



JEFFERSON NEUROBEHAVIORAL GROUP
Megan A. Ciota, PhD

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. University of Georgia
Major: Clinical Psychology, Behavioral Medicine Track
Major Professor: Amos Zeichner
Date: June 1998
- MS University of Georgia
Major: Clinical Psychology
Date: August 1996
- BA State University of New York at Binghamton
Graduated with Honors in Psychology
Major: Psychology
Date: May 1993

LICENSURE

Louisiana Licensed Clinical Psychologist: License Number 866
Commonwealth of Massachusetts Licensed Psychologist Provider: License Number: 7700

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND HONORS ORGANIZATIONS

American Psychological Association
Association for the Advancement of Behavior Therapy
International Society of Neuropsychology
Psi Chi, National Honor Society in Psychology
Society of Behavioral Medicine

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

10/00 – Current

Clinical Psychologist/ Neuropsychologist

Jefferson Neurobehavioral Associates
Metairie, LA

Specializing in neuropsychological evaluation, psychological evaluation, behavioral medicine, and cognitive behavioral therapy in both out and in-patient settings. Provide assessment and/or psychotherapy to a variety of patient populations including chronic pain patients, individuals with compromised health and/or cognitive functioning, and individuals with psychopathology including affective, anxiety, personality, psychotic, and/or behavioral disorders. Serve child, adolescent, adult, and geriatric populations.

8/99 - 10/00

Psychologist for Cooperative Study

Boston VA Medical Center
Boston, MA

Served as the clinical psychologist on the Gulf War Illness Exercise/ Behavioral Therapy Treatment Trial study for Gulf War veterans with fatigue, muscle/joint pain, and cognitive complaints following deployment to the Persian Gulf. Responsibilities included delivering a cognitive/behavioral treatment protocol to veterans, monitoring progress, and reporting Boston's results to central headquarters. Also involved with screening veterans to determine appropriateness for participation in study and collecting psychological data at baseline and post-treatment.

In addition to study responsibilities, served as a member of the Behavioral Medicine Team of the Psychology Department at the Boston VA Medical Center. Supervised graduate and internship level students' therapy cases, performed individual and group therapy, and conducted pre-surgical psychological evaluations and neuropsychological assessments.

9/98 - 8/99

Neuropsychology Postdoctoral Fellow

Boston University Department of Neurology/ Boston VA Medical Center
Boston, MA

Supervisors: Roberta F. White, Ph.D., ABPP
Maxine Krengel, Ph.D.

Major responsibilities included performing neuropsychological evaluations from multiple referral sources in the Boston Veterans Medical Center including neurology, medicine, psychiatry, psychology, rehabilitation, and outpatient clinic services. Neuropsychological fellow for the Boston University Neurological Associates service performing assessments of community-based patients with a variety of referral and diagnostic questions including the cognitive functioning consequences of toxin exposure, head injury, learning disabilities, and CNS disease. Overall, approximately 4-5 assessments were performed weekly. A general core battery was utilized and augmented with tests that were chosen based on the referral question

and patient characteristics. A process approach was employed in order to aid in understanding patterns of patient cognitive functioning.

In addition to assessment, a weekly neuropsychology case conference was attended during which patient testing was reviewed and specific disorders and their neuropsychological sequeli were identified and discussed. Neurobehavior/Aphasia rounds were attended weekly and provide the opportunity for an interdisciplinary approach to patient assessment and care. For these rounds, responsibilities included the neuropsychological testing of patient and presentation of neuropsychological findings 1-2 times per month. Participated in the Behavioral Neurology Treatment Planning Team, an interdisciplinary approach to patient care. In addition, weekly Neurology Bed Rounds were attended.

9/97 – 6/98 Practicum Post-Intern Supervisor

University of Georgia Psychology Clinic
Athens, GA
Supervisor: Amos Zeichner, Ph.D.

Responsible for the supervision of 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students enrolled in the clinical psychology program. Assisted in developing clinical skills by aiding in junior students' session planning, assessment, case conceptualization, treatment planning and implementation, as well as evaluation of treatment progress. Supervision was provided by direct observation of therapists' sessions followed by weekly individual one-on-one meetings to discuss and evaluate progress. A weekly team practicum meeting was designed to incorporate feedback from all members of the practicum team. Cases included depression, antisocial personality disorder, borderline personality disorder and non-clinical syndromes. In addition, a caseload of one client was carried to serve as a training case for the practicum team. Supervision load: Three students with two clients each. (Hours: 40 weeks x 13hours = 520 hours)

9/97 – 6/98 Co-Therapist, Cancer Group

and Psychology Clinic
1/95-6/96 University of Georgia
Supervisor: Amos Zeichner, Ph.D.

Co-lead a support group for individuals with cancer. Originally founded this group along with another student in order to broaden clinical experiences, to gain training with a medical population, and to help fill a need for psychological service for those individuals with a cancer diagnosis in the community. Focus was on the thoughts and feelings involving having cancer including issues related to family and friends, body image, death and dying, working, fear of relapse, dealing with medical doctors, and coping. Meetings were held on a bi-weekly basis and supervision consisted of bi-weekly 1-hour sessions. (Hours: 40 months x 8 hours/month = 320 hours)

8/96 - 7/97 Psychology Intern

Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center
New Orleans, LA

Supervisors: Jeffrey West, Ph.D.
 Michael Kauth, Ph.D.
 Sheila Corrigan, Ph.D.
 Jennifer Vasterling, Ph.D.
 John Mendoza, Ph.D.
 Lee Mathews, Ph.D.

The training year consisted of four 3-month rotations as follows: one 3-month rotation in behavioral medicine, two 3-month rotations in neuropsychology, one 3-month rotation divided half-time at DePaul hospital's inpatient child and adolescent units and half-time at the Nursing Home Care Unit.

Rotation in Behavioral Medicine included transplant appropriateness assessment, pain management, bio-feedback, group therapy, individual therapy, psycho-education and supportive therapy for both in and out-patients with infectious disease, cancer, cardiac damage and renal difficulties.

Requirements consistent with the guidelines established by the Task Force on Education, Accreditation and Credentialing of the International Neuropsychological Society and Division 40 of the American Psychological Association were met for training in Neuropsychology with the second and third rotations' primary focus on this area. Worked in collaboration with neurologists to assist in the diagnosis of neurological syndromes, provide diagnostic descriptions of impairments, define spared cognitive skills, outline patient management strategies, and aid in assisting patients with adaptive living skills. Major emphasis was on the development of assessment skills including the use of clinical interviews and behavioral observations, the administration of both mental status exams and more formal neuropsychological test batteries, and the integration of this information into written reports useful for referral source.

The Nursing Home Care Unit experience focused on geriatric neuropsychological assessment and neurological conditions that manifest in this population. The unit served veterans whose medical or neurological disorder precluded independent functioning. Worked in an interdisciplinary rehabilitative setting, including participation in weekly team treatment and discharge planning.

At DePaul Hospital, the training focused on neuropsychological evaluation of children and adolescents referred to this private hospital's inpatient unit for psychiatric disturbances. In addition to assessments, facilitated therapy process groups and assisted staff in understanding neuropsychological deficits and how to plan treatment accordingly.

In addition, yearlong therapy cases were seen including diagnoses of borderline personality disorder, depression, adjustment disorder due to medical illness, schizotypal personality disorder and conversion disorder. Training experience also included neuroanatomy class and brain cuttings at the Tulane Medical School, a weekly Neurology Case Conference at

the VAMC, a weekly seminar in Neuropsychology, and bi-weekly seminar in Child Neuropsychological assessment at DePaul Hospital. (Hours: 40 hours x 48 weeks = 1920 hours).

9/95 -6/96 Therapist Clinical Practicum Team

Psychology Clinic
University of Georgia
Supervisors: Henry Adams, Ph.D.
Bethany Lohr, M.S.

Outpatient based assessment and treatment of adult patients conducted primarily from behavioral and cognitive behavioral perspectives. Caseload included the following issues/diagnostic categories: factitious disorder, major depression, social phobia, agoraphobia, adjustment disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, and paranoid schizophrenia. Therapeutic interventions included cognitive restructuring, scheduling of activities, systematic desensitization, *in vivo* exposure, progressive muscle relaxation, social skills training, and assertiveness training. In addition to individual therapy cases, the team conducted court-ordered and privately referred assessments of deviant sexual behavior and paraphilic disorders. This additional experience included furnishing comprehensive reports to the court and use of the following assessment techniques: penile plethysmograph, self-monitoring, MMPI-2, MCMI, WAIS-R, WRAT3, and the clinical interview. Additionally, experience in the assessment and treatment of simple phobia, sexual fetishism, histrionic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, pedophilia, and dysthymia was gained via the observation of other team members' cases throughout the year. Supervision consisted of approximately thirty minutes per client (two hours per week) and a weekly two-hour team meetings supervised by Dr. Adams and the post-intern supervisor. Additional supervision was provided on an as-needed basis. (Hours: 11 hours x 40 weeks = 440 hours)

9/94 - 6/95 Therapist, Clinical Practicum Team

Psychology Clinic
University of Georgia
Supervisors: L. Stephen Miller, Ph.D.
Mark Davis, M.S.

The primary focus of this practicum was assessment of individuals applying for disability from the Social Security Commission in the state of Georgia. The goal was to assess each client's current psychological functioning and to furnish a comprehensive report to the Social Security office. Approximately twenty clients were assessed and diagnoses included alcohol abuse, major depression, dementia, mental retardation, somatoform disorder, anxiety disorders, dysthymia, post-traumatic stress disorder, and schizophrenia. Assessment techniques were presented and discussed in weekly two-hour practicum meetings and included the WAIS-R, WRAT3, Benton Visual Retention Test, Beck Depression Inventory, MMPI-2, Halstead-Reitan Battery, and clinical interview. Dr. Miller provided one-hour individual supervision meetings in order to discuss clients, test results, and scoring. In addition to the assessments, outpatient based assessment and treatment with an adult population was part of the practicum experience. Assessment and treatment of schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, and anxiety disorder were experienced. The orientation of treatment was cognitive-

behavioral and included social skills training, activity scheduling, and cognitive restructuring. One hour per week was devoted to individual supervision for therapy clients. In addition to personal caseload (2 clients and approximately 20 disability assessments), at least 2 hours per week were devoted to observing other team members' clients that included the treatment and assessment of social phobia, major depression, bipolar disorder, and personality disorders. (Hours: 14 hours x 40 weeks = 560 hours)

9/93 - 6/94 Therapist, Clinical Practicum Team

Psychology Clinic

University Of Georgia

Supervisors: Amos Zeichner, Ph.D.

Sabina Widner, M.A.

Adult assessment and treatment in an outpatient setting were the focus of this practicum. Assessment and therapy were conducted from a primarily cognitive-behavioral orientation and complimented with techniques from other disciplines. Assessment and treatment included the following issues/diagnostic categories: somatoform disorder, narcissistic personality disorder, histrionic personality disorder, anti-social personality disorder, bipolar disorder, and schizoaffective disorder. Assessment tools employed included the MCMI, MMPI-2, interview, and self-monitoring of behavior, affect and cognitions. Therapeutic techniques included cognitive therapy, social skills training, activity scheduling, and assertiveness training. Supervision consisted of weekly one-hour individual meetings with either Dr. Zeichner or the post-intern supervisor, and weekly two-hour team meetings focusing on discussion of all team cases and presentation of related issues including the MMPI-2, MCMI, and developing empathy with clients. In addition to personal caseload (three clients), additional experience with the assessment and treatment of panic disorder, borderline personality disorder, bulimia, and major depression was gained by observing cases of fellow team members. (Hours: 9 hours x 40 weeks = 360 hours)

9/93 - 6/94 Clinic Assistant, Assistantship

Psychology Clinic

University of Georgia

Supervisors: Ilena Arias, Ph.D.

Leslie Love, M.S.

Conducted intake interviews with adult, adolescent, and child clients presenting in an outpatient setting. Served as initial contact for incoming clients, performed initial intake interview, furnished reports to the clinical staff, and provided case management until a primary therapist was assigned. Assessment included determining the appropriateness of the clinic for the client, furnishing appropriate referrals, assessing for suicidal and homicidal ideation, assessing medical, psychiatric, and chemical history, and assessing the presenting problem. In addition, suicide crisis intervention was provided as needed. Service as a liaison between the Psychology Clinic and a practicum team was provided to inform the team of potential clients, Clinic policy changes, etc. Attended meetings relevant to the procedure and policy of the clinic, such as child services meetings, and reported changes in laws and policies to the clinical staff. In addition, remained on call 1-2 days per week in order to handle questions from clients and the

community regarding the clinic, as well as to handle client emergencies. (Hours: 10 hours x 30 weeks = 300 hours)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Doctoral Research, September 1993 to June 1998.

Title: The Impact of Self-Esteem on Responsiveness to Performance Feedback, Anxiety, and Pain Indices

Supervisor: Amos Zeichner, Ph.D.

Location: Department of Psychology, University of Georgia.

Status: Complete

Study was proposed to examine the relationship between pain-relevant anxiety, the malleability of self-esteem, and to consider the implication of this link for the experience of noxious stimuli.

Overall, research activities included writing literature reviews, data collection, the design and implementation of studies, data analysis and supervision of research assistants. Research focused on behavioral medicine, health psychology and neuropsychological issues. Specifically, research topics included sexual dysfunction and aging, psychosocial variables influencing the experience of pain and neuropsychological correlates to the expression of aggression.

Master's Thesis Research, March 1995 to June 1996

Title: The role of psychological variables in buffering anxiety and autonomic arousal during painful stimulus.

Supervisor: Amos Zeichner, Ph.D.

Location: Department of Psychology, University of Georgia.

Evaluated the influence of self-esteem on anxiety, physiological arousal, and subjective pain during a painful episode. In particular, it was proposed that the presence of high self-esteem or a positive manipulation of self-esteem would serve to buffer anxiety during a painful episode, resulting in lower physiological arousal and subjective pain ratings.

Visiting Researcher, June 1994 - September 1994: Research activity still in progress

Supervisor: Marci Lobel, Ph.D.

Location: State University of New York at Stony Brook, Stony Brook Hospital and Psychology Department

Designed and implemented a study, assisted with data collection and analysis, wrote literature review, and supervised research assistants for the Stony Brook Pregnancy Project. Research focused on pregnant women who have high-risk pregnancies because of maternal disease or a history of previous miscarriage. In particular, the relationship among psychological variables, anxiety, and coping were examined.

Research Assistant, June 1992 to May 1993

Supervisor: Thomas Brandon, Ph.D.

Location: State University of New York at Binghamton

Conducted subject interviews and assisted with data collection and management. Research focused on smoking cessation. In particular, treatment programs were designed and implemented focusing on the use of cognitive and behavioral methods in a group setting.

PRESENTATIONS AND IN-PROGRESS RESEARCH

Ciota, M., Mori, D., Dettmer, E. (2000). Coping style and depression in patients with end-stage renal disease (Esrd). Proceedings of the Society for Behavioral Medicine,

Dettmer, E., Mori, D., Ciota, M. (2000). Religiosity as a buffer in individuals with end stage renal disease (Esrd). Proceedings of the Society for Behavioral Medicine,

Given, M., Zeichner, A., & Ciota, M. (1997). Effects of self-esteem on self-monitoring on physiologic recovery from acute pain. Proceedings of the Society for Behavioral Medicine, p. 207.

Given, M., Ciota, M. & Zeichner, A. (1996). Effects of frequent self-monitoring on pain during acute pain. Convention Proceedings for the 30th AABT Annual Convention, p. 187.

Ciota, M. A. (May, 1995) Sexual dysfunction and aging. Paper presented to the Sixth Annual Convention in Gerontology and Geriatrics. Athens, Ga.

Ciota, M., Lobel, M., Yali, A. (November, 1995) Anxiety, self-esteem, and coping style during high-risk pregnancy. Paper presented to the 29th Annual convention for Advancement of Behavior Therapy. Washington, DC.

Ciota, M. & Zeichner A. Sexual dysfunction and aging. Manuscript preparation complete.

Ciota, M. & Zeichner, A. Self-esteem and response to pain. Manuscript in preparation.

Ciota, M. (1996). The role of self-esteem and ego-alteration in buffering anxiety and autonomic arousal during painful stimulus. Master's Thesis, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

Ciota, M. (1998). The impact of self-esteem on performance feedback, anxiety, and pain indices. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Georgia, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Instructor Assistantship - September 1997-June 1998

Supervisor: Ronald Blunt, Ph.D.
Location: University of Georgia
Subject: Psychology of Adjustment (PSY 258)

Primary instructor for this second level undergraduate course. Responsible for course organization, daily lectures, test construction, and project development for 60 students. Also serve to aid in the development of teaching skills of a graduate teaching assistant. Course was taught each trimester of the academic year.

Graduate Teaching Assistant- Assistantship, September 1995 – June 1996

Supervisors: Henry Adams, Ph.D., Lisa Armistead, Ph.D., Karen Calhoun, Ph.D.
Location: University of Georgia
Subjects: Psychopathology, Child Psychopathology, Ethics

Serve as the graduate teaching assistant for courses that all first-year clinical students enroll. Responsibilities include attendance of all lectures, preparing lectures, lecturing, test construction and correction, and grade management. In addition, weekly office hours and test review sessions are provided.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant January 1992 - May 1992

Supervisor: Jane Connor, Ph.D.
Location: State University of New York at Binghamton
Subject: Statistics

Responsible for teaching a subsection (20 students) of a large lecture class SPSS, and for providing “small class” follow-up during a weekly two-hour meeting. In addition, provided large group reviews, managed subsection class grades and homework correction, and aided in the correction of exams.