. Reviewer Crosson also was troubled by the inclusion of new findings in the Discussion, and again felt this section was poorly organized and too long. In response to this feedback, we shortened the Discussion and Conclusion from 1493 to 1023 words. We removed all references to "new" data from study participants not previously mentioned in the Results section. Further, we reorganized the Discussion so that it clearly addresses all points presented in the Results. We further attempted to provide our own authorial recommendations or concerns regarding the issues raised by study participants. As Reviewer Beagan anticipated, although we have enormous respect for her concern to protect already doubly vulnerable minority patients, we still believe in the value of students being educated to internalize a position of cultural humility. We have tried to express this viewpoint in the discussion.

Overall, we took seriously Reviewer Crosson's implicit concern that an exploratory study such as this did not merit such detailed reporting. Therefore, we have reduced the total text from 5357 to 3472, which is more in line with his recommendations. In addition to the specific changes enumerated above, we significantly revised all aspects of the manuscript, including modifying the abstract, clarifying the data analysis process,
adjusting subheadings, and making numerous additions and modifications in the text in an effort to clarify the import of our findings. We are confident that the present version is a significant improvement and we thank the reviewers for their patience with this manuscript.

Johanna Shapiro, Ph.D.