

Trauma-Informed Pedagogy in Higher Education: Considerations for the Future of Research and Practice

R. Kirk Anderson
Dickinson College

Brendan Landy
*Amazing Life Games
Preschool*

Victoria Sanchez
New Hampton School

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the current state of the scholarly literature on trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) in higher education. We trace the origins of this literature in clinical fields where scholars brought the trauma-informed care lens to bear on pedagogical questions. This literature is currently dominated by practitioner reflections, often written by scholars working in these clinical fields. While these reflections provide valuable insights for educational practice, we identify two important gaps in this body of scholarship: the dearth of empirical research and the lack of attention to students' experiences and perspectives. We argue that given trauma-informed pedagogy's stated commitment to collaboration, trust, and choice, future empirical scholarship must re-center students' voices, experiences, and meaning-making in both research and practice. We conclude by reporting on an on-going participatory action research project designed to address these identified gaps.

Keywords: trauma, trauma-informed pedagogy, higher education, undergraduate students

As college instructors mobilized to adapt to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus for many was the rapid shift to remote learning. The upheaval caused by the pandemic also illuminated challenges to effective and responsive teaching beyond technological considerations (Felten, 2022). Even when the authors' home institution returned to in-person instruction, our community confronted a variety of challenges with noticeable effects on the classroom. This ranged from the anxiety of returning

to large group settings to difficulty accessing adequate nutrition because of supply chain disruptions and staffing shortages. The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a public health crisis—it is an ongoing moment of collective trauma exposure (Stephens, 2020). This is compounded by what many have called the “dual pandemic” of COVID-19 and systemic racism and racialized violence (Jones, 2021).

The ensuing educational struggles during the pandemic led many to trauma-informed pedagogy (Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Roman, 2020; Stephens, 2020), which applies the insights of trauma-informed care (TIC) in clinical professions to educational contexts. Trauma-informed pedagogy (TIP) relies on key values such as safety, collaboration, choice, and empowerment to guide pedagogical choices (Carello & Butler, 2014, 2015). While early childhood, primary, and secondary education scholars can find a growing wealth of research and evidence-based practice literature on trauma-informed pedagogy (e.g., Brown et al., 2022; Jennings, 2018; Nicholson et al., 2019; Venet, 2021), TIP in higher education is under-researched in a moment when instructors desperately need tools to address the effects of widespread trauma exposure. As this body of work grows, a critical examination of the current state of this scholarship is necessary to consider how this emergent field might address important gaps in research and practice moving forward.

This paper poses the question: What is the current state of the extant scholarly literature on trauma-informed teaching and learning practices in postsecondary education? Our critical survey of this literature was conducted by a team of one professor and two undergraduate students at a small liberal arts college. The unique standpoints of the two undergraduate coresearchers were key in identifying the overarching trends in this scholarship, particularly the one-sided portrayal of TIP via a teacher-centric lens. We argue that trauma-informed pedagogy’s stated commitment to redefining the student-teacher relationship to promote equity, wellbeing, and healing, future empirical scholarship must re-center students’ voices, experiences, and meaning-making in both research and practice. After surveying and analyzing the literature, we conclude by describing how this shift in perspective has led to the creation of an ongoing participatory action research project designed to address the key gaps we identify.

TRAUMA-INFORMED TEACHING & LEARNING

Our critical survey of the extant literature on trauma-informed pedagogy in higher education was primarily conducted utilizing the Education Source and Education Resource Information Center (ERIC) databases. The team co-developed initial Boolean search parameters that paired *trauma*, *trauma-informed*, and *trauma-informed pedagogy* with terms relevant to postsecondary education, including *colleges*, *universities*, *higher education*, and *undergraduate students*. The initial search was limited to the last decade, but the team was forced to expand its parameters and develop alternate search terms because of the limited relevant results. Even so, the literature our search turned up was small. We excluded studies that addressed aspects of college life outside of teaching and learning (for example, scholarship on mental health services with college students), but chose to include studies that identified broad trends in the causes, effects, and prevalence of trauma among

postsecondary education students. Our search initially yielded 119 articles and 6 books, of which 60 articles and 4 books met the criteria for inclusion in our review. In our analysis, we examined how scholars frame the causes and consequences of trauma exposure, methodological and sampling approaches, findings, and recommendations for practice.

In examining the literature on trauma-informed pedagogy in higher education, we first differentiate forms of trauma and its impact on college students. We then trace TIP's evolution from clinical fields of research and practice. Next, we discuss how the trauma-informed lens is being utilized in higher education scholarship. Finally, we identify key themes, trends, and limitations in this literature and consider the future of TIP in higher education, briefly discussing our ongoing research project and its impact on our practices.

Conceptualizing Trauma

Trauma-informed pedagogy is indebted to trauma-informed care, a lens developed and refined in clinical disciplines (Carello & Butler, 2015). While trauma-informed pedagogy's prescriptions for addressing trauma centers clinical understandings of how trauma impacts the mind and body and the consequences this has for learning, we also recognize the historical and sociological dimensions of trauma and its unique consequences for minoritized groups. Any understanding of TIP must recognize the dialectical interplay of the individual and social dimensions of trauma—trauma is both an individual and an institutional and social phenomenon. Below, we define and synthesize these clinical and sociological understandings of trauma to provide a holistic framework for understanding trauma that is central to our analysis of the literature.

Trauma as a Clinical Phenomenon

The most widely used definition of trauma, drawn from the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual (DSM-V), identifies this trauma as “exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury or sexual violence” (Jones & Cureton, 2021, para. 10) either directly or indirectly. Definitions of trauma that center an individual's stress response provide an avenue for considering a person's lived experiences and identity rather than solely focusing on symptoms and diagnosis. For instance, Shalka (2020) frames trauma as embodied:

“knowing and meaning making occur within the multidimensionality of the individual's social location (explicitly acknowledging the body, emotions, and lived experiences as marginalized bodies moving within historically situated systems of oppression) as opposed to being a detached process of the mind alone” (p. 458).

One's reaction to a traumatic event cannot be understood outside of one's embodied life history.

The need to delineate between experience and response has led trauma scholars to analytically separate trauma exposure from its potential effects. Trauma exposure

is an event in which an individual experiences a perceived risk of actual or threatened death, serious injury, sexual violence, or the witnessing/ learning of such an event happening to another (Pickett et al., 2016, p. 25). Trauma exposures may lead to trauma if this experience overwhelms their ability to cope (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA], 2014). Both trauma and trauma-exposure are distinct from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Relevant to our discussion here is the finding that 66%-85% of college students have experienced trauma (Read et al., 2011; Smyth et al., 2008), while 9%-12% of college students meet the clinical criteria for PTSD (Read et al., 2011).

Trauma as a Social Phenomenon

Trauma is not solely individual. As the COVID-19 pandemic indicates, trauma can also be collective and experienced society-wide (Hirschberger, 2018). A constellation of related terms highlights that trauma is produced by systems and its effects are unevenly distributed even when it is experienced collectively. Systemic trauma is enacted by institutions (even supposed helping institutions like hospitals and schools) and this trauma is disproportionately experienced by socially minoritized groups (Goldsmith et al., 2014). The recognition that trauma is sexed, raced, classed, and so forth (Goldsmith et al., 2014) has led to more specific terms. For example, Menakem's (2017) influential work highlights that racial trauma is a consequence of centuries of white supremacy in the United States.

The longitudinal impact of trauma is captured by historical and intergenerational trauma, which refer to the transmission of the effects from adverse life experiences on subsequent generations that influences how the individual appraises the world and develops coping mechanisms (Bombay et al., 2009). Individuals who experience trauma, and their offspring, are at increased risk for further trauma (Gaywish & Mordoch, 2018). Scholars studying the impact of trauma on Indigenous peoples have been essential to this understanding of trauma's collective and persistent nature (Cote-Meek, 2014; Gaywish & Mordoch, 2018; Whynacht et al., 2018). Researchers link past effects of trauma to contemporary experiences of trauma, such as poverty and substance abuse (Gaywish & Mordoch, 2018). This scholarship highlights how educational institutions can themselves be agents of trauma.

As helpful as these various concepts are in recognizing the social and multidimensional nature of trauma, Stevens' (2016) articulation of critical trauma theory (CTT) underscores how trauma discourses shape subjectivities. CTT underscores how trauma impacts individuals and communities while reflexively analyzing how clinical discourses of trauma are not separate from forms of social control and domination. Relevant here is that trauma-informed pedagogy, like universal design, resists the urge to diagnose and label and instead seeks to create spaces that are responsive to what "trauma makes" and what "trauma does" (Stevens, 2016, p. 20).

Trauma's Causes and Consequences in Higher Education

The causes of trauma for college students are diverse. Many students bring trauma histories due to factors such as adverse childhood experiences (Smyth et al., 2008), poverty (Olesen-Tracy, 2020), institutional racism (Boyratz et al., 2013), or sexual violence (Conley & Griffith, 2016). Others experience trauma exposure in college. The prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses is one particularly prominent source of trauma (Conley & Griffith, 2016; McCauley & Casler, 2015). By one estimate, trauma exposure affects roughly two thirds of college students (Boyratz et al., 2013), making trauma exposure the norm rather than the exception.

To return to the concept of systemic trauma (Goldsmith et al., 2014), we must also recognize postsecondary institutions themselves as sources of trauma exposure. It is unsurprising that TIP in higher education emerged in clinical fields such as social work given that the content of courses and the nature of field placement brings students into contact with trauma and its effects (e.g., Bosse et al., 2021; Butler et al., 2017). Likewise, the potentially traumatic nature of course content is a widespread concern in the humanities, particularly in literature and writing courses (e.g., Lee, 2021; Nikischer, 2019).

However, it is not only academic content and experiences that can lead to trauma exposure. Sexual violence on college campuses is a well-documented phenomenon (e.g., Carey et al., 2015). The fact that the sexual and romantic marketplace on college campuses is dominated by white, middle-to-upper class, cisgendered men (Wade, 2018) creates a context for raced, classed, and gendered sexual violence. In addition, the extensive critique of institutional racism in higher education (e.g., Hamer & Lang, 2015) points to another source of potential trauma exposure. Most survey-based studies included in our review (18 of 22) did not distinguish between lifetime trauma exposure and trauma exposure in college among survey respondents, and as such we know less about sources of trauma in postsecondary education. We hope to see more survey research in the future that attends specifically to trauma exposure in college. One illustrative example of this approach is Lynch's (2019) examination of secondary trauma among student resident advisors, which highlights how the context of postsecondary education (in this case, life within the total institution of a residential school) creates specific opportunities for trauma exposure. We recommend that future scholarship explore context-specific causes of trauma in hopes of illuminating pathways for minimizing the likelihood of trauma exposure in college.

TIP emerged in response to the evidence of the harmful effects of trauma exposure on learning minds. For example, the effects of trauma on college students include: difficulty focusing, attending, retaining, and recalling; persistent absenteeism; emotional regulation difficulties; fear of taking risks; anxiety about group work, assessments, deadlines, and presentations; anger and aggression; helplessness and dissociation; withdrawal, isolation, and difficulty accessing social supports; and sleep disruption and lack of appetite (Colburn et al., 2021; Stephens, 2020; Venet, 2021). Trauma-exposed students may also develop substance abuse problems or disordered eating (Ham et. al, 2016; Meyer & Stanick, 2018). Once one reaches high levels of arousal, other areas of the brain that are responsible for interpreting and storing information are disrupted, including the hippocampus, and the resulting pieces of memory are unable to be organized or interpreted (van der Kolk, 2014). The only options left become fight, flight, or freeze, none of which are

conducive to learning or being in educational environments. As a result, a trauma-informed lens forces us to radically reconsider what it means to support student development (Shalka, 2022).

FROM TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE TO TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY

Trauma-informed pedagogy is an outgrowth of trauma-informed care, which addresses and mitigates the harm of trauma while enacting healing clinical care. Fallot and Harris (2009) first articulated the key values of trauma-informed care and their work influenced the development of trauma-informed pedagogy. Their values include: ensuring emotional and physical safety, establishing trustworthiness, maximizing choice, maximizing collaboration, and prioritizing empowerment. To this list, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA, 2014) adds a sixth value, “Cultural, Historical, and Gender Issues” (p. 10), to recognize the sociocultural dimensions of trauma. Carello (2020) refers to this simply as “Social Justice” and also adds “Resilience, Growth, and Change” as a seventh value.

Given the origins of trauma-informed pedagogy, it is unsurprising that many of the scholars who have written about TIP in higher education are in clinical fields (e.g., Carello & Butler, 2014, 2015; Cote-Meek, 2014; Gutierrez & Gutierrez, 2019; Henderson et al., 2016; Lee, 2021; Whynacht et al., 2018). While trauma-informed care and pedagogy share important guidelines and principles to ensure that no harm is caused, there are unique considerations to make when a trauma-informed lens is applied within an educational context: students’ individual characteristics, the content and context of what is taught, the requirements of assignments, aspects of both instructor and student behavior and interaction, characteristics of the classroom setting, and the instruction on and practice of self-care (Carello & Butler, 2015).

Adapting the trauma-informed lens to education provides a unique vantage point for generating new approaches to college instruction. Carello and Butler (2015) propose a variety of practices rooted in TIC/TIP’s core values. Faculty can maximize choice for their students by telegraphing when potentially traumatic material is encountered in class, allowing them to opt out of that material. Establishing trustworthiness can be achieved by using prompts to elicit what students want from their instructors in terms of support and care (Ludvik, 2020). Collaboration can be maximized by letting students pick their own partners for projects, which may lower anxiety and improve performance (Bohannon et al., 2019). Empowerment is fostered by recognizing when students demonstrate improvement rather than only highlighting arbitrary marks of achievement (Ludvik, 2020) and where failure is leveraged for growth (Bohannon et al., 2019). Other suggestions include creating a structured and predictable learning environment (Carello & Butler, 2015), connecting students to the school community (Davidson, 2017), and shifting the power dynamic by adding students into decision making conversations about discipline or curriculum content (Walton-Fisette & Ellison, 2020).

Disagreement exists between scholars who see healing from trauma as the purview of the classroom (e.g., Lee, 2021), versus those who prioritize referring

students to mental health services (e.g., Gutierrez, 2019). Some merge the two approaches, offering space for students to come to them about their trauma (either through writing or in person) without expectation that such disclosures will occur (Cote-Meek, 2014; Whynacht et al., 2018). These debates highlight the ongoing need to further refine our understanding of trauma-informed pedagogy in practice.

Key Trends

We initially surveyed the existing body of scholarship on trauma-informed pedagogy in higher education, 64 texts in total, with the long-term goal of launching an empirical investigation into TIP practice. We present the findings of this investigation below. First, we survey key methodological trends: the dearth of empirical studies and the emphasis on practitioner reflection. Then, we consider how perspectives on TIP have responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing struggle against white supremacy. We conclude by looking forward at how future research on TIP might shift to systematically engage students' perspectives and experiences.

Empirical Studies

While there are few empirical studies on TIP in higher education, many scholars have examined issues relevant to trauma-informed teaching and learning. Some explore the trauma students bring to college (Meyer & Stanick, 2018; Oehme, Perko et al., 2019). Others examine how students respond to potentially (re)traumatizing discussions in class (Harrison et al., 2020) or how interventions such as mindfulness impact their ability to engage in such discussions (Kuhl et al., 201). As TIP becomes more established, it has also become a focus of teacher education research (Brown et al., 2022).

The few empirical studies that examine the impact of TIP on students are generally limited to disciplines (e.g., social work, nursing) where discussing trauma or confronting traumatic content is more common (e.g., Goodwin & Tiderington, 2022; Hitchcock et al., 2021). In some cases, authors draw conclusions based on course evaluations and surveys for classes where trauma-informed pedagogy was utilized (Bosse et al., 2021; Harrison et al., 2020; Kuhl & Boyraz, 2017). The studies are also limited mostly to large research institutions while other types of institutions have limited representation.

The field is poised for growth, particularly as scholars begin to publish studies conducted during the height of the pandemic. For example, Oehme, Ray et al. (2021) assess an online student wellness intervention for its efficacy and alignment with trauma-informed principles. One particularly instructive example is Bosse et al.'s (2021) analysis of student evaluations in two undergraduate nursing courses where trauma-informed practices were implemented—coding the responses according to each of the key tenets of TIP. The authors were primarily focus on determining whether TIP is feasible and positively evaluated by students, ultimately concluding favorably on both counts. While the instructors started the semester creating a community agreement based on students' expressed needs around safety in the

classroom, student input was not solicited on enacting other values. It is illuminating, then, that evaluation comments related to safety occurred far more frequently than all other TIP values.

Practitioner Reflections

The most common genre in this literature is practitioner reflections, where instructors reflect on and interrogate their own teaching practices via a TIP lens (Bohannon et al., 2019; Carello & Butler, 2015; Davidson, 2021; Ludvik, 2020; Nikischer, 2019; Whynacht et al., 2018). Many in this vein are autobiographical and narrative-driven. Carello and Thompson's (2021) recent anthology encapsulates this trend. Narratives are commonly accompanied by recommendations for how to put trauma-informed principles into practice in the classroom (e.g., Hunter, 2022; Imad, 2022; Tayles, 2021).

While these reflections are generative, they overlook potential gaps between instructors' interpretations of student feedback and more robust and systematic forms of data collection. The only example that runs counter to this trend is Gaywish and Mordoch's (2018) work examining the experiences of Canadian Aboriginal students. The authors bring students' perspectives into conversation with interviews with instructors and administrators. Their findings illuminate significant gaps between these perspectives. Their study problematizes the partial nature of practitioner reflections and demonstrates that a more systematic exploration of students' experiences and perspectives is essential for developing a robust understanding of TIP in practice.

As it stands, while there is a growing body of valuable literature that reflects on trauma-informed practice that, in aggregate, begins to develop a picture of best-practice, the lack of systematic, empirical research is troubling in two ways. First, practitioner reflections must be brought into conversation with a variety of empirical evidence that has the potential to challenge the assumptions and partial perspectives all instructors possess. Second, and central to our critique, is that the preponderance of practitioner reflections has left little room for a deep examination of how students make sense of trauma-informed principles and their application. This literature assumes students and instructors conceptualize these values and want to see them applied in similar ways. Brendan (author 2) and Victoria's (author 3) positions as student-researchers enabled them to immediately spot both the lack of student perspectives in the literature as well as how this contradicts TIP's stated values of collaboration, empowerment, and agency. The critique they raised highlights a persistent limitation in the literature on how to practice trauma-informed pedagogy.

Retraumatization and Vicarious Traumatization

A significant focus within this literature is the risk and role of vicarious and secondary traumatization (Carello & Butler, 2014; Nikischer, 2017; Zurbriggen, 2011). This may occur in any instance where trauma is engaged via lessons, course content, or research. This is a particular topic of concern among scholars in fields such as social work (e.g., Carello & Butler, 2014; Zurbriggen, 2011), and highlights

the importance of trauma-informed approaches that pay attention both to the risk of retraumatization as well as secondary and vicarious traumatization. Carello and Butler (2014) emphasize not only a risk of secondary traumatization due to course content, but a specific risk of it occurring during pre-service training of teachers and clinical care providers.

Instructors themselves are not immune from this concern. Nikischer (2017) emphasizes the importance of a trauma-informed approach within schools that pays just as much attention to the safety and health of instructors as it does to students. Nikischer argues that institutions must utilize a trauma-informed approach with teachers as well, rather than relying solely on self-care interventions. This argument highlights the need to think beyond the classroom in considering what it means for the application of trauma-informed approaches in higher education. Likewise, Imad (2021) sees trauma-informed professional development as key to supporting faculty who are experiencing traumatic stress. Student affairs staff and administrators are also at risk and equally deserving of support (Lynch & Glass, 2019, 2020).

Mindfulness and Trauma-Informed Pedagogy

Mindfulness interventions show promise for supporting students who have experienced trauma (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020; Kuhl & Boyraz, 2017; Ludvik, 2020). Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention to the present moment in a non-judgmental manner (Kuhl & Boyraz, 2017), and a mindfulness practice might take the shape of a meditative exercise in which students pay attention to their breathing, their body, and their physical surroundings, or even their thoughts and feelings. Mindfulness can positively impact the academic performance of students who have experienced trauma and decrease levels of perceived stress and anxiety (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020; Kuhl & Boyraz, 2017; Ludvik, 2020). Somner (2018) suggests that mindfulness practices can reduce vicarious traumatization in students. However, in cases of severe PTSD, mindfulness may lack efficacy (Kuhl & Boyraz, 2017). Because students are at risk of retraumatization, these approaches, if used, should be applied consistently (Cherry & Wilcox, 2020).

Trauma-Informed Institutions

The trauma-informed lens can also be applied to institutional policies and practices (Carello & Butler, 2015; Gutierrez & Gutierrez, 2019; Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021). From administration to food service, shifting the service model from confrontation to care at all levels would foster what Stephens (2020) calls “a circle of care,” in which each member of the community is engaged in an attention towards putting safety, trust, and agency first in interactions with students. This shift is epitomized by moving from interactions with students that frame their behavior through a deficit lens and practice “shame and blame” (p. 448) to engagement that nurtures and brings out the best in students. Without an institution-wide trauma-informed practice, existing traditional support programs will be limited by students’ abilities to engage in and navigate beneficial relationships and service provision (Olesen-Tracy, 2020). Furthermore, the implementation of trauma-informed

approaches must also include community members and those who share spaces with the school (Whynacht et al., 2018). The onus of change cannot solely be on individual instructors. Seeing institutions as sources of trauma, as discussed above, highlights that trauma-informed pedagogy must also be accompanied by systematic reform.

Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and the Dual Pandemic

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, scholars have examined impacts of the “dual pandemic” on student learning and coping and the importance of trauma-informed approaches (Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Roman, 2020; Stephens, 2020). From the tremendous loss caused by the pandemic (Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Stephens, 2020) to offering suggestions such as mindfulness practices (Kutza & Cornell, 2021) or the importance of instructors learning how to incorporate a trauma-informed pedagogy (Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Stephens, 2020), these scholars draw on the lived experiences of students as well as professors during the pandemic (Carello & Thompson, 2021; Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Roman, 2020; Stephens, 2020). Pica-Smith and Scannell (2020) note that while some students were grappling solely with the non-trivial transition to remote learning, others experienced homelessness, uncertain labor conditions, food insecurity, and a host of other stressors. Moving forward, scholars will need to reckon with the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and what insights can be generated for applying trauma-informed pedagogy in whatever a post-pandemic environment may look like.

Like the recent focus on teaching in the context of the COVID-19, other scholars have examined trauma-informed responses to the context of the ongoing trauma of violence against BIPOC communities. Scholars declared the need for a trauma-informed approach in response to the pervasiveness of racial trauma in the lives of BIPOC students (Pica-Smith & Scannell, 2021; Stephens, 2020; Whynacht et al., 2018). Stephens (2020) asks:

“the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, sparked by the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, compounded trauma upon trauma for many students, their families, and communities. In these circumstances, how can we, as instructors in higher education, contribute to the health and success of our students?” (p. 449).

This points to the need for synthesis between trauma-informed approaches and critical pedagogies to validate and confront the harm and trauma caused by both educational and carceral institutions. Here we see an important point of overlap between TIP and critical pedagogy’s prioritization of safety and student agency (Whynacht et al., 2018).

THE FUTURE OF TIP SCHOLARSHIP

Like any emergent field of scholarship and practice, the number of empirical studies on TIP in higher education are currently limited. What we have demonstrated, however, is that the limitations of the body of scholarship are not simply numerical. The limitations are also conceptual—much, if not most, of these studies center the

instructor in conceptualizing, initiating, and sustaining relations of care and in determining how TIP's values are to be understood and enacted. These limitations become more problematic when recognizing the need for instructors to be responsive to the systemic violence and failure that have been so salient in recent years. If trauma-informed pedagogy is to realize its espoused values, particularly choice, collaboration, and empowerment, then we must begin to see and treat students as co-creators of this pedagogy.

Brendan and Victoria's initial insight into these shortcomings became the basis for an ongoing critical participatory action research program (Fine & Torre, 2021) that centers students' voices and perspectives on conceptualizing and enacting trauma-informed pedagogy. They were the first two members of a team of student co-researchers investigating how undergraduate students make sense of TIP's core values in relation to their educational experiences. Our team worked collaboratively to design and implement every aspect of this study. We are conducting focus group sessions with undergraduates where we ask them about how they have and have not experienced these values in practice.

This in turn has had an ongoing impact on Author 1's teaching practices. I (Author 1) often teach classes differently the day after a focus group session based on what is shared. For example, in one particularly memorable focus group session, students described the nuanced and complex social calculations they make when deciding whether to participate in large group activities. They had deep concerns for how each and every action they take is perceived by their peers. When feeling stuck with generating a group discussion in a large introductory class the next day, I paused the lesson to share what I had learned the night before and to recognize that I need to do more to help them feel safe taking social and academic risks in my class. I then asked my students to proceed with the assumption that just this once, no one was judging or negatively evaluating them. This brief pause completely changed the tenor of the class and led to a lively and engaging discussion. Perhaps more fundamentally, when I encounter a problem or challenge in my trauma-informed teaching practices, my first response is to share that concern with my students and to ask for their help in diagnosing and solving the problem.

We invite others to find new and novel ways to investigate student's perspectives on and experiences with trauma-informed pedagogy and its principles and to bring their perspectives into ongoing conversation with those of faculty and instructors. Our hope is to see the field of scholarship develop in concert with its practice—grounding our research and teaching in mutuality, trust, and collaboration with students.

REFERENCES

- Bohannon, L., Clapsaddle, S., & McCollum, D. (2019). Responding to college students who exhibit adverse manifestations of stress and trauma in the college classroom. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, 5(2), 66–78. <https://doi.org/10.32865/fire201952164>
- Bombay, A., Matheson, K., & Anisman, H. (2009). Intergenerational trauma: Convergence of multiple processes among First Nations peoples in Canada. *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 5(3), 6–47.

- Bosse, J. D., Clark, K. D., & Arnold, S. (2021). Implementing trauma-informed education practices in undergraduate mental health nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 60(12), 707–711. <https://doi.org/10.3928/01484834-20211103-02>
- Boyratz, G., Horne, S. G., Owens, A. C., & Armstrong, A. P. (2013). Academic achievement and college persistence of African American students with trauma exposure. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 60(4), 582–592. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033672>
- Brown, E. C., Freedle, A., Hurlless, N. L., Miller, R. D., Martin, C., & Paul, Z. A. (2022). Preparing teacher candidates for trauma-informed practices. *Urban Education*, 57(4), 662–685. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085920974084>
- Brown, L. M., Biddle, C., & Tappan, M. B. (2022). *Trauma-responsive schooling: Centering student voice and healing*. Harvard Education Press.
- Butler, L. D., Carello, J., Maguin, E., & Kendall-Tackett, K. (2017). Trauma, stress, and self-care in clinical training: Predictors of burnout, decline in health status, secondary traumatic stress symptoms, and compassion satisfaction. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 9(4), 416–424. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000187>
- Carello, J. (2020, March). *Resources for trauma-informed teaching and learning*. Resources: Bringing a Trauma-Informed Approach to Higher Education. <https://traumainformedteaching.blog/resources/>
- Carello, J., & Butler, L. D. (2014). Potentially perilous pedagogies: Teaching trauma is not the same as trauma-informed teaching. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation*, 15(2), 153–168. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2014.867571>
- Carello, J., & Butler, L. D. (2015). Practicing what we teach: Trauma-informed educational practice. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 35(3), 262–278. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2015.1030059>
- Carello, J., & Thompson, P. (Eds.). (2021). *Lessons from the pandemic: Trauma-informed approaches to college, crisis, change*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carey, K. B., Durney, S. E., Shepardson, R. L., & Carey, M. P. (2015) Incapacitated and forcible rape of college women: Prevalence across the first year. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56(6), 678–680. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.02.018>
- Cherry, M. L., & Wilcox, M. M. (2020). Decreasing perceived and academic stress through emotion regulation and nonjudging with trauma-exposed college students. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 27(2), 101–110. <https://doi.org/10.1037/str0000138>
- Colburn, A. R., Kremer, K. P., & Jackson, D. B. (2021). Early trauma and psychosocial outcomes among college students. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 126, 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2021.106052>
- Conley, A. H., & Griffith, C. (2016). Trauma-informed response in the age of Title IX: Considerations for college counselors working with survivors of power-based personal violence. *Journal of College Counseling*, 19(3), 276–288. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocc.12049>
- Cote-Meek, S. (2014). *Colonized classrooms: Racism, trauma and resistance in post-secondary education*. Fernwood Publishing.

- Davidson, J. W. (2021). Beyond trigger warnings: Toward a trauma-informed andragogy for the graduate theological classroom. *Teaching Theology & Religion, 24*(1), 4–16. <https://doi.org/10.1111/teth.12574>
- Davidson, S. (2017). *Trauma-informed practices for postsecondary education: A guide*. Education Northwest.
- Fallot, R. D., & Harris, M. (2009). *Creating cultures of trauma-informed care (CCTIC): A self assessment and planning protocol*. Community Connections. <https://doi.org/10.13140/2.1.4843.6002>
- Felten, P. (2022). From pandemic to endemic pedagogy: Being clear in our teaching. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning, 2022*, 39–46. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20481>
- Fine, M., & Torre, M. E. (2021). *Essentials of critical participatory action research*. American Psychological Association.
- Gaywish, R., & Mordoch, E. (2018). Situating intergenerational trauma in the educational journey. *In Education, 24*(2), 3–23. <https://doi.org/10.37119/ojs2018.v24i2.386>
- Goldsmith, R. E., Martin, C. G., & Smith, C. P. (2014) Systemic trauma. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 15*(2), 117–132. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15299732.2014.871666>
- Goodwin, J., & Tiderington, E. (2022). Building trauma-informed research competencies in social work education. *Social Work Education, 41*(2), 143–156. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2020.1820977>
- Gutierrez, D., & Gutierrez, A. (2019). Developing a trauma-informed lens in the college classroom and empowering students through building positive relationships. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (CIER), 12*(1), 11–18. <https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v12i1.10258>
- Ham, L. S., Wiersma-Mosley, J. D., Feldner, M. T., Melkonian, A. J., Milner, L. A., & Lewis, S. F. (2016). Posttraumatic stress symptoms and nonmedical prescription drug use among college students with trauma exposure. *Journal of Dual Diagnosis, 12*(1), 43–54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15504263.2016.1146556>
- Hamer, J. F., & Lang, C. (2015). Race, structural violence, and the neoliberal university: The challenges of inhabitation. *Critical Sociology, 41*(6), 897–912. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0896920515594765>
- Harrison, N., Burke, J., & Clarke, I. (2020). Risky teaching: Developing a trauma-informed pedagogy for higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education, 28*(1), 180–194. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2020.1786046>
- Henderson, Z., Acquaye-Doyle, L. A., Waites, S., & Howard, T. (2016). Putting principles into practice: Addressing historical trauma, mistrust, and apprehension in research methods courses. *Journal of Social Work Education, 52*(1), 69–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2016.1112631>
- Hirschberger, G. (2018). Collective trauma and the social construction of meaning. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1441. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01441>
- Hitchcock, L. I., Báez, J. C., Sage, M., Marquart, M., Lewis, K., & Smyth, N. J. (2021). Social work educators' opportunities during COVID-19: A roadmap for trauma-informed teaching during crisis. *Journal of Social Work Education, 57*(sup1), 82–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2021.1935369>

- Hunter, J. J. (2022). Clinician's voice: Trauma-informed practices in higher education. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2022(177), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20412>
- Jones, L. K., & Cureton, J. L. (2021, April 6). Trauma redefined in the DSM-5: Rationale and implications for counseling practice. *The Professional Counselor*, 4(3), 257–271. <https://doi.org/10.15241/lkj.4.3.257>
- Kuhl, M., & Boyraz, G. (2017). Mindfulness, general trust, and social support among trauma-exposed college students. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 22(2), 150–162. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15325024.2016.1212610>
- Kutza, D., & Cornell, K. (2021). Fostering posttraumatic growth in college classrooms during COVID-19. *Journal of Teaching and Learning with Technology*, 10(Special Issue), 12–22.
- Lee, D. (2021). Agency in writing: Managing narratives of trauma in student writing. In N. Sieben and S. Shelton (Eds.), *Humanizing grief in higher education* (pp. 23-30). Routledge.
- Lynch, R. J. (2019). Work-environment factors impacting the report of secondary trauma in U.S. resident assistants. *Journal of College & University Student Housing*, 46(1), 62–78.
- Lynch, R. J., & Glass, C. R. (2019). The development of the secondary trauma in student affairs professionals scale (STSAP). *Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice*, 56(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2018.1474757>
- Lynch, R. J. & Glass, C. R. (2020). The cost of caring: An arts-based phenomenological analysis of secondary traumatic stress in college student affairs. *Review of Higher Education*, 43(4), 1041–1068. <https://doi.org/10.1353/rhe.2020.0030>
- Ludvik, M. B. (2020). Co-creating the container for optimal learning and development: Lessons from trauma-informed mindful compassion practices. *About Campus: Enriching the Student Learning Experience*, 24(6), 25–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086482219899648>
- Imad, M. (2021). Transcending adversity: Trauma-informed educational development. *To Improve the Academy: A Journal of Educational Development*, 39(3). <https://doi.org/10.3998/tia.17063888.0039.301>
- Imad, M. (2022). Trauma-informed education for wholeness: Strategies for faculty & advisors. *New Directions for Student Services*, 2022(177), 39–47. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20413>
- Jennings, P. A. (2018). *Trauma informed classroom: Building resilience with compassionate teaching*. W. W. Norton.
- Jones, J. M. (2021). The dual pandemics of COVID-19 and systemic racism: Navigating our path forward. *School Psychology*, 36(5), 427–431. <https://doi.org/10.1037/spq0000472>
- McCauley, H. L., & Casler, A. W. (2015). College sexual assault: A call for trauma-informed prevention. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56(6), 584–585. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.03.012>
- Menakem, R. (2017). *My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and Bodies*. Central Recovery Press.

- Meyer, L. K., & Stanick, C. F. (2018). College students' relationship between trauma and disordered eating. *Journal of College Student Psychotherapy, 32*(3), 242–250. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87568225.2017.1396517>
- Nicholson, J., Perez, L., & Kurtz, J. (2019). *Trauma-informed practices for early childhood educators: Relationship-based approaches that support healing and build resilience in young children*. Routledge.
- Nikischer, A. (2019). Vicarious trauma inside the academe: Understanding the impact of teaching, researching and writing violence. *Higher Education, 77*(5), 905–916. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-018-0308-4>
- Oehme, K., Perko, A., Clark, J., Ray, E. C., Arpan, L., & Bradley, L. (2019). A trauma-informed approach to building college students' resilience. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work, 16*(1), 93–107. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23761407.2018.1533503>
- Oehme, K., Ray, E. C., Perko, A., Bradley, L., Arpan, L., & Clark, J. J. (2021). An online student resilience project responds to the pandemic. In J. Carello & P. Thompson (Eds.), *Lessons from the pandemic: Trauma-informed approaches to college, crisis, change* (pp. 51-63). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Olesen-Tracey, K. L. (2020). *Supporting students from enrollment to alumni: Trauma-informed practices in higher education* [Doctoral Dissertation, Western Illinois University]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.
- Pica-Smith, C., & Scannell, C. (2021). Teaching and learning for this moment: How a trauma-informed lens can guide our praxis. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Perspectives in Higher Education, 5*(1), 76–83. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jimphe.v5i1.2627>
- Pickett, S. M., Barbaro, N., & Mello, D. (2016). The relationship between subjective sleep disturbance, sleep quality, and emotion regulation difficulties in a sample of college students reporting trauma exposure. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 8*(1), 25–33. <https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000064>
- Read, J. P., Ouimette, P., White, J., Colder, C., & Farrow, S. (2011). Rates of DSM–IV–TR trauma exposure and posttraumatic stress disorder among newly matriculated college students. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy, 3*(2), 148–156. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021260>
- Roman, T. A. (2020). Supporting the mental health of teachers in COVID-19 through trauma-informed educational practices and adaptive formative assessment tools. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 28*(2), 9.
- Shalka, T. R. (2020). (Re)membering the body: Identity development and college student trauma. *Journal of College Student Development, 61*(4), 456–473. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.2020.0051>
- Shalka, T. R. (2022). Re-envisioning student development theory through a trauma lens. *New Directions for Student Services, 2022*(177), 81–93. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ss.20417>
- Smyth, J. M., Hockemeyer, J. R., Heron, K. E., Wonderlich, S. A., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2008). Prevalence, type, disclosure, and severity of adverse life events in college students. *Journal of American College Health, 57*(1), 69–76. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JACH.57.1.69-76>

- Stephens, D. W. (2020). Trauma-informed pedagogy for the religious and theological higher education classroom. *Religions*, 11(9), 449. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel11090449>
- Stevens, M. E. (2016). Trauma is as trauma does: The politics of affect in catastrophic times. In M. Casper & E. H. R. Wertheimer (Eds.), *Critical trauma studies: Understanding violence, conflict, and memory in everyday life* (pp. 19-36). NYU Press.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (2014). *SAMHSA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach* (No. SMA 14-4884). Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SAMHSA-s-Concept-of-Trauma-and-Guidance-for-a-Trauma-Informed-Approach/SMA14-4884>
- Tayles, M. (2021). Trauma-informed writing pedagogy: Ways to support student writers affected by trauma and traumatic stress. *Teaching English in the Two-Year College*, 48(3), 295–313.
- van der Kolk, B. (2015). *The body keeps the score: Brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. Penguin Publishing Group.
- Venet, S. A. (2021). *Equity-centered trauma-informed education*. W.W. Norton & Company.
- Wade, L. (2018). *American hookup: The new culture of sex on campus*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Whynacht, A., Arsenault, E., & Cooney, R. (2018). Abolitionist pedagogy in the neoliberal university: Notes on trauma-informed practice, collaboration, and confronting the impossible. *Social Justice*, 45(4), 141–162.
- Zurbruggen, E. L. (2011). Preventing secondary traumatization in the undergraduate classroom: Lessons from theory and clinical practice. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 3(3), 223–228. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024913>
-

R. KIRK ANDERSON, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the Educational Studies Department at Dickinson College. His major research interests lie in the areas of trauma-informed teaching and learning, the politics and practice of diversity, and higher education ethnography. Email: anderray@dickinson.edu

BRENDAN LANDY, BA, is a lead teacher at an outdoor, play-based preschool in Washington, DC. His major research interests lie in the areas of trauma-informed pedagogy, play-based learning, and, combatting fatphobia in the classroom. Email: brendanwlandy@gmail.com

VICTORIA SANCHEZ, BA, is a French Teacher in the World Languages Department at New Hampton School. Her major research interests lie in the areas of Trauma-Informed Pedagogy and Women's Reproductive History. Email: 327ves@gmail.com
