BEST PRACTICES OF OUTSTANDING MENTORS IN PSYCHOLOGY:
AN ECOLOGICAL, RELATIONAL, AND MULTICULTURAL MODEL

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Approved for the University Committee on Graduate Studies.
ABSTRACT

Recent studies have pinpointed disconcerting trends regarding the recruitment, retention, and graduation rates of ethnic minorities in doctoral programs. Mentoring has been touted as part of the strategy to address this problem. However, there is a paucity of research on the mentoring of ethnic minorities in academia, particularly with regard to how mentors tackle cross-cultural differences in mentoring relationships. This dissertation addresses this gap in the literature by examining the practices of outstanding mentors in cross-cultural mentoring relationships. The sample consisted of 9 mentors nominated for being outstanding mentors and 17 doctoral-level psychology protégés – all the mentoring relationships diverged along racial and/or cultural lines. I used grounded theory in this study to uncover mentor practices as well as to discern a theory of cross-cultural mentoring. Data was collected from semi-structured interviews with mentors and their protégés, audiotapes of two actual mentoring sessions, as well as archival materials such as e-mail exchanges.

The data showed that the mentors engaged in a wide variety of practices targeted at three key areas: individual career development of the protégés, relationship/trust building, and socialization/organizational development of the protégés. These mentor practices were found to address the special concerns and challenges faced by ethnic minority and culturally different protégés.

This dissertation contributes to the literature on mentoring by proposing an ecological model of mentoring that emphasizes the contextual, relational, and multicultural nature of cross-cultural mentoring relationships. The findings from this
study contribute to our understanding of the processes within a mentoring relationship and the ways in which mentors can successfully negotiate differences.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale for Study

At this present time when the enrollment and graduation rates for doctoral students of color are significantly declining, psychology graduate departments are faced with the triple challenges of successfully recruiting, retaining, and graduating students of color (Maton, Kohout, Wicherski, Leary, & Vinokurov, 2006; Rogers & Molina, 2006). The disconcerting trends of the declining and leveling graduation rates of ethnic minority doctoral students (particularly African American and Hispanic/Latino(a) students) have been observed not only in psychology, but in other disciplines as well (Maton et al., 2006). Maton et al.’s recent study (2006) of the minority graduate pipeline in psychology pinpointed several pressing concerns, most notably that the number of minority students receiving a PhD has not increased since 2000 and that this receipt level is less than half of their population representation. Maton et al. also note that the number of African American students enrolled in top-ranked doctoral research departments in psychology actually decreased from 1997 (4.9%) to 2003 (3.8%). Mentoring has often been proposed and recommended as one answer to this widespread and complex problem (Rogers & Molina, 2006). Indeed, Rogers and Molina’s (2006) study of psychology departments successful at recruiting and retaining students of color found that 82% of the institutions studied had established mentoring systems.

The benefits of mentoring have been well-researched and much touted. While it is imperative to keep in mind that correlation does not imply causation and that the benefits of mentoring may be due to selection bias, extensive studies have made a compelling
case for a wide range of benefits enjoyed by protégés. These benefits include greater
career satisfaction (Allen, Poteet, & Eby, 2004; R. Burke, Burgess, & Fallon, 2006;
Murphy & Ensher, 2001), more promotions (Scandura, 1992), higher salaries (Allen et
al., 2004; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Scandura, 1992), less isolation (Schrodt,
Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003), easier socialization (Chao et al., 1992; Feldman, Folks, &
Turnley, 1999), greater productivity (Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006), and increased
commitment to the organization (Allen et al., 2004; Koberg, Boss, & Goodman, 1998;
Payne & Huffman, 2005). In higher education settings, the data suggest that faculty
mentors are highly influential in the research training of graduate students and play
significant roles in the shaping of students as researchers (Boyle & Boice, 1998b; Gelso
& Lent, 2000; Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002). Boyle and Boice (1998b) write that
“Mentorship may be the most important variable related to academic and career success
for graduate students” (p. 90). Studies focusing on the fields of counseling and clinical
psychology have shown that quality mentoring can be extremely influential in a student’s
sense of research self-efficacy (Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002) and decision to pursue

Despite the promising prospects of mentoring suggested by the above studies,
several concerns cloud this rosy picture:

First, there is the problem of ethnic minority students finding mentors. The
literature suggests that minorities have greater difficulty in finding mentors than
European Americans (Ragins, 1997). For instance, one study found that African
American and Hispanic American MBAs were less likely to have White male mentors
than White MBAs (Dreher & Cox, 1996). Another study comparing Asian American and
European American college women found that fewer Asians reported having a mentor (Liang, Allison, Kauh, Taylor, & Williams, 2006). The lack of ethnic minority representation in the higher echelons of academia puts ethnic minorities at a disadvantage when they seek mentorship (Gonzalez Rodriguez, 1995; Tillman, 1998). Several studies have shown that minority group members prefer to be in homogeneous relationships (González-Figueroa & Young, 2005; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005), but they experience difficulties finding mentors who share their gender, race/ethnicity, class, and/or sexual orientation identities (S. R. Bowman, Kite, Branscombe, & Williams, 1999; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Rodenhauser, Rudisill, & Dvorak, 2000). Another challenge for minorities is the tendency for mentors to choose protégés who are most like themselves (Sanchez & Reyes, 1999).

Second, diversified (i.e. cross-race or cross-cultural) mentoring relationships have been shown to be confronted with challenges associated with differences inherent in these relationships. It is thought that lack of shared identity, similarity, and shared experiences decrease connection and rapport within these dyads (Ragins, 1997). While a few recent studies have given some tentative indications that cross-race and cross-cultural mentoring can be successful (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Tillman, 1998), the results from many other studies are much less positive: several studies have found that protégés in cross-cultural mentoring dyads tend to receive less mentoring and psychosocial support than protégés who have mentors who are similar to them (R. J. Burke, McKeen, & McKenna, 1993; Dreher & Cox, 1996; Feldman et al., 1999; Koberg et al., 1998; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Thomas, 1990). Thomas’s (1986a) dissertation on cross-racial mentoring also found that White racial consciousness and Black racial identity significantly
influenced the dynamics of cross-racial mentoring relationships. In addition, some studies on cross-gender mentoring relationships have shown that they experience more difficulties creating and maintaining their relationships than same-gender relationships (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Feldman et al., 1999; Kanter, 1977). In addition, cross-gender relationships have been found to report fewer role modeling behaviors (Scandura & Williams, 2001) and after work social interactions (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) than same-gender relationships. Researchers have explored interpersonal comfort as an avenue for explaining these critical differences between same- versus cross-cultural relationships. Recent studies have shown greater interpersonal comfort, higher satisfaction, and easier communication in same race/gender dyads as opposed to mixed race/gender dyads (Allen, Day, & Lentz, 2005; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Thomas, 1990).

The above two problems have especially troubling implications for ethnic minority students because success in the academic world depends to a certain extent on engagement in the academic world – those with meaningful relationships and interactions with faculty and peers tend to persist more than those with lower levels of engagement (Tinto, 1998). Those who feel isolated and lack a sense of belonging are most at risk of quitting their programs – examples of such students include those of ethnic minority status who lack adequate representation and students who are first in their family to go to college (Girves, Zepeda, & Gwathmey, 2005; Terrell & Hassell, 1994). Hence, for ethnic minority students, mentors can be particularly critical in terms of facilitating integration into the academic world as well as encouraging persistence (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Girves et al., 2005; Terrell & Hassell, 1994).
One solution to the above two identified problems is to teach mentors how to mentor effectively across racial and cultural divides. Allen et al. (2005) make the following point about traversing gender differences in mentoring relationships:

It is not gender per se, but the discomfort associated with interacting with members of the opposite sex that explains differences in mentoring effectiveness. In some sense this is good news. If we can find ways to increase interpersonal comfort, we can increase the likelihood that cross-gender pairs will realize similar mentoring outcomes as do same-gender pairs (p. 166).

Unfortunately, there is a lack of research on the actual processes occurring in mentoring relationships (Valadez, 1998) and in specific mentor practices that contribute to interpersonal comfort. We know even less about the dynamics and processes within diversified mentoring relationships (Darling, Bogat, Cavell, Murphy, & Sanchez, 2006) and how to establish and increase interpersonal comfort in such dyads. Compared to the well-documented findings regarding the benefits of mentoring, there is a paucity of research on the role of race and ethnicity in mentoring relationships (Crosby, 1999; Schrodt et al., 2003) and the mentoring needs of ethnic minority protégés (Brown & Davis, 1999; Schrodt et al., 2003). One study of mentoring books and guides found that there is very little material available in the United States to guide faculty in effectively and successfully mentoring women, minority, and international students (Dedrick & Watson, 2002).

Given the underrepresentation of ethnic minority graduate students and faculty in most academic fields and given that mentoring has been pinpointed as a means to increase ethnic minority recruitment and retention (Blackwell, 1989; Cartledge, Gardner,
& Tillman, 1995), it is critical that we gain a better understanding of the needs of ethnic minority protégés and how mentors can best work to meet their needs. Davidson and Foster-Johnson (2001) call for more ethnographic (Fetterman, 1998) and naturalistic research so as to capture the complexity and depth of the issues involved in this topic.

### Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate the types of activities and practices that occur in cross-cultural mentoring relationships between outstanding mentors and their protégés in doctoral clinical and counseling psychology programs. This study seeks to examine how mentors work with their protégés with regard to professional development matters as well as other interpersonal issues such as personal differences, conflicts, and racial/cultural issues. The goal of this study is eminently practical: I seek to uncover the practices and behaviors of mentors in successful cross-cultural relationships so that others can likewise learn to mentor effectively and successfully. This pragmatic goal is aligned with the historical shift in the usage of the word “mentor” from a noun to a verb (Enerson, 2001).

Since this was conceived as an exploratory study, grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was utilized to discern patterns in mentor practices. Data collected and analyzed included interviews with outstanding mentors and their protégés, audiotapes of two in vivo mentoring sessions, e-mail exchanges between the mentors and protégés, and relevant archival materials. Traditionally, research on mentoring has tended to focus on either the protégés or the mentors. Researchers have noted the importance of taking both mentor and protégé perspectives into account since they can diverge dramatically (Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Valentine &
Mosley, 2000). A feature of this dissertation study is the inclusion of perspectives from both mentors and protégés. The data were systematically and repeatedly coded, sorted, and categorized until a comprehensive, explanatory theory emerged.

Research Questions

The present study examined the practices of outstanding mentors in cross-cultural relationships. The research questions were as follows:

1. What activities and practices take place in cross-cultural relationships between outstanding mentors and their protégés in the fields of clinical and counseling psychology?

2. How do mentors handle or address issues of race and cultural differences when mentoring culturally different protégés?

Definitions

A universally agreed definition of mentoring does not exist in the research literature. Hence, for my research purposes, I found it necessary to create my own definition by reviewing commonly used definitions and crafting one suitable for an academic setting. My definition is adapted from Mullen’s (1994) and Healy and Welchert’s (1990) definitions of a mentor:

A mentoring relationship is a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced member (mentor) and a less experienced member (protégé) that is aimed to promote the professional and personal growth of the protégé through coaching, support, and guidance. Through individualized attention, the mentor transfers
needed information, feedback, and encouragement to the protégé as well as providing emotional support and recommendation.

The role of mentor can coincide with that of an advisor, though not all advising relationships are mentoring ones (Sedlacek, Benjamin, Schlosser, & Sheu, in press). All but two protégés in this study stated that their mentors were also their advisors, but all the participants made a clear distinction between a mentor and an advisor. Almost all of the mentors and protégés interviewed used descriptors such as “close,” “deeper,” “personal,” and “in-depth” to characterize the intimate quality of their mentoring relationships. In contrast, advisors (who are not mentors) were perceived to be more impersonal and less invested in the student, as illustrated in the following quote:

Camille (Protégé): Just the term advisor . . . it’s more of a gross word. . . . I think of an advisor as someone who sits in an office and just sort of tells you, “Okay, these are the requirements that you need to complete before the end of your first year and make sure that you do your prelims by this time and fix the grammar on the sentence here,” and then you’re good to go, and looks at you on paper and evaluates you and then goes along a scripted thing or something like that. So I just perceive an advisor as someone who is more distant, doesn’t really have as much of a personal relationship and is more businesslike and is someone who doesn’t necessarily care so much about you in the sense that they’re just sort of doing their job whereas a mentor is someone who, yes, they’re doing their job but they don’t care about you just because it’s their job. And so they will go out of their way to help you if you need it and they will go out of their way to ask you how
you’re doing and it’s not this scripted sort of distant relationship (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

The term “protégé” was not generally used by the mentors in this study. Instead, they typically referred to their protégés as “mentees” or “students.” Although my participants did not readily use this term, I chose to adopt it in this study because it is commonly utilized in the mentoring literature. Moreover, protection and caring are intrinsic to the etymology and meaning of the word “protégé,” making it particularly apt in capturing the special qualities of a mentoring relationship.

The following are additional terms and their definitions, as used in this study:

*Ethnic identity* refers to one’s association or affiliation with a particular group having a shared national or geographical origin, with common values, behaviors, affective styles, beliefs, and other cultural patterns (Suyemoto & Dimas, 2003).

*Culture* refers to “a highly variable set of meanings that are learned and shared by a group of people or by an identifiable segment of the population. Culture represents a way of life that can be transmitted from one generation to another” (La Roche & Maxie, 2003, p. 180).

*Cross-cultural mentoring and diversified mentoring relationships* are ones “composed of mentors and protégés who differ in group membership associated with power differences in organizations (e.g. race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation)” (Ragins, 1997, p. 482).

*Homogeneous mentoring relationships* are ones where the mentor and protégé are both similar in cultural backgrounds.
This Study’s Contribution to Knowledge

The overall aim of this study is to build an emergent theory outlining effective cross-cultural mentoring practices. To my knowledge, there is currently no comprehensive theory in this area of research that is derived from actual data. To date, there is very little research on the ways in which mentors actually work with their protégés; nor is there substantive knowledge on mentor practices with ethnic minority and culturally different protégés. The theory and findings from this study will be an original contribution to the knowledge base on mentoring and will provide the foundation for understanding the processes within a mentoring relationship. In addition, this study will shed light on how mentors tackle sensitive issues of race and cultural differences in their mentoring relationships.

Overview

The chapters that follow lay out the theoretical background, analytical process, results, and implications of this study. My overall goal in this study was to uncover and articulate the intangible, rather ill-defined process of mentoring, so as to answer the question of “What do mentors actually do?”

The focus of this chapter was to present the background and rationale for this study. Chapter Two provides the theoretical and research literature relevant to this study. Chapter Three explicates the methodology chosen and used for this study. In particular, I explain in detail the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) that provides the overall framework and foundation for each stage of the research process in this study.

The “Results” of a dissertation are typically presented in one chapter. However, I found that it made for better organization and readability to present the results of this
dissertation in four chapters. The mentors in this study were found to engage in a wide range of practices that supported and enhanced the careers of their protégés in two key domains: individual career development and socialization into the field. Chapter Four outlines the mentor practices targeted at supporting the individual career development of the protégés. Chapter Six explicates the mentor practices that were found to have an impact on the interfacing of the protégé with institutional/organizational concerns. Another identified dimension of mentor practices was found to be critical in the development, promotion, and maintenance of trust in the mentoring relationships – this set of mentor practices is delineated in Chapter Five. This dimension of mentor practices was key in the negotiation of cross-cultural differences within the dyads. Chapter Seven details the “aha” moment of my research process – the emergent theory built on the insights from the findings described in Chapters Four, Five, and Six. This theory proposes a model of mentoring that highlights the multicultural, relational, and ecological themes identified in the data.

Chapter Eight presents a summary of the dissertation and the implications of its findings for research and practice on mentoring. A distinct contribution of this study is the provision of insight into the phenomenon of cross-cultural mentoring. At the same time, the findings from this study also pose new directions for research and praxis in mentoring.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The research and literature on mentoring has flourished in the last two decades. Early efforts focused on the benefits of mentoring for protégés in corporations. More recent research directions have included mentoring in different organizational settings such as higher education (see Boyle & Boice, 1998b; Cawyer, Simonds, & Davis, 2002; Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002; Luna & Cullen, 1998) and community organizations (see Hamilton et al., 2006), gender differences and effects of cross gender configurations in mentoring (see Allen & Eby, 2004; Liang, Tracy, Taylor, & Williams, 2002; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000), mentoring with different populations (see Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Sanchez & Reyes, 1999; Spencer, Jordan, & Sazama, 2004) and even the negative aspects of mentoring (see Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004; Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000; Ragins, 1997; Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

This chapter reviews extant literature on mentoring pertinent to the present study. First, I review the research on how mentoring has been defined and operationalized; this section is followed by an overview of research on mentoring functions and mentor practices. I then discuss the literature on cross-cultural mentoring. Next, I present a review of the literature on mentoring in higher education, with a particular focus on mentoring practices and mentoring ethnic minority protégés. Lastly, I discuss two theories that have informed my views on mentoring.
Definitions and Conceptualizations of Mentoring

A review of how mentoring has been conceptualized, defined, and operationalized in the research literature is discussed in this section. This overview is particularly important to this present study since the aim of this study is to uncover the essential practices of mentors and provide a grounded theory of mentoring.

The first recorded use of the word “mentor” occurred in Homer’s *The Odyssey*, in which the character of Mentor was assigned by the King to protect and guide his son during his absence (Luna & Cullen, 1995). Even in this earliest usage, the word “mentor” implied a trusted advisor, protector, and guide. The concept of mentoring did not become part of the popular vernacular in the United States until much later, when bestselling publications in the late 1970s like *Passages* (Sheehy, 1976) and *Seasons of a Man’s Life* (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978) highlighted the centrality of mentoring in the lives of professional men and women.

One problem that recurs in the literature and research on mentoring is the lack of a comprehensive, consistent, and functional definition that holds universal agreement (Healey & Welchert, 1990; Noe, 1988). Different definitions abound, with some emphasizing certain mentor functions and others focusing on the nature of the mentoring relationship (Gonzalez Rodriguez, 1995). This heterogeneity in the way mentoring is conceived, defined, operationalized, and implemented poses an ongoing challenge for researchers (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004; Crosby, 1999; Tentoni, 1995). To compound the problem, the word *mentor* can connote a wide variety of meanings, including that of an “adviser, counselor, guide, preparer, monitor, teacher, instructor, professor, coach, preceptor, proctor, master, friend, and guru” (Lagowski & Vick, 1995,
In addition, the word "mentoring" is frequently used to describe different types of supportive relationships involving varying configurations of individuals: dyads of dissimilar power status (e.g., a more senior individual with a less experienced individual), dyads of equal power status (e.g., peer mentoring), and groups of individuals of mixed power status (e.g., mentoring groups).

Some contemporary mentoring researchers have relied on a fairly traditional view of the mentor as a more experienced, influential senior who "has advanced experience and knowledge and who is committed to providing upward mobility and support" to his or her protégé's career (Ragins & Scandura, 1999, p. 496). Other researchers have attempted to conceptualize the phenomenon of mentoring by identifying special characteristics that distinguish mentoring relationships from other relationships. The following list provides some key differences between mentoring and other types of professional or organizational relationships as highlighted in the literature:

- the mentor and protégé may or may not have a formal relationship, such as that of supervisor-supervisee (Allen & Poteet, 1999);
- the length of the mentoring relationship typically exceeds that of most organizational relationships (Allen & Poteet, 1999);
- the issues discussed between mentor and protégé are not confined to work issues (Allen & Poteet, 1999);
- the mentor and protégé enjoy a tighter, more intimate bond (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Hunt & Michael, 1983).

Clearly, the lack of consensus on what constitutes mentoring points to the need for more empirical research on the actual processes within mentoring relationships. In
particular, research on what actually goes on between mentor and protégé may help aid researchers toward a more concrete definition of mentoring.

Mentor Functions

Much research has been devoted to mentor functions and roles. The best known and widely cited model for mentoring functions is Kram's (1985) landmark study of developmental relationships in a large public utilities firm. Drawing on data from her grounded study, Kram organizes the functions of a mentor into two main categories -- career functions and psychosocial functions (see Table 1). According to Kram, career functions enhance advancement in an organization and are possible because of the mentor's seniority and power. Psychosocial functions, on the other hand, promote the protégé's self-confidence, identity, and efficacy in a professional role.

Table 1

\textit{Kram's (1985) Mentoring Functions}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Functions</th>
<th>Psychosocial Functions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>Role Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure-and-Visibility</td>
<td>Acceptance-and-Confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenging Assignments</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Kram’s (1985) pioneering research has been a seminal contribution to the research and literature on mentoring. Many subsequent mentoring models and research studies have adopted her delineation of career and psychosocial functions. However, a major omission in her 1985 work is the lack of attention paid to cultural variables. Although gender was addressed in her study, no other cultural or racial demographics were examined or even noted in her participant pool. Hence, though her findings were, and continue to be, greatly influential in the mentoring literature, it is not known how applicable or suitable they are to ethnic minority and culturally different mentors and protégés. In addition, her findings may be context-specific to business corporations – more research is needed to determine if these mentor practices pertain to other professional contexts and whether there are specific practices unique to each setting.

Kram’s (1985) model has been the basis and inspiration for other theoretical models of mentoring. In particular, three recent theoretical models developed by counseling and clinical psychologists are noteworthy for their incorporation of multicultural concerns. The first is Fassinger’s (1997) model of feminist mentoring, which she initially presented as a “Woman of the Year” Award address at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association. Fassinger provides a model of mentoring that embraces feminist principles, thus her model emphasizes mentoring processes such as re-thinking of power, emphasis on the relational, valuing of collaboration, commitment to diversity, integration of dichotomies, and incorporation of political analysis. Her model is distinct in its highlighting of diversity and power within the mentoring relationship. Drawing on Fassinger’s model, Benishek et al. (2004) proposed a multicultural feminist model of mentoring that explicitly infused multicultural
considerations into the dimensions identified by Fassinger. Both these models are revolutionary in their incorporation of feminist and multicultural considerations within their frameworks, and in providing an evaluation of the benefits to both mentors and protégés. However, a major limitation of these models is that neither was empirically derived or tested. Hence, the actual validity of these models is not known. The third mentoring model proposed by a clinical psychologist is Johnson’s (2003) triangular model of mentor competence that includes mentor character virtues, abilities, and competencies. In this model, Johnson points to the need for mentors to have competencies in relational skills as well as cross-gender and cross-race skills. Although his model was not developed from field research, it serves as a useful starting point and backdrop for the present study. Most useful is his distinction between mentor abilities and skills: Johnson differentiates the former from the latter in terms of inherent or fundamental capacity as opposed to something that can be learned or developed. In this study, the focus is on mentor practices, i.e. using Johnson’s differentiation, the focus of the present research is on skills that can be acquired, developed, or learned.

A unique contribution to the mentoring literature is Harris’s (1999) Africentric model of mentoring that is centered on Africentric principles (unity, self-determination, creativity, purpose, convergence of “I” and “We,” and faith). Harris’s model is distinctive for its conceptualization of cultural values for the purpose of mentoring African Americans in a culturally congruent way. Indeed, all three models (Harris’s, Fassinger’s, and Benishek et al.’s) are exemplary and exciting in their incorporation of multicultural perspectives. However, all three models are in need of empirical validation to test for their robustness and applicability to minority populations and cross-cultural relationships.
Other researchers have identified or proposed additional mentoring functions, including: enhancing and supporting the learning and education of the protégé (Atkinson, Casas, & Neville, 1994), socializing the protégé into the profession (S. R. Bowman et al., 1999; Luna & Cullen, 1995), role modeling (Anderson & Shannon, 1988), facilitating the development of the protégé (Galbraith & Cohen, 1996), and empowering the protégé (Fassinger, 1997; Ragins, 1999; Welch, 1996). These mentor functions are useful in providing a broad picture of the roles played by mentors. However, much less is known about how mentors actually perform or fulfill these functions. Along the same lines, Allen, Poteet, Russell, and Dobbins (1997) call for future research to examine specific and actual interactions between mentor and protégé. In addition, we know comparatively little about the relevancy of these mentor functions to higher education settings and ethnic minority populations. Clearly, more research in these areas is badly needed.

Mentoring Practices

The above section outlines the research devoted to mentor functions. However, comparatively little research has been conducted on the actual practices that occur within a mentoring relationship. Many studies have been done on ideal or effective mentor characteristics and qualities (see Allen & Poteet, 1999; Cunningham & Eberle, 1993; Jackson et al., 2003; Rowley, 1999). Although such studies are insightful, they do not provide clues as to what mentors actually do with their protégés and how mentoring programs can train and inform mentors on good mentoring practice.

A few researchers have made inroads into identifying actual mentor practices. The commonly identified ones are shown in Table 2:
### Table 2

**Mentor Practices Identified in the Literature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Practices</th>
<th>Researcher/Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open self-disclosure</td>
<td>(Blanchett &amp; Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Cunningham &amp; Eberle, 1993; Fassinger, 1997; Galbraith &amp; Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to the protégé</td>
<td>(Galbraith &amp; Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating respect and concern for the protégé and his/her goals, needs, and interests</td>
<td>(Cunningham &amp; Eberle, 1993; Fassinger, 1997; Galbraith &amp; Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being accessible to the protégé</td>
<td>(Cunningham &amp; Eberle, 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiating and maintaining regular contact</td>
<td>(Connell, 1985; Morrison-Beedy, Aronowitz, Dyne, &amp; Mkandawire, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting the protégé by introducing them to significant people in the field</td>
<td>(Jackson et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining clear goals and expectations for the relationship</td>
<td>(Blanchett &amp; Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Johnson, 2002; Morrison-Beedy et al., 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information, guidance, expertise, and advice</td>
<td>(S. R. Bowman et al., 1999; Burlew, 1991; Galbraith &amp; Cohen, 1996; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating opportunities for the protégé</td>
<td>(Burlew, 1991)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching the unwritten rules of the organization/field</td>
<td>(Jackson et al., 2003; Johnson, 2003; Wright, 1992)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Galbraith and Cohen’s (1996) description of the six behavioral functions of a mentor also includes a clearly defined list of activities and behaviors that comprise each function (Galbraith & Cohen, 1996). This list was derived from the research on adult mentoring relationships and is the basis for the development of Cohen’s (1993) Adult Mentoring Scale (see Table 3):

Table 3

*Galbraith and Cohen’s (1996) Mentor Behaviors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Functions</th>
<th>Activities and Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationship</strong></td>
<td>• Listens actively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Asks open-ended questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides feedback based on observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Uses checks to ensure clear understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is sensitive and nonjudgmental in helping the protégé through emotional situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information</strong></td>
<td>• Asks questions to determine the protégé’s background, career situation and plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Poses direct questions about current problems and solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor Functions</td>
<td>Activities and Behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confrontive</td>
<td>• Carefully questions the protégé about areas in behaviors that might need change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discusses strategies for making change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provides carefully worded feedback to protégé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitative</td>
<td>• Poses hypothetical questions to expand the protégé’s goals and visions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presents multiple viewpoints and options to consider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reviews personal and professional life goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>• Shares personal experiences to inspire the protégé as well as to enrich the relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protégé vision</td>
<td>• Discusses present and future goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Asks questions about the protégé’s feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expresses confidence in the protégé and in his/her ability to create his/her future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Encourages the protégé to pursue dreams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The work of Galbraith and Cohen and others cited above are important for providing insight into general mentor practices across a variety of settings. Although these elaborations are useful and insightful, little is known about the relative importance of each of these practices or the significance and meaning attached to these practices. In
addition, most of these studies have focused on broad corporate or educational contexts, but not all of these identified practices may be universally applicable to all settings. Research focusing on the mentor practices in more specific settings (such as doctoral programs in psychology) with regard to specific populations (such as junior faculty) is needed. These proposed mentor activities also contain no mention of racial or cultural concerns, and do not provide us with insights on how mentors deal with such issues in mentoring relationships. This area of cross-cultural mentoring practices in academia has received very little attention in the research literature to date.

Another problem with several of the existing studies in this area and in the research on mentoring as a whole is the reliance on data gathered from one viewpoint rather than multiple viewpoints. Most research on mentoring has been based on protégé reports (Allen & Eby, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Russell & Adams, 1997); other studies have examined mentor perspectives without input from protégés. For instance, one qualitative study of ideal mentor characteristics interviewed 27 mentors from five different organizations but did not include interviews with protégés (Allen & Poteet, 1999). A contribution to the literature was this study’s findings that mentors thought “ideal” mentors should possess certain personality characteristics, such as honesty and patience, and that mentoring relationships should have good communication, trust, caring, flexibility, and openness to learning. However, a shortcoming of this study was its exclusion of protégé perspectives. Several writers have underscored the importance of taking both mentor and protégé perspectives into account since they can diverge dramatically (Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Valentine & Mosley, 2000). For instance, Raabe and Beehr’s (2003) study showed
that mentors and protégés differed significantly in their perceptions of their relationships. Future research on mentoring should examine perspectives from both mentors and protégés in order to get an accurate and balanced view of these relationships.

Cross Cultural Mentoring

A serious omission in the mentoring literature is the scant attention paid to diversity variables. Much of the existing research has been conducted on homogeneous samples of high-level, executive managers who are male and White. The generalizability of these studies to the diverse workforce of today is hence questionable (Ragins, 1997). In addition, we have an extreme lack of knowledge on how mentors tackle issues of race and diversity in their mentoring relationships. Much more research needs to be conducted on cross-racial, cross-gender, and other cross-cultural dynamics within the mentoring dyad. We also lack knowledge on how these key differences are negotiated in the dyad. One early contribution to this research area that deserves special attention is Thomas’s (1986b) dissertation study on the impact of race on mentoring. Thomas found that cross-race relationships experienced challenges with regard to relationship functions, identification, and initiation of the relationship. He also found that Black racial identity and White racial consciousness were significant variables in the dynamics of these relationships. In another study of 22 cross-race work relationships, Thomas (1993) found that a shared strategy for dealing with issues of race, rather than simply the activity of addressing race, was key in influencing the quality of the relationship. The findings from this study are singular in pinpointing the possible influence of racial identity development in the negotiation of racial differences in a mentoring relationship. At the same time, a noticeable absence in this study was representation from dyads comprising of Whites.
who prefer direct engagement and African Americans who prefer denial and suppression of racial issues. This absence calls for a more fine-grained interpretation of Thomas’s conclusions – in particular, the power differential stemming from racial difference may be at play in perceptions of these relationships.

A later study of Thomas is also valuable for its insights into the differences between same-race versus cross-race mentorships. Thomas’s (2001) study of minority and White professionals at three U.S. corporations found distinct differences between the patterns of advancement and types of mentoring relationships experienced by the two groups. For instance, compared to the mentored White professionals, the mentored ethnic minority professionals experienced a less linear, more lengthy ascent to high level positions. Two key findings from Thomas’s study are pertinent to this present study: first, Thomas found that minorities tended to advance further when their White mentors acknowledged and understood the impact of race on their protégés. He also found that dyads that discussed race openly experienced broader understanding in both parties. Thomas argues that cross-race relationships are particularly vulnerable to “protective hesitation” (p. 105) – the reluctance to address sensitive topics such as race and racism. Hence, he makes the recommendation that organizations teach mentors how to communicate about racial issues, warning that the reluctance or avoidance to speak openly about race can undermine the relationship. Thomas’s work points to the need for more research attention to this topic of communication about racial differences and discrimination in cross-racial mentoring relationships.

Ragins’ (1997) article on diversified mentoring relationships is innovative for offering a theoretical framework outlining the processes underlying such relationships.
Combining insights from psychological, interpersonal, sociological, and organizational perspectives, Ragins asserts that membership in a minority group affects one’s ability “to develop inter- and intraorganizational resources for power” (p. 487). Ragins frames the mentoring relationship as one where the mentor helps the protégé develop power resources through methods such as giving them challenging assignments and increasing their visibility in the organization. In terms of mentor behaviors, Ragins proposes that mentors in homogeneous relationships will provide more role modeling and psychosocial functions than mentors in cross-race relationships since the former are more likely to identify with their protégés than the latter. Ragins also proposes that minority mentors will perform fewer career development functions than majority mentors because minority mentors have fewer power resources. Ragins’s model is useful because it is the only theoretical model about mentoring that comprehensively addresses issues of diversity and power within mentoring.

Some effort has been made to substantiate Ragin’s theoretical propositions regarding diversified relationships. Research on cross-cultural relationships have resulted in somewhat mixed findings. While a few recent studies have given some tentative indications that cross-race and cross-cultural mentoring can be successful and satisfying (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Tillman, 1998) and that ethnic minority protégés enjoy equal benefits (Smith, Smith, & Markham, 2000), the results from other studies are much less positive. Several studies have found that protégés in cross-cultural mentoring dyads receive less career and/or psychosocial support than protégés with mentors who are similar to them (Dreher & Cox, 1996; Feldman et al., 1999; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Ragins, 1999; Thomas, 1990). Smith et al. (2000) suggest that these differing
results may be a consequence of different conceptualizations or operationalizations of mentoring. The small sample sizes in some of these studies (for instance in the Bordes & Arredondo and Smith et al. studies) also indicate these findings need to be interpreted with great care.

A key study that sheds light on why diversified relationships might experience difficulties is Allen, Day, and Lentz's (2005) research on the role of interpersonal comfort in mentoring relationships. Focusing on gender composition, Allen et al. found that interpersonal comfort mediated the relationship between gender similarity and protégés' reports of career and psychosocial support received. The authors write that discomfort associated with difference may explain disparities in mentoring effectiveness, and they call for qualitative research to further shed light on this issue. Although Allen et al. did not address racial or other cultural differences, their findings point to the need for research on mentor practices that may impact interpersonal comfort in cross-cultural relationships.

Some writers have advocated special mentor practices for cross-race relationships. Johnson (2003) notes that successful mentors must be attentive to issues of negative stereotypes, the lack of available role models, the protégé’s mistrust, public scrutiny, and peer resentment. Davidson and Foster-Johnson (2001) advocate four skills essential to cross-race mentoring: cross-cultural understanding and knowledge, cross-cultural communication, facilitation and mediation, and being flexible and adaptable. Other authors have similarly pressed for mentoring programs and mentors to be genuinely sensitive to and knowledgeable about cultural values (S. R. Bowman et al., 1999; Harris & Smith, 1999; Warren-Sams, 2001). Given the importance of mediating interpersonal
comfort in diversified relationships, research is badly needed on the utility and relevance of these recommendations.

The theoretical propositions and practical recommendations outlined in this section are in need of further examination, using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. There is much we do not know about diversified mentoring relationships. In particular, we lack insight as to how mentors successfully negotiate difference in their relationships with culturally different protégés. More research attention to processes and practices within cross-cultural relationships is clearly needed.

Mentoring in Higher Education Settings

Substantial research has been devoted to mentoring in business or workplace settings; comparatively less is known about mentoring in other settings such as higher education. While it is critical to keep in mind that selection bias may affect research findings on the benefits of mentoring, it is nevertheless worth mentioning that several studies, using diverse research methodologies, have documented the importance of mentoring for graduate students (see Boyle & Boice, 1998a; Clark, Harden, & Johnson, 2000; Dohm & Cummings, 2002; Luna & Cullen, 1998; Paglis et al., 2006; Tenenbaum, Crosby, & Gliner, 2001). Research has shown that doctoral students who are mentored tend to enjoy significant benefits, such as role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, coaching, friendship, and counseling (Luna & Cullen, 1998). Luna and Cullen’s survey of 109 graduate students found that 90 participants believed it is important for graduate students to have a mentor. This finding was confirmed from another angle in Boyle and Boice’s (1998) study of the best practices of exemplary departments. They found that mentorship “may be the most important variable related to academic and career success
for graduate students” (p. 90). Student perspectives have also added to the overall picture of the benefits of mentoring: Clark et al.’s (2000) quantitative study of clinical psychology doctoral students found that mentored graduates reported significantly more satisfaction with their doctoral programs than non-mentored individuals. Similarly, Tenenbaum et al. (2001) found that the provision of instrumental help was found to correlate with student productivity. Another way in which mentoring appears to help is by mediating the graduate school environment. For instance, Hollingsworth and Fassinger (2002) found that students’ mentoring experiences served as an important predictor of research productivity and that mentoring mediated the relationship between the research training environment and research productivity, even when students’ past attitudes toward research were controlled. Interestingly, gender was not found to be a predictor for research self-efficacy, contrary to previous assumptions. Along the same lines, Paglis et al.’s (2006) longitudinal study of doctoral students in the natural sciences found that mentoring was associated with research productivity four years later and that psychosocial mentoring positively influenced research self-efficacy. While it is important to keep in mind that correlation does not signify causation, the above studies are still invaluable for their investigation of the benefits of mentoring to graduate students. At the same time, these studies do not address how mentoring is actually delivered, thus leaving us with little knowledge of what effective mentoring looks like.

Two case studies and two quantitative studies offer a few glimpses into the actual workings of mentoring relationships in academia. The first case study involved interviews with an advisor and her doctoral student advisee at the beginning and end of a two-year period (Bean, Readence, Barone, & Sylvester, 2004). This study found that the
mentor viewed her role as inducting her protégé into a community of practice, whereas
the protégé viewed her mentor as a guide to the various challenges in the field. A strength
of this study was its inclusion of both mentor and protégé perspectives and its
longitudinal nature – a combination that constitutes somewhat of a methodological rarity
in mentoring studies. Another case study of two female counselor education doctoral
students (Bruce, 1995) found that encouragement and support, role modeling, and
provision of professional development opportunities were influential in their journey
through higher education. A contribution of this study is its illumination of the
experiences of two non-traditional aged women in higher education – this is a perspective
that tends to be ignored in the literature. However, a weakness of this study is its lack of a
cohesive conceptualization of mentoring – it was unclear if the women were reflecting on
close mentoring relationships or were simply discussing standard student-faculty
interactions. Overall, both of these case studies offer some tentative ideas for what goes
on within a mentoring dyad, but are limited in their generalizability.

Rose’s (2003) Ideal Mentor Scale, based on surveys of doctoral students at three
different universities found that the students valued communication skills and feedback.
Factor analysis of the scale indicated that three factors (Integrity, Guidance, and
Relationship) reliably underlie the students’ ratings of mentor attributes. This study
indicates that relational practices of mentors are important to the students. However, one
limitation of this scale is its reliance on survey data from students – we do not know if the
mentor attributes highlighted in the results are relevant to actual mentor practice. In
addition, Rose’s participants are drawn from a variety of departments; hence the scale
does not distinguish between cross-discipline differences in mentor attributes.
Luna and Cullen's (1998) survey of 109 graduate students found that 10% or more of the participants reported they received the following mentor functions as identified by Kram (1985): role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, coaching, friendship, challenging work, counseling, sponsorship, and exposure. 5% indicated they had been protected by their mentors. These results are helpful in providing a sense of the Kram mentoring functions received by graduate students. However, other mentor functions beyond the Kram paradigm were not identified. In addition, the study did not provide a uniform definition of mentoring for the participants. Instead, participants were asked to self-identify mentors, and were given choices ranging from advisors, friend, to parent. The lack of precise operationalization of the term “mentor” may well have affected their findings of mentor functions.

Overall, these studies serve as starting points toward our understanding of mentoring practices geared toward graduate students. A serious gap in the research literature is the lack of inclusion of cultural variables (aside from gender) in these studies. We do not know if these results pertain to ethnic minority students, nor do we know how mentor practices differ in cross-cultural relationships.

An area of research that has recently garnered more attention is the mentoring of junior faculty in academic institutions of higher learning. The following practices have been suggested for mentoring new faculty (see Table 4):
Table 4

*Table for Practices for Mentoring New Faculty*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Researcher/Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide concrete information about the department’s expectations for publications and tenure</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998; Cawyer et al., 2002; Schrodt et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide feedback and opportunities for encouraging the new hire to publish, e.g. help with establishing goals for writing articles</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide research assistance</td>
<td>(Schrodt et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide examples of syllabi used at the institution so that the new faculty has a grasp of the types of assignments and information covered</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the new faculty negotiate a reasonable schedule for teaching and scholarship, for instance, by adjusting teaching assignments that might conflict with writing deadlines</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the new faculty find opportunities to teach in area of research expertise</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review teaching tapes with the new faculty so as to help improve the teaching experience</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the protégé discern suitable ways for being involved in committee service without becoming overextended</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998; Cawyer et al., 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect the protégé</td>
<td>(Borisoff, 1998; Cawyer et al., 2002; Schrodt et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express affirming and welcoming suggestions to give the new faculty a sense of belonging</td>
<td>(Cawyer et al., 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide social support and collegiality</td>
<td>(Cawyer et al., 2002; Schrodt et al., 2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be available</td>
<td>(Cawyer et al., 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give history and unwritten rules of the organization</td>
<td>(Cawyer et al., 2002)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These studies are clearly valuable in highlighting practices that might likewise pertain to the mentoring of graduate students. However, the strategies and practices used to mentor graduate students are likely to be different from those used to mentor junior faculty – it would be worthwhile to have research focused on specific populations so as to give us a clearer picture of the types of mentor practices appropriate for each population. In addition, a consideration of race and culture is missing in these studies – we are left uninformed as to how mentors work successfully and effectively with minority protégés. Clearly, this is an area in need of more research.

*Cross-Cultural Mentoring in Academia*

Research on ethnic minorities in academia has shown that they are faced with distinct challenges, including isolation (Bova, 2000; Burden, Harrison, & Hodge, 2005), discrimination (Bova, 2000), subjection to stereotypes (Bova, 2000; Bradley, 2005), racism (Bradley, 2005), the need to balance demands of work and community (Bell, 1990), and tokenism (Bell, 1990; Bradley, 2005). Mentoring has been discussed as a means of ameliorating some of these challenges (see Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; S. R. Bowman et al., 1999; Burden et al., 2005; Tillman, 2001).

Two studies on the impact of race in academic mentoring appear to report conflicting results. Ortiz-Walters and Gilson (2005) found that graduate students of color received more psychosocial and instrumental support from their mentors of color than those with majority mentors. The students also reported more satisfaction with same-race mentors. A key finding in this study was that interpersonal comfort mediated the relationships between surface- (such as race) and deep-level (such as values) similarity. This study suggests that race can impact cross-cultural relationships when interpersonal
comfort is an issue. On the other hand, one of the few quantitative studies that addressed the topic of mentoring ethnic minority faculty found no significant difference in the amount of psychosocial or career support provided by mentors in diversified relationships compared with mentors in homogenous relationships (Smith et al., 2000). One drawback of this study is its examination of only two mentor functions – the authors themselves acknowledge that other functions, such as role modeling, might be pertinent in these relationships. Another limitation of this study was the relatively small numbers of ethnic minority faculty studied: only 13.8% of the sample (N = 226) were ethnic minority. The authors did not specify how many of these relationships were diversified and how many of the ethnic minority faculty were in homogenous relationships – attention to these variables could have led to a more sensitive analysis of the picture of diversified relationships presented.

The available studies on cross-cultural mentoring relationships in academia point to the importance of mentor competence in dealing with race and racial differences. Tillman’s (2001) qualitative study of the mentoring experiences of nine untenured African American faculty is a noteworthy contribution to the literature. She found that the mentors provided both career and psychosocial functions, but that the majority of the White mentors felt uncomfortable providing emotional support, due to cultural differences. The protégés turned to secondary African American mentors for support. Likewise, another qualitative study found that the mentors recognized cultural differences as a potential source of conflict in cross-cultural relationships (Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999). This study, however, did not address the issue of how mentors actually dealt with these cross-cultural conflicts.
The few studies available on mentor functions in cross-cultural relationships indicate that academic mentors do provide a variety of career and psychosocial functions. Dixon-Reeves's (2003) study of recently graduated, African American sociology doctorates found that over half of her sample (N = 33) reported receiving emotional support, letter of support, introductions, guidance, advice on career matters, feedback on papers, and assistance with getting fellowships. Sixty-two percent were also encouraged to submit publications as well as present at conferences. This is a unique study on an area virtually ignored in the literature – the mentoring experiences of African American doctoral students. However, a major limitation of this study is its small sample size. In addition, this was a retrospective study that was reliant on the potentially inaccurate recollections of the subjects.

The importance of including both mentor and protégé accounts is underlined by Blanchett and Clarke-Yapi’s findings (1999) of differing perceptions of the mentor’s role: the ethnic minority special education doctoral protégés in this study tended to see the mentor as someone who can counsel them on personal and professional issues, highlight career opportunities, and provide important information. The mentors, on the other hand, reported that they perceived their roles as role models and facilitators of growth. These findings provide some insights into effective mentor practices for ethnic minority doctoral students. However, a limitation of this study was its extensive scope that covered mentor and protégé roles, the personal characteristics of mentor and protégés, differences and conflicts within the relationship, and mentoring outcomes. The expansiveness of this study limits its usefulness in terms of providing specific detail in the area of mentor practices.
One study that is relevant to this section is Lark and Croteau’s (1998) qualitative study of mentoring relationships involving lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) doctoral students. One of the key findings of this study was the desire of the LGB students for an LGB mentor. Others who had dual identities of being LGB and students of color reported feeling torn about choosing between mentors who could guide them regarding race and racism and mentors who understood their sexual orientation/identities. The mentors in this study served professional and personal functions, akin to the career and psychosocial functions identified by Kram (1985). A key finding in this study was the integration of LGB concerns into these personal and professional functions. These findings point to the significance of cultural variables in mentoring and to the importance of mentor awareness, sensitivity, and skill in handling these concerns within the mentoring relationship.

Despite a comprehensive review of the literature, I was unable to locate research studies that specifically addressed the mentoring practices of mentors paired with ethnic minority doctoral students. The lack of research in this area points to the need for studies focusing on this area of concern. In particular, exploratory studies are needed to unearth and identify the practices that are unique and relevant for this population.

Two Theories Relevant to this Topic

In grounded theory research, the researcher is encouraged to work closely with the data to allow the theory to emerge directly from the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). At the same time, I believe that a priori assumptions, beliefs, and ideas inevitably color one’s perceptions of the world (Charmaz, 2006). The researcher thus has to be as aware of prior informing influences as far as possible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As such, I am
including a discussion of the following two theories of interest which have potentially influenced or colored the way I approach the data: Social Cognitive Theory of Career and Academic Interest, Choice and Performance (Lent et al., 1994) and Socialization Theory (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Although I was cognizant of these theoretical ideas during the course of my research, I did not privilege any one theoretical frame but drew firmly on the goals of grounded theory and maintained “theoretical sensitivity” (Glaser, 1978) so as to foster the development of an emergent theory.

Social Cognitive Theory of Career and Academic Interest, Choice, and Performance

The social cognitive theory of career and academic interest (Lent et al., 1994), drawn primarily from the work of Albert Bandura (1986), proposes a complex, bi-

![Figure 1. Model of person, contextual, and experiential factors affecting academic-related choice behavior (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).](image)

directional model in which personal, environmental, and individual behavior variables operate as “interlocking mechanisms” to influence an individual's thoughts and behaviors (see Figure 1).

Three key constructs relevant to this study are emphasized in this theory: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals.
The first key construct is self-efficacy, a concept derived from the work of Bandura, defined as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (1986, p. 391); such beliefs are thought to influence one's choices, one's energy and determination in pursuing a goal, and one's response to setbacks. In social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is viewed as a set of beliefs that interact dynamically with other personal and environmental factors, rather than as a passive, unchanging state of being. This complex, dynamic interaction can be seen in a person's development of interest, whereby individuals' interest in an activity is piqued when they perceive themselves to be competent and expect good outcomes. This activity is then likely to develop as a personal interest and goal, thereby reinforcing self-efficacy. Following Bandura's propositions, Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1996) state that self-efficacy is developed through four types of learning experiences: "personal performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, social persuasion, and physiological states and reactions" (p. 102). Self-efficacy beliefs are thought to be positively related to positive experiences and exposure to good models. These beliefs are also thought to be mediated by negative thoughts or beliefs. Lent et al. theorize that self-efficacy exerts direct and indirect effects on an individual's goals, choices, and actions. In this study, mentoring practices are thought to increase the protégé's self-efficacy in various ways – through learning experiences provided by the mentors, through validation and affirmation of the protégé, and through encouragement and support of the protégé's actions.

The second key construct, outcome expectations, is defined as "personal beliefs about probable response outcomes" (Lent et al., 1994, p. 83). Write Lent et al., "Whereas
self-efficacy beliefs are concerned with one's response capabilities (i.e. "Can I do this?")
outcome expectations involve the imagined consequences of performing particular
behaviors ("If I do this, what will happen?") (p. 83). Outcome expectations can vary
from anticipation of external rewards such as money, to internal rewards such as
fulfillment and happiness. Bandura (1986) argues that self-efficacy can be much more
influential than outcome expectations in that self-doubt can deter one from pursuing a
course of action even though one perceives the reward inherent in that action.

The third key construct in social cognitive theory is that of goals, which Lent et
al. define as "the determination to engage in a particular activity or to effect a particular
future outcome" (p. 86). Goals interact with self-efficacy and outcome expectations in
helping people visualize and attain positive outcomes. It is hypothesized in this study that
mentor practices work to strengthen the protégé’s outcome expectations and goals
through discussions of goals as well as encouragement and support as the protégé
advances toward achieving personal goals.

Lent et al.'s theory also includes an additional "layer" of theoretical analysis that
elaborates the basic model predictions. Lent et al. believe that the factors in this "layer"
interact in complex ways, either as moderators of certain relationships, as direct
facilitators or restrictors, or as precursors of sociocognitive variables. Two pertinent
variables in this category are ethnicity and gender. Lent et al. view gender and ethnicity
as socially constructed aspects of experiences that shape the individual’s career and
academic development process and influence learning experiences. These influences
work in concert to interact with personal beliefs and expectations to support or restrict
life choices. In addition, contextual factors such as specific opportunities (ranging from
financial support and personal contacts to discriminatory practices) can further shape the learning experiences and beliefs of the individual. Lent et al. hypothesize that gender and racial/ethnic differences in self-efficacy, outcome expectations, interests, actions, and goals are due to "differential access to opportunities, supports, and socialization processes" (p. 105) and that these differences would be lowered when such differential access is controlled. In this study, mentor practices are thought to affect internal and external barriers stemming from gender, racial, and ethnic differences, by increasing access to opportunities and support, as well as by smoothing the socialization process for protégés.

Lent et al.'s model distinguishes between goals and actions, positing bidirectional as well as direct and indirect relationships between self-efficacy, interests, goals, outcome expectations, and actions. This model provides a useful framework for understanding mentor practices and their impact on protégés. The special interactions that take place between mentor and protégé are likely to engage and enhance the self-efficacy, interests, goals, outcome expectations, learning experiences, and actions of the protégé. At the same time, mentor practices also increase access for ethnic minority protégés by offering support and opportunities that might not be otherwise available.

Socialization Theory

Socialization theory is relevant to this research study because it focuses on the developmental stages of the socialization process for newcomers (Schrodt et al., 2003; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Organizational socialization has been defined as "the process by which an individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational role" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Van Maanen and Schein
propose six major dimensions which characterize organizational socialization processes: collective versus individual, formal versus informal, sequential versus random, fixed versus variable, serial versus disjunctive, and investiture versus diversiture. Of these, three (collective versus individual; sequential versus random; serial versus disjunctive) are especially relevant to this present study.

In collective socialization, groups of newcomers are socialized into an organization through a common, shared set of experiences. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) cite boot camp training of new army recruits as an instance of collective socialization. Individual socialization, on the other hand, is tailored toward individuals undergoing a distinct set of experiences. One example of this is the grooming of a mid-level manager by his boss to become part of upper management. According to Van Maanen and Schein, individual socialization occurs most frequently in situations where the newcomer has to learn a complex set of organizational skills and values in order to negotiate internal boundaries to be deemed worthy of being included in the higher levels or inner circles of the organization. In this study, protégés wanting to become part of the academic world may experience some aspects of collective socialization (e.g. being in a cohort of same-year colleagues). However, graduate students also undergo individual socialization, wherein they have to individually master the complex and unwritten rules, skills, values, and steps needed to forge their individualized identities in the world of academia. It is hypothesized that mentoring by a senior person reduces the confusion, isolation, and anxiety associated with individual socialization by providing the junior person guidance regarding the complex rules and by providing reassurance during the process of creating a professional identity.
Sequential socialization occurs when there are specific sequences of known steps to achieve a place in the organization. In contrast, random socialization takes place when there is no known sequence of steps or if the steps are confusing, unclear, or constantly in flux. It seems commonsense that sequential socialization would provoke much less anxiety and uncertainty than random socialization. Likewise, higher anxiety is associated with variable socialization, wherein the timeline for achieving a goal is not known. Much less anxiety is associated with fixed socialization, where the newcomer has clear ideas of the amount of time needed to reach a certain goal. This study hypothesizes that entrance into the academic world falls more within the category of random socialization.

Although there are some known steps needed to gain entrance (e.g. complete one's undergraduate degree), innumerable unwritten rules abound (e.g. the actual importance of the test scores or which types of journals one should publish in) and many critical steps are also left unclear. This can cause a great deal of confusion and anxiety for the newcomer attempting to navigate the system. Mentor practices help the protégé through the process of random socialization by clarifying the steps and explaining the unwritten rules within the academic world.

The third proposition relevant to this study is the dimension of serial versus disjunctive socialization. In the former, newcomers are socialized by more experienced people from the organization who serve as role models and guides. In disjunctive socialization, there are no such guides for newcomers and they are left to learn the ropes on their own. To illustrate this phenomenon, Van Maanen and Schein give examples of a Black firefighter joining a team of White firefighters or a woman entering an all-male company. Disjunctive socialization is a useful concept for understanding the experiences
of ethnic minorities wanting to enter academia but lack ethnic minority role models within the academy to serve as guides and support. It is theorized that mentoring helps to smooth the socialization process for ethnic minorities by providing them with senior people who can show them the ropes and help them find a space and an identity within academia.

The theoretical propositions of both socialization theory and social cognitive theory have been influential in my conceptualization of mentoring practices. Socialization theory provides the framework for understanding the unique developmental position and needs of the protégés as newcomers waiting to be socialized into the norms and practices of the field. Socialization theory also indirectly addresses the experiences of minorities in its conceptualization of disjunctive socialization. While socialization theory focuses on the interaction between newcomers and the organization/field they hope to assimilate into, social cognitive theory focuses on both the internal and external forces that interact complexly and dynamically to influence the individual's beliefs, cognitions, behaviors, actions, and goals. Social cognitive theory is useful in conceptualizing the types of mentoring practices that can empower protégés to pursue their academic and career goals, despite being buffeted by forces that might otherwise derail them.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature relevant to this present study's focus on the practices of mentors working with minority protégés in psychology doctoral programs. Previous research and writing on mentoring processes and mentor functions (in particular, the 1985 work of Kram) provided the basis for this study's investigation on mentor practices. In addition, insights from social cognitive theory and socialization
theory served as a lens through which I could view and make sense of the data. I acknowledge the contribution and influence of this scholarship to my study. At the same time, I attempted to stay true to the goals of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by being open to the data.

The topic of this research study has not been adequately addressed in the literature. Although there has been good research documenting the importance of mentoring for graduate students (see Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002; Paglis et al., 2006), there is much less research on cross-cultural relationships in academia. Existing research on cross-cultural mentoring in other contexts shows that such relationships can be subject to specific challenges, such as societal forces of discrimination and racism (Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Thomas, 1986b; Thomas, 1990). These studies strongly indicate that mentors in cross-cultural relationships need to be competent in specific strategies to mentor the culturally different in an effective manner. This area of cross-cultural mentoring praxis is one that has not been substantially addressed in the literature. The present study examining the practices of outstanding mentors in academic cross-cultural relationships is designed to address this gap.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

This research study investigated the activities and practices of 9 faculty mentors with their 17 doctoral student protégés. Each mentor and protégé (26 participants in all) was interviewed to get an in-depth view of mentor practices. Documents pertinent to these relationships were also examined – these consisted primarily of e-mail exchanges between mentors and protégés. The actual mentoring sessions of two dyads were also audiotaped and analyzed.

This chapter outlines the research methods used in this study. The chapter contains five sections. The first section discusses the research methodology chosen and used for the study. The second section describes the sample selection methodology and the third section discusses data collection, and the establishment and maintenance of trustworthiness. The fourth section discusses the data analysis process. The fifth and last section discusses the pilot study conducted prior to this present study.

Research Methodology

Objectives of Study and Qualitative Methodology

The main objectives of this study were to identify mentor practices and to explicate the deep meaning and significance of these practices. Clifford Geertz (1973) described analysis as “sorting out the structures of signification . . . and determining their social ground and import” (p. 9). To achieve this goal, Geertz pinpoints the difference between “thin description” (what is readily observed) versus “thick description”
(interpretations of the meaning and significance of what is observed) (Geertz, 1973).

Denzin describes “thick description” as follows:

A thick description does more than record what a person is doing. It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion, and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard (1989, p. 83).

The overarching aim of this study was to achieve a “thick description” of mentor practices, i.e. to look beyond surface-level, readily observable phenomena so as to interpret and articulate the deep levels of meaning and significance behind these practices.

To achieve this goal, a qualitative methodology was chosen so as to enable me to discern the meanings that “people attach to things in their lives” by “understanding their own frames of reference and experiencing reality as they experience it” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 7). In addition, since little empirical research has been conducted in this area of mentor practices, a qualitative approach was appropriate for this study because it can be used “to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known;” in addition, it is more suitable than quantitative methods at describing “the intricate details of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 19).
The Grounded Theory Approach

I elected to use grounded theory as my research and conceptual methodology for this study since it is a research method that stresses the discovery and development of theory directly through the systematic collection and analysis of data rather than from preconceived assumptions or prior theoretical frameworks (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Since there is scant research focusing on mentor practices, grounded theory is an appropriate methodology for the purpose of generating theory in this exploratory research study. Charmaz (2006) describes grounded theory methods as “systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves” (p. 2). My overall guide in using grounded theory was Glaser and Strauss’s (1967) model of grounded theory wherein the analytic process begins with developing initial categories that describe and/or interpret the data, demonstrating the relevance of these categories with as many cases as possible, then refining and enlarging these categories into theoretical frameworks with relevance beyond the research study. In the following sections, I discuss the research processes of sample selection, data collection, and data analysis in this study and I show how grounded theory techniques inform and shape these processes.

Sample Selection

Purposeful Sampling

The method of sampling was “purposeful sampling” (Patton, 2002), also termed “purposive sampling” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and “theoretical sampling” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). Glaser and Strauss (1987) describe theoretical sampling as
a process in which “the analyst jointly collects, codes, and analyzes his data and decides what data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his theory as it emerges” (p. 45). The selection of participants was based on:

... their contribution to the development of the theory. Often this process begins with a homogeneous sample of individuals who are similar, and, as the data collection proceeds and the categories emerge, the researcher turns to a heterogeneous sample to see under what conditions the categories hold true” (Cresswell, 1998, p. 243).

Given that my main goal was to obtain in-depth understanding of mentoring rather than generalizability (Patton, 2002), purposeful sampling is appropriate for this study.

Sample Selection

Since this was a qualitative study looking at depth of experience rather than breadth, I selected a small sample of mentors to interview. With such a small sample, I needed to determine the limits and parameters of my sample. Initially, I had planned to interview only participants who met the following criteria:

- Ethnic minority faculty in counseling psychology;
- Ethnic minority protégés at the dissertation and job search stage.

However, as the data collection began, I found myself becoming less interested in the race/ethnicity of the individual mentors and protégés, and more intrigued by the cross-cultural dynamics of the dyads. Using purposeful sampling as my guide, I recruited and interviewed outstanding mentors who were European American but were involved in cross-cultural relationships with their protégés. I also recruited and interviewed European American protégés who were in cross-cultural relationships with their mentors.
I chose to interview faculty mentors from the field of counseling psychology because the Division of Counseling Psychology (Division 17 of the American Psychological Association) has an avowed commitment to promote diversity (Counseling Psychology Division 17, 2005). This commitment is exemplified in several of the sections of Division 17, including sections representing Advancement of Women, Ethnic and Racial Diversity, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Awareness. In addition, clinical and counseling psychologists are specially trained in interpersonal and clinical skills, and I thought that mentors who were also trained clinical professionals might provide additional insight on effective mentoring. I also selected counseling and clinical psychology as opposed to other sub-fields in psychology because counseling and clinical psychology PhD’s pursue a broad range of academic and non-academic careers, and I was interested in how mentors worked with protégés on career preparation before and after graduation. I was also interested in examining what happened when mentors differed with their protégés’ in terms of the protégés’ career goals.

My plan for the selection of protégé participants also changed during the course of the study. Initially, I wanted to interview only protégés at the dissertation and job search stage because I was interested in how mentors work with protégés at this particularly difficult and anxiety-inducing developmental level. However, as I commenced interviewing, I realized that mentors generally prepared their protégés for the job search far in advance of this stage. For instance, one protégé mentioned that her mentor gave her advice for preparing for the internship phase (which typically happens after the dissertation is proposed or even completed) during her first year in the doctoral program. Staying true to the spirit of purposeful sampling, I then recruited and
interviewed protégés who were at earlier stages of their doctoral careers to examine how
their mentors prepared them for the last stages of their academic programs. Likewise,
when I interviewed one participant who was past the dissertation stage, I realized that her
retrospective reflections of her graduate school mentor were richer, more nuanced, and
more thoughtful than participants who had only had one or two years’ experience of
being mentored. For this reason, I decided to add more post-dissertation protégés to the
sample.

Participants for this study were identified in the following way: I posted a
message on a psychology listserv asking for nominations of outstanding mentors in the
field (Appendix A). Since the purpose of this study was to uncover mentor practices, I
wanted to be open to the participants’ definitions and conceptions about mentoring.
Hence, in my request, I deliberately chose not to provide a detailed definition of a mentor
because I did not want to restrict the participant pool to my definition of mentorship.

I also researched different divisions of the American Psychological Association to
identify individuals in psychology who had been honored for their mentoring efforts. To
ensure that I was getting a large enough pool of ethnic minority mentors, I also included
in my list of possible participants all the recipients of the Janet E. Helms Award for
Mentoring. This is an award given at a national multicultural conference to commemorate
an individual’s outstanding contributions as a mentor, scholar, and trainer in multicultural
issues. These combined recruitment strategies resulted in a list of 45 possible mentor
participants. Seventeen of these participants closely fit the parameters of my study:
faculty mentors who were in cross-cultural mentoring relationships with their
counseling/clinical psychology doctoral students.
Making Initial Contact with Respondents

My first contact with each mentor was by e-mail. Using a standardized e-mail (Appendix B), I invited each of these 17 participants to join my study. In the e-mail, I briefly explained my dissertation research and the requirements for the study. I informed them that I would be interviewing their protégés as well. I also described my background to explain my personal investment in the research. Nine of the 17 invited faculty responded to my e-mail and agreed to participate. After the mentors had signed the human subjects consent form (Appendix C), I interviewed them at a time agreeable to both of us. One mentor was visiting the area and I interviewed him in person. All the other participants were interviewed by phone.

After each interview, I asked the mentors to give me the names of two of their protégés who might be willing to speak with me. As with the mentors, I invited each protégé via e-mail to participate in the study. All except one of the protégés whom I approached agreed to participate in the study. In sum, I interviewed nine mentors and 17 protégés.

As a token of appreciation for their time, I sent each participant a small gift (a $20 Amazon gift certificate) after I interviewed them. I felt that this was a culturally appropriate gesture (see discussion on gift-giving in Chapter Five) that would not interfere with my research findings. The majority of the participants had agreed to participate in my study before I informed them about the gift certificate. Hence, for most of the participants, this gift was not a factor in their decision to participate. In fact, two mentors did not want the gift and asked me to give it to someone else.
Characteristics of the Sample

Although the mentors and protégés in this study do not form a representative sample and were not randomly selected, I believe there is still much to glean from this in-depth exploration of their activities. As befits such a sample, the purpose of the study is not to make generalizations about mentoring activities or to posit any causal relationships. Rather, this study is designed so as to enable me to observe patterns common in this particular sample of mentoring dyads, and to get an in-depth understanding of these mentoring relationships.

I made a conscious effort to select mentors who were recognized either by their peers and/or their students as notable mentors. In addition, to achieve a sample of mentors who were from different cultural backgrounds, I did my best to recruit mentors of different genders, races, cultures, as well as ages.

My sample had the following characteristics:

- There were 2 male mentors, 7 female mentors, 2 male protégés and 15 female protégés;
- There were 2 African American mentors, 1 Hispanic American mentor, 4 Asian American mentors, and 2 European American mentors;
- The mentors were at the following stages of their careers: 1 was assistant professor, 4 were associate professors, and 4 were full professors;
- There were 2 African American protégés, 2 Hispanic American protégés, 9 Asian American protégés, 2 European American protégés, and 2 biracial protégés;
- The protégés were at the following stages of their careers: 4 were at the pre-dissertation stage, 5 were at the dissertation stage or had just completed their dissertations, 8 were at the internship/job stage;
- All the dyads were diversified in one or more of the following dimensions: race, ethnicity, gender, age/generation, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual orientation.
- There were 9 cross-race dyads; 5 same-race but cross-ethnic dyads.

Table 5 depicts the pertinent characteristics of each mentor-protégé dyad. I chose to retain the participants’ own descriptors of their racial, ethnic, and cultural identities because I wanted to be true to how the participants described and saw themselves, even though this meant an occasional inconsistency in the use of terms. For instance, some participants described themselves as “White” and others used the term “European American.” In addition, one participant described himself as “biracial” while another saw herself as “mixed race.” I elected to include generational/immigration information provided by certain participants since generational status can be salient in one’s cultural identities and experiences. The term “first generation” refers to a foreign-born individual who immigrates to the United States. “Second generation” refers to the United States-born children of the first generation of immigrants. “1.5 generation” refers to a person who immigrates to the United States before their early teens. One participant, Dr. Lombardi, referred to herself as “first generation” but she is technically second generation since she was born in the United States but her parents were born in Italy.
Table 5

*Characteristics of the Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor</th>
<th>Protégés</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Serena Munoz</td>
<td>Paula, Biracial Filipina &amp; European American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Mexican American female</em></td>
<td>Solomon, White, Jewish American male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Beth Miller</td>
<td>Jung, Korean American male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>European American female</em></td>
<td>Maria, Black Cuban female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Vittoria Lombardi</td>
<td>Joan, European American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Second generation Italian American</em></td>
<td>Ginny, Asian American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Sato</td>
<td>Sovann, Cambodian American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Biracial/Asian American male</em></td>
<td>Camille, Mixed race European and Chinese American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akiko Watanabe</td>
<td>Wei, Chinese American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>1.5 generation Japanese American female</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Keisha Johnson</td>
<td>Latisha, African American lesbian female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>African American female</em></td>
<td>Isabella, Mexican American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Takahashi</td>
<td>Tamika, African American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Japanese American female</em></td>
<td>Nandita, Asian American/Indian American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrel Davis</td>
<td>Shanti, Indian American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>African American male</em></td>
<td>Manjeet, South Asian/Euro American biracial female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimi Wang</td>
<td>Ming, 1.5 generation Chinese Taiwanese American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Second generation</em></td>
<td>Ai Ling, first generation Asian American female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Taiwanese American female</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53
Protecting Participants' Confidentiality

The identities of the participants were protected by the use of pseudonyms. I chose pseudonyms that reflected the participants’ racial backgrounds, for instance, I gave Asian participants Asian pseudonyms that reflected their ethnicity. Through the course of my data collection, I became aware that the use of titles (i.e. Dr. and Prof.) for the mentors was a subtle issue for some of the protégés. The use of a formal title can mean an enforcement of authority and hierarchy by the mentor, or it could simply reflect the particular convention at a university. To stay true to the way the mentors were addressed, I decided to use pseudonyms in accordance with how the protégés referred to their mentors. Most of the protégés used their mentors’ first names, hence I followed their precedent and gave their mentors first-name pseudonyms. Five protégés used the title “Dr” when referring to their mentors and I gave these mentors pseudonyms that reflected this formality.

All identifiable markers were also changed to protect the participants’ confidentiality (for example, names of universities, job titles, names of real people not associated with this study, and geographical locations). One marker that I did not change was the race and cultural backgrounds of the participants since this was a focus of the study.

There were a few instances when protégés made comments that might be perceived as critical of their mentors or might in some way be construed negatively by their mentors. In such instances, I decided against using pseudonyms in order to protect the protégés’ identities. Instead, I used the phrase “name withheld” to denote that I deliberately chose to preserve the speaker’s anonymity.
Quotations

When quoting participants, I followed the guidelines from the fifth edition of the American Psychological Association Style Manual (American Psychological Association, 2001). In particular, I used three spaced ellipsis points to indicate omission of material and four ellipsis points for omissions between two sentences.

As far as possible, the words of the participants were used verbatim in order to preserve their language and style of speaking. For easier readability, the following types of utterances were excised from the quotes: "you know," "uh," "like," and "um." I also deleted phrases that the participants repeated unnecessarily. For instance, if the actual utterance of a participant was as follows:

"I was in graduate school for a, like, long, uhm, time, and it was, it was, you know, difficult,"

I would clean up the quotation and represent it as follows:

"I was in graduate school for a long time and it was difficult."

There were several instances when I was not able to ascertain conclusively if an utterance was truly superfluous to the overall meaning of the participants' words. In such cases, I retained utterances such as "you know" and "like" when I felt that they were integral to the sentence structure or its meaning. For instance, in the following quotation, the participant appeared to use the word "like" as a way of introducing a clarifying example. Hence, I retained the use of "like" in the quotation:

Maria (Protégé): Those types of things that she talks about and although it's a funny joke . . . but then we started focusing a lot on like, "Well, what does this mean for our study? And are we going to have people only who are Catholics or
are we going to have people who are spiritual and people from other religions?
Like how is that going to affect our study?” . . . . So like those types of things,
it’s what I mean by personal. It ties it into our research (personal interview, June
12, 2005).

Data Collection

This study utilized a qualitative fieldwork approach that collected data from three
sources. In order of prominence in this study, the three data sources used were:

- In-depth, semi-structured interviews with mentors and their protégés;
- Archival materials such as e-mails and relevant publications;
- Audiotapes of actual mentoring sessions in selected dyads.

Semi-Structured, In-Depth Interviews

The primary method of data collection in this study was via semi-structured, in-
depth interviews with mentors and their protégés. In qualitative research, “all
perspectives are worthy of study” (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998, p. 9). Hence, I interviewed
the protégés using the same in-depth interview format so as to help me corroborate their
mentors’ accounts, as well as to gain insight on their perspectives about their mentoring
relationships.

Taylor and Bogdan (1998) list the following circumstances as being appropriate
for the use of in-depth interviewing: “The research interests are relatively clear and well
defined; settings or people are not otherwise accessible; the researcher has time
constraints; and the researcher is interested in a broad range of settings or people” (p. 90-
My decision to rely primarily on in-depth interviews for data collection is justified because this study fits each of Taylor and Bogdan's (1998) criteria:

- My research interest and topic of determining mentor practices is clear and well defined;
- The setting and people were not easily accessible: the mentors and protégés in this study were located across the country and it would have been prohibitively expensive to interview and observe all of them in person. Moreover, mentoring does not always take place at a pre-arranged time and setting. In fact, one of the mentors emphasized that mentoring tends to take place “on the fly” rather than at scheduled appointments;
- Seven mentor-protégé dyads were either geographically separated and/or did not meet regularly in person, thus making it impossible for me to observe their face-to-face meetings;
- I had both time and financial constraints that prevented me from doing more naturalistic observations;
- I was interested in a range of mentors and protégés in different academic institutions.

I chose to do semi-structured interviewing rather than structured interviewing for the following reasons: 1) to provide some consistency and standardization across interviews so that cross-comparisons could be made (Selltiz, Jahoda, Deutsch, & Cook, 1964); 2) to allow for greater depth in the interviews and to give respondents the opportunity to discuss information not contained within the interview questions (Denzin, 1970); and 3) to be flexible and in-tune with the respondent’s conversational style.
(Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). In terms of the last criteria, I felt that it was critical for me to develop a conversational rapport with my participants so that they would feel comfortable discussing their thoughts and feelings with me. I did not want to force them to adhere to a strict question-and-answer protocol because I wanted to be open to any new ideas or thoughts that were not in the interview protocol. Following Taylor and Bogdan’s (1998) concept of the interview as “a conversation between equals rather than a formal question-and-answer exchange” (p. 88), I strove to create a conversational tone in my interviews by being attentive to the flow of conversation, asking appropriate questions at the right time, and by responding with my own reactions and thoughts when appropriate.

The interviews took place between March 2005 and January 2006. The majority of the interviews lasted between sixty to ninety minutes. The longest interview session was the one I conducted in person – this interview lasted over two hours.

Interviews were scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time. I made arrangements with all the respondents via e-mail and sent them the human subjects consent form (see Appendix C) before I called them at the appointed time. Following Berg’s (1998) recommendation to “Never begin an interview cold (p. 87),” I generally began each interview by thanking the participants for their time and asking them how they were doing. For many participants, this initial start to the conversation led to a discussion of their research projects. When I felt that the participants were at ease with me, I would then tell them briefly about my research study and my methodology. I invited them to ask me questions about myself and my research. I stressed that I took confidentiality very seriously and that I used pseudonyms to protect their identities. I also asked their
permission to record the interview. Taylor and Bogdon (1998) recommend raising these issues of motives, intentions, and anonymity before commencing the interview. At the end of each interview, I reminded participants about the qualitative nature of my research and asked permission to contact them later for follow-up questions (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

I interviewed each mentor before interviewing their protégés. After interviewing each mentor, I carefully examined the transcript of the interview for any issues of interest that needed further confirmation or elaboration. I then supplemented my protégé interview protocols with questions pertaining to these issues (see Appendices D and E). This process enabled me to verify mentor responses and to get their protégés’ perspectives. It also led to a constant refinement of my interview protocol throughout the data collection phase.

*Interview Protocol*

To maintain both structure and flexibility in my interviews, I adopted the general interview guide approach which:

.. lists questions or issues that are to be explored in the course of an interview. An interview guide is prepared to ensure that the same basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each person interviewed. The interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate the particular subject. Thus, the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style but with
the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined" (Patton, 2002, p. 343).

In accordance with Patton’s recommendation, I used the interview guide in a flexible manner rather than as a highly rigid structured protocol (see Appendices D and E). The guide served both as a reminder of the key topics and questions I needed to cover as well as a means to stimulate conversation. I intentionally chose not to adhere to a strict interview protocol; instead, I adapted the order and type of questions asked during each interview to maintain a comfortable conversational tone.

The construction of the interview protocol began with an outline of all the broad categories relevant to this study (Berg, 1998). These categories were derived from Kram’s (1985) mentoring functions as well as from other functions identified through a comprehensive review of the literature. Open-ended questions were then developed for each of the identified mentor functions. The use of open-ended questions was adopted so as to gain access to how mentors understand what they are doing (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). In addition, open-ended questions were used in this study because they have been found to have better reliability and validity than close-ended questions; open-ended questions have also been found to be less sensitive to manipulation, interviewer effects, and question order effects (Converse, 1984; Geer, 1988; Metzner & Mann, 1952; Schuman & Presser, 1981; Schuman & Scott, 1987).

The tone and content of the interview was established with a general statement about the purpose of the interview (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Following Taylor and Bogdan’s (1998) recommendations to start an interview with open-ended, descriptive questions, I began each interview by asking participants to tell me about their
backgrounds and how they decided to pursue a career in psychology. This opening question was followed by questions about how they defined a mentor and the types of activities they associated with mentoring. I deliberately chose to begin the interviews with these initial questions to stimulate easy conversation and to create rapport between me and the respondents (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992).

My interviews with mentors contained questions pertaining to how they spent time with their protégés, the types of activities they did as mentors, and the factors that set the stage for a successful mentoring relationship. To confirm mentor responses, I interviewed the protégés using the same semi-structured interview format but with questions tailored to the protégés' experiences. The list of questions for both the mentor and protégé interview protocols were grouped under the following categories: background of the respondent, their thoughts on what constitutes a mentor, communication practices, practices to facilitate academic and professional development, communications about race, culture, gender, sexual orientation, class, and ethnicity, activities in the personal and social arenas, and overall thoughts on their mentoring relationships.

Piloting the Interview Protocol

The methodology and interview protocol chosen for this dissertation study were partially influenced and derived from that used in the pilot study that I conducted involving graduate student mentors and their protégés. The pilot interview protocol provided the basic format and structure for the questions. Some of the questions were pertinent only to the first study – these were obviously not included in the present study.
However, other questions were piloted and either used or revised for the present study. The most significant revisions were:

- I revised the order of the questions to facilitate a better conversational flow. Most notably, I moved to the forefront my question asking respondents to provide their definition of a mentor. I did this so that the respondents could start thinking about mentoring practices right from the outset of the interview and I could get a sense of how they conceptualized mentoring.

- I added questions to solicit further information. One question that I added for the protégés was: “What would you change about your relationship, if you could?” This particular question gave me insight into what other types of mentoring practices would be helpful, as seen from the protégés’ perspectives. Another question that I added was, “Tell me about humor in your relationship” after I noticed a significant degree of humorous exchanges between mentors and protégés in the pilot study.

- I revised and rewrote questions for greater clarity. One question was cumbersome in its original form: “What personal information does he/she share about himself/herself and you with him/her?” I reworded this question to read, “What personal information have you both shared with each other?”

- I re-organized questions so as to avoid asking extraneous questions. In my original interview protocol, I had several questions pertaining to mentoring in terms of academic and professional development. For this
present study, I grouped these questions together and broached the topic by asking the protégés, "How does he/she support your academic and professional development?"

After revising the interview guide for the present study, I piloted the revised protocol by conducting a sample interview with my own mentor. This interview was taped and transcribed. I asked for feedback for this interview from two faculty members who are qualitative researchers as well as fellow students in a qualitative analysis class. I incorporated the feedback that I received from these sources and further revised my interview protocol.

In addition, before officially going into the field, I showed the final revised version of the protocol to the members of my dissertation reading committee, two of whom are qualitative researchers. After receiving their feedback, I revised the protocol yet again. I repeated this process after conducting the first interview to get further feedback on the questions and my interviewing style.

The process of revising and refining the interview protocol continued right up to the last interview. When participants brought up pertinent topics that I had not thought to put in the protocol, I would add these questions for the next participant. For instance, when I first started interviewing, I noted the significance of letters of recommendation to the participants. The mentors as well as the protégés talked about how important these letters were, both as a mentoring practice and what this practice meant for the protégés. Hence, I added a question about letters of recommendation in the interview protocol. Occasionally, during the course of these interviews, I was made aware of the problematic wording of certain questions, and I revised these accordingly. For instance, one of the
mentors reacted strongly to my use of the word "politics" when I asked him what he told his protégés about politics in the department and in the field of counseling psychology. His reaction made me recognize how loaded the term was and I re-wrote the question for future interviews.

In a controlled study designed to test hypotheses, these constant modifications to the interview protocol would be a serious methodological concern. However, since this study is an exploratory one with the goal of discovering theory, the refinement of ideas gained from the evolution of the interview protocol actually supports the research goal of discovering theory.

Building Credibility Before, During, and After the Interviews

It was imperative that mentors and protégés were honest and open with me. I took pains to establish and build trust with my participants right from the moment of first contact in the following ways:

- To establish my credibility as a researcher, I strove to maintain an attitude of professionalism and seriousness by being conscientious, courteous, and attentive in all of my dealings with the participants. This meant e-mailing reminders prior to the interviews, sending thank-you notes after each interview, and calling each individual punctually. One of the mentors actually remarked on my punctuality, telling me that I called just when the clock tower outside his office chimed.

- I began each interview by giving the participants a very brief description of my dissertation topic and my motivation for conducting this study. I hoped that by being transparent about myself and my research, I would be
encouraging them to be likewise open with me. I also wanted to communicate courtesy and respect for my participants, and my genuine appreciation for giving me their time (Patton, 2002).

- Before the interview formally began, I told the participants about my interview questions and gave them the option of skipping questions if they felt uncomfortable answering any of them. Although I do not feel that there were any distressing questions in my protocol, I wanted the participants to feel that they could exercise some control during the interview. None of the participants refused to answer any of my questions.

- I talked to the participants about confidentiality, and informed them that I used pseudonyms to protect their identities. I also told protégés that what they told me was confidential and that I would not divulge their confidences to their mentors.

- I was prompt and responsive in my e-mail communications with the participants. This meant checking my e-mail several times a day (even on weekends) to ensure that I could reply very promptly. I hoped that my responsiveness would build trust with my participants by showing them that I took my research very seriously. In addition, I demonstrated my credibility and dependability by being extremely prompt in giving each participant a $20 online gift certificate for their participation in my study. I would send the gift certificate to them typically within minutes of the interview.
My perception of the mentors was that they were willing to talk, were open, and were honest with me. It was a little discomforting for me to be interviewing faculty whom I had never met. However, the majority of the mentors quickly put me at ease with their warmth, easy-going manner, and willingness to talk. Certainly, the personality styles of each mentor were quite different – some were more introverted and reserved, whereas others were more outgoing. Despite these differences, they all appeared to be very committed and dedicated to their students. Overall, I felt that the mentors were extremely supportive of my research and seemed willing to help me as much as they could.

Three mentors had worked as high level administrators, consultants, and/or professional public speakers. These three individuals had more of a public persona feel to them than the other mentors – I felt less comfortable interviewing them than other mentors and protégés. Moreover, I had to schedule my interviews with them through their administrative assistants. In particular, two of these mentors were much more stringent with their time than the other mentors – my interviews with them were scheduled for an hour only and I felt rushed to ask all my questions within that set period of time. The formality of the time arrangements made me feel less at ease with them than with the other mentors with whom I was able to make appointments directly. I wondered if my reactions and feelings were in tune with their protégés’ experiences.

My perception of the protégés were that they were all open, honest, and willing to help me with my research. A frequent comment made was that they were eager to help out a fellow student because they understood the difficulty of recruiting subjects. I felt more comfortable talking with them than with their mentors because I too was a student and shared many commonalities with them.
Limitations of the Interview Format

The interview format is limited in several key ways:

- Possible inaccuracy of the interviewee’s self-report (Patton, 2002; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998);
- Distortion of data due to a variety of causes, including interviewees’ “personal bias, anger, anxiety, politics, and simple lack of awareness” (Patton, 2002, p. 306). Patton also cautions that interview data are also “subject to recall error, reactivity of the interviewee to the interviewer, and self-serving responses” (p. 306);
- Absence or lack of important contextual cues from the interview data, such as the physical environment in which mentoring took place. This absence can potentially result in a less than accurate understanding of the participants’ words (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

In this study, I attempted to ameliorate these shortcomings by getting data from a variety of sources rather than depending solely on the word of mentors. Thus, I incorporated into the research design in-depth interviews of both mentors and their protégés, an examination of e-mail exchanges, and an analysis of actual mentoring sessions. This triangulation of sources helped to lessen the impact of reactivity, recall error, and inaccuracy of self-report. Using a variety of data sources also helped me to fill in some of the important contextual cues that were missing from the interviews.
Data From Other Sources

The use of multiple data collection methods was chosen to facilitate triangulation (Denzin, 1970) and to enable me to obtain an aggregation of data from different but related sources. This helped provide a more comprehensive and complete picture of mentor practices, thereby increasing the validity of the findings.

Archival Materials

Mentors and protégés were asked to share any archival materials (e-mails, correspondence, journals, etc.) that might shed light on their mentoring relationships. I was most interested in examining the e-mails exchanged between mentors and protégés since these e-mails document ongoing communication in these relationships.

When requesting e-mails, I simply asked protégés to send me e-mails that were representative of their relationships. I deliberately made my request in a non-specific manner rather than stipulating the types of e-mails I wanted. In this way, I hoped to receive a wide variety of e-mails typical of these relationships. Fifteen of the protégés forwarded e-mails to me. I received a total of 298 e-mails exchanged between these protégés and their mentors.

Audiotapes of Actual Mentoring Sessions

Instead of observing the mentoring sessions directly, I chose to tape-record the sessions. I made this decision for two reasons:

- Taping the mentoring sessions would be less intrusive than having a stranger observing the sessions;
Since the mentors were located across the country, it was financially impossible for me to fly to different locations across the country to observe them.

Understandably, most of the mentors and protégés did not give consent to have their mentoring sessions taped. Two dyads agreed to have their mentoring sessions taped. I mailed each protégé an MP3 recorder and asked them to tape their mentoring sessions for me. They then mailed the recorder back to me using a prepaid-postage box.

Transcription of Interviews and Mentoring Sessions

Over 800 pages of data were transcribed and analyzed in the course of this research. All phone interviews (except one) were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriber. The data from one interview was unfortunately not taped due to unforeseen technical problems and thus could not be transcribed.

Two actual mentoring sessions from two different dyads were taped for this study. The first session occurred early in my data collection -- I had this session transcribed in its entirety by my transcriber so as to get a full sense of the themes emerging in the data. The second mentoring session was recorded and sent to me at a very late stage of the research process wherein I had already identified the major analytic categories and themes of the study. In order to save on transcription costs, I decided not to have this session transcribed by a professional transcriber -- instead, I listened repeatedly to the session and I transcribed portions of this session that matched, deviated from, or informed the themes identified.
Establishing and Building Trustworthiness of Data

Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend the following to establish trustworthiness of data: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, and member checking. All of the above, except for persistent observation, were relevant for this study.

Prolonged Engagement

Prolonged engagement is "the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes: learning the "culture," testing for misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents, and building trust" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 301). Although this criterion is more relevant to ethnography than the type of interview work I did for this study, I found it useful as a paradigm to be aware and thoughtful about how long I had immersed myself in the data collection process. I started my first pilot interview on March 2004, and finished my last interview on January 2006. During the space of these two years, I not only had many conversations with different mentors and protégés, I also examined the archival materials pertaining to their relationships. In addition, I had the opportunity to present the findings of my pilot study at two conferences during this period of time. I also submitted my write-up of the pilot study to the peer-reviewed journal, "Mentoring and Tutoring." These public presentations of my research provided an avenue for me to get valuable feedback from other colleagues and researchers. I incorporated their thoughts, suggestions, and reactions in my work for this present study. I feel that this extended period of time devoted to interviewing, reading,
analyzing, presenting, and writing about mentoring constituted sufficient prolonged engagement for this study.

**Triangulation**

Triangulation involves the use of at least two or more sources or types of data and/or methods of data collection in order to check for the validity of findings. Triangulation offers a way to increase both credibility and quality by reducing bias during the analysis. In this study, triangulation was achieved by the use of different sources of data and data collection methods. To check mentor accounts, I interviewed their protégés to get their views about the relationships. In all except one of the dyads, I was able to interview two protégés of each mentor.

Triangulation was also achieved in this study by the use of diverse sources of data: I examined e-mail exchanges between mentors and protégés and I also audio-taped mentoring sessions of dyads who consented to having their mentoring sessions taped. The use of these different data collection sources not only gave me a more complex, in-depth, and multidimensional view of the mentoring relationships observed, they also helped me to verify respondents’ accounts.

**Peer Debriefing**

To establish credibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend using peer debriefing for “the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer’s mind” (p. 308). Peer debriefing helps to keep the researcher honest, to test working hypotheses, to develop future steps in the research, and to clear the researcher’s mind of impediments that may prevent clear thinking. I
chose as my peer debriefer a fellow student in my department who had many years of experience doing her own qualitative research as well as working with seasoned qualitative researchers. She fulfilled Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) recommendation that the peer debriefer be neither too junior or too senior. I met with her biweekly or tri-weekly, as our schedules permitted. During our meetings, I shared and explored with her the current state of my research and my plans for the next two weeks. I also submitted my analytic memos, theoretical notes, and drafts of chapters to her for critical feedback. I found that these regular meetings were extremely useful for clarifying and challenging my ideas, for testing emerging hypotheses, for moving my ideas forward, and for lessening the isolation that I experienced as a lone researcher.

In addition to my primary peer debriefer, I also had peer debriefings from student colleagues during the course of a year-long qualitative class. During this year, I also met semi-regularly with a dissertation support group comprising of four ethnic minority doctoral students.

**Negative Case Analysis**

Negative cases are instances that do not fit within the observed pattern. Negative case analysis is “a process of revising hypotheses with hindsight. The object of the game is continuously to refine a hypothesis until it accounts for all known cases without exception” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 309). This process increases the complexity of the explanations and interpretations generated, as well as enhances the credibility of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) acknowledge that zero exceptions may be too strict of a requirement and may be a practical impossibility.
In this study, I strove to refine my working hypotheses as far as possible, by constantly looking for and analyzing exceptions to my hypotheses. I then refined the hypotheses as I encountered these exceptions. For instance, when I commenced this study, I had the expectation and assumption that mentors would share a great deal of personal information with their protégés. This was a robust finding from the pilot study. Hence, it was surprising to encounter two negative cases of this trait in the present study, i.e. two mentors were found to be strict about their boundaries and revealed very little of themselves to their protégés. Rather than excluding them from my analysis (as some quantitative researchers might remove outliers from the data set), I deliberately and consciously used these two cases to help me refine my working hypotheses about mentoring relationships.

**Member Checking**

Member checking is the process whereby data, analyses, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with participants from whom data were gathered in order to ascertain the meaningfulness, credibility, and validity of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba argue that this is the most important step in establishing credibility. Following Lincoln and Guba’s strong recommendation to perform member checking, I shared my data with seven mentors and six protégés in order to check and ensure that my analyses and interpretations were meaningful and credible to them. I used their feedback to further refine my analyses and model. I felt that this highly interactive process with my participants did much to deepen my understanding of the story of mentoring and to enhance the credibility of my data. Member checking also helped me
stay true to the participatory spirit of doing qualitative research, as is beautifully
described in the following quotation:

Conducting qualitative research, in fact, is a highly self-reflective and
introspective journey in which the researcher listens to other people’s stories,
retells the stories in the way that she/he understands them, or even reconstructs
the story with the participants (Heppner, Heppner, & Wang, 2004, p. 139).

In addition to responses from the participants themselves, I also solicited
additional feedback from attendees at the 2007 National Multicultural Summit. I
presented a poster outlining my research findings and took advantage of this opportunity
to get feedback on my findings and model (Appendix O).

_Credibility/ The Researcher as Instrument_

The interview has been described as a complex social interaction (Berg, 1998;
Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). As such, interviewers are not distant observers detached from
the data they collect. Write Taylor and Bogdan (1998), “Findings do not exist
independently of the consciousness of the observer” (p. 160). Indeed, Patton (2002)
argues that “The perspective that the researcher brings to a qualitative inquiry is part of
the context for the findings” (p. 64). Most qualitative researchers acknowledge the
relationship between the observer and observed (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), and strive to
understand their own values, assumptions, and biases influencing the research process. I
used a reflexive journal to help me track and examine my personal assumptions. My
reflections on my credibility and researcher are provided in the following section,
“Researcher Credibility.”

_Reflexive Journal_
Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend keeping a reflexive journal to document the extent to which the researcher might have biased the outcomes or interpretations. They define a reflexive journal as "a kind of diary in which the investigator on a daily basis, or as needed, records a variety of information about self (hence the term "reflexive") and method" (p. 327). I maintained a reflexive journal throughout the data collection, analyses, and write-up phases in order to keep track of my biases and assumptions, and to reflect on methodological decisions made. Things that I included in my diary included: future directions and steps for my study, musings on my own thoughts, insights, values, and leanings, and notes on methodological decisions and my rationale for them (see Appendix F for a sample entry from my reflexive journal).

Researcher Credibility

To establish researcher credibility, Patton (2002) recommends following a basic principle "to report any personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis, and interpretation" (p. 566). It is arguably impossible to be completely conscious and aware of all of one's biases and assumptions. However, I tried my best to have an ongoing process of critical self-reflection throughout the research process. Keeping a reflexive journal was important as a means of bringing to the forefront of my consciousness any personal reactions that potentially influenced the data collection and/or analysis. This practice also helped to keep me honest about my values, biases, assumptions, and allegiances. Through this ongoing intensive introspection, I saw that I brought the following to the research:

- My experiences of being mentored by an older, African American male who had his unique style of mentoring that was both personal and
boundaried at the same time. Through him, I experienced a mentor who was very proactive, goal-focused, encouraging, remarkably generous in giving of his time and resources, and very competent and astute in dealing with politics. I enjoyed his story-telling approach to mentoring – it seemed to me that he often told personal and professional stories about himself and the people he knew to teach me important lessons about becoming a professional. He was also very open in discussing race with me and we had many conversations that dealt with race and racism. At times, he seemed very sensitive to the constraints I experienced as an Asian woman. These characteristics and practices heavily influenced my initial conceptions of the practices of an excellent mentor. At the same time, I felt that our differences in gender were not optimally addressed in our relationship. As a female protégé with a male mentor, I at times felt hindered by specific issues that I could not comfortably discuss with him. My reticence on these topics made me wonder how different the relationship would have been with a female mentor.

- As a mentor myself, I found myself simultaneously comparing my experiences of mentoring with that of the participants' in the study. I realize that my deeply personal notions of what constitutes a mentor inevitably shape my analysis of this study. At the same time, conducting this study likewise influenced and changed my perceptions of mentoring.
- My experiences as a working mother with a young child made me acutely aware of how mentors approached issues of work/life balance and
parenthood. I became a mother during the course of this research and thus became highly sensitized to how mentors treated protégés who wanted to become parents and/or wanted to have a more balanced life. I also became highly sensitized to the challenges of juggling academic life and parenting. As a new mother, I felt comfortable talking with mentors and protégés who had children. I would not have had this comfort or ease as my pre-child self.

- My relationships with people who were not mentoring types also influenced my ideas of exemplary mentors. I have had many encounters with faculty who have not taken a personal interest in me. Their disinterest shaped my thinking about what distinguishes a mentor from a non-mentor.

- As an older, less traditional, married graduate student with heavy family responsibilities, I was keenly interested in issues relating to time management, personal career goals, and mentor expectations. I found myself more emotionally aligned with the “non-traditional” students of one mentor as opposed to the younger, academia-focused protégés of other mentors.

- As an Asian woman and a first-generation immigrant to this country, I am deeply interested in issues of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, generational and immigration history, and gender and have taken many undergraduate and graduate courses on race, identity, and multiculturalism. In my interactions with others, I am conscious of how they react to my race, ethnicity, class, and gender, and whether their
reactions are disingenuous, uninformed, uncomfortable, defensive, or authentic. This sensitivity made me pay particular attention to how mentors dealt with their protégés' cultural concerns.

A key way in which I handled these potential biases was by opening up my data and analyses to the perspectives of a wide range of people differing in age, life experiences, and other demographics. For instance, I consistently shared my memos with my committee members and peer debriefer, and I solicited each of their perspectives on my work. Their readings of my data and analysis helped me not only to check personal biases at play but to attain a richer understanding of the data as well.

Reactivity

Patton (2002) recommends reporting the study's "instrumentation effects" (p. 567), i.e. how my study may have affected those who were studied. It is difficult for me to hypothesize about instrumentation effects since reactivity is nearly impossible to measure or determine accurately. In addition, I did not conduct follow-up interviews or observations to ascertain reactivity. Hence, I can only conjecture about the instrumentation effects of the interviews. The following are my speculations about reactivity in my study:

- I might have changed or impacted subsequent mentor practices with my questions, particularly those in which mentors replied in the negative. After being interviewed, some mentors reported that my questions gave them something to think about. One mentor said that he had agreed to the interview because he aspired to learn how to become a better mentor.
Another mentor said that she had no idea what made her a good mentor and hoped to find out through the interview.

- It is conceivable that the interviews with the protégés prompted them to re-evaluate their mentoring relationships, either positively or negatively. For instance, while talking with one protégé about her mentor’s communication practices, it became clear to me that our conversation sparked an appreciation for her mentor’s generosity in giving her time. Before the interview, she had possibly taken his kindness for granted.

In many research studies, there is the possibility that the very act of studying a phenomenon changes the phenomenon itself. In this present study, my interview questions might have prompted the mentors and protégés to re-think and change their mentoring relationships. However, I believe the issue of reactivity is a minor one given the nature of this topic. If anything, the mentors in this study were so clearly committed to supporting and facilitating the growth of their protégés that they most likely would have used any insights gained from the interviews to better their mentoring practices. Although it was beyond the scope of this study to document what kinds of changes might have happened after the interviews, I am naturally curious as to how the interview process impacted my participants. Should the opportunity for further conversation with the participants arise, I plan to ask them for their thoughts on this matter.
Data Analysis

Goals of Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was chosen as the research methodology for this present study because of its emphasis on emergent theory and induction. Strauss and Corbin (1990) define the goals of grounded theory methodology as follows:

1. Build rather than only test theory;
2. Give the research process the rigor necessary to make the theory "good" science;
3. Help the analyst to break through the biases and assumptions brought to, and that can develop during the research process;
4. Provide the grounding, build the density, and develop the sensitivity and integration needed to generate a rich, tightly woven, explanatory theory that closely approximates the reality it represents (p. 57).

Intertwining of Data Collection, Analysis, and Theory Production

Grounded theory is derived inductively from the systematic analysis of data. Rather than approaching the data with a preconceived theoretical framework, the grounded theorist works to enable theory to emerge from the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The processes of data collection, analysis, and production of theory are not conceptualized as mutually exclusive, but instead are seen as intertwined processes that inform each other and guide the direction of the research. This has been described as a "zigzag" process – "out to the field to gather information, analyze the data, back to the field to gather more information, analyze the data, and so forth" (Cresswell, 1998, p. 57).
Yeh and Inman (in press) note the circularity of the qualitative research process requiring multiple readings and examinations in combination with data collection and even conceptualization. Combining data collection with analyses is actually critical for the generation of theory. Write Glaser and Strauss (1967):

Joint collection, coding, and analysis of data is the underlying operation. The generation of theory, coupled with the notion of theory as process, requires that all three operations be done together as much as possible. They should blur and intertwine continually, from the beginning of an investigation to its end . . . but in many (if not most) studies of description and verification, there is typically such a definite focus on one operation at a time that the others are slighted or ignored. This definite separation of each operation hinders generation of theory. For example, if data are being coded and a fresh analytic idea emerges that jolts the operation, the idea may be disregarded because of pre-established rules or plain routine – thus stifling at that moment the generation of theory (p. 43).

I followed Glaser and Strauss' recommendations and began data analysis after the first interview and throughout the data collection phase. Immediately after each interview, I noted patterns and pondered the meaning and significance of actions. During all phases of the analysis, I strove to maintain “theoretical sensitivity” – the ability to be aware of subtlety and nuance, depth and dimensionality in the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Following the recommendations of Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Becker (1998), I strove to maintain theoretical sensitivity by using techniques such as analyzing meanings of words and phrases, applying specific questions to the data, and making “far-
out” comparisons. I also wrote analytic memos, methodological notes, and theoretical notes to stimulate my thinking on the emerging patterns.

*Field Notes and Memos*

Schatzman and Strauss (1973) recommend the writing of notes and memos in order to assist in the chronicling of events and the development of the researcher’s thoughts, and to aid the researcher in being honest. Following their recommendations, I recorded my subjective reactions, thoughts, and insights in my notes and memos. The systematic and consistent writing of these notes and memos helped me to stay grounded in the data, to grapple actively with, reflect, and build on emerging theoretical propositions, as well as to track changes in my thought processes and ideas over the course of the study.

I wrote four types of notes in this study: field, observational, theoretical, and methodological notes. In addition, I also wrote analytic memos in the course of the study.

*Field notes.*

Field notes are commonly used in ethnographic research and consist of the researcher’s observations of the participants, setting, social behaviors, and phenomena studied “in the field.” Although I was not conducting true field research in this study, I wrote field notes in the form of my reactions, thoughts, and emerging ideas after each interview (see Appendix G). These field notes helped me to capture my subjective impressions, initial insights, and tentative hypotheses in the preparation and planning for the next interview. Through this process I was able to crystallize my thoughts about each interview to guide the revision of the next one.
Observational notes.

Observational notes (see Appendix H) are descriptions of the “Who, What, When, Where, and How of human activity” and contain “as little interpretation as possible” (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973, p. 100). Observational notes are more relevant to ethnographic research than the type of interview-based study I was conducting. However, I used observational notes to keep track of interview logistics.

Theoretical notes.

Theoretical notes (see Appendix I) go beyond observational notes to explore tentative interpretative ideas, theories, opinions, inferences, and personal interpretations (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Methodological notes.

Methodological notes (see Appendix J) are reflections on the researcher and the methodological process and contain notes regarding present, past, and future steps for the research (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Memos.

Memo writing was another important component of my research. Throughout the entire coding and data collection processes, I wrote memos to document the evolution of my research and the development of codes, categories, and emerging relationships. Memo writing “connects the barebones analytic framework that coding provides with the polished ideas developed in the finished draft” (Charmaz, 1983, p. 120). Pidgeon & Henwood (1996) define memo writing as a process to write “hunches; comments on new
samples to be checked out, explanations of modifications to categories; emerging theoretical reflections; and links to the literature" (p. 95). As Strauss elegantly describes it, memo-writing records the “continuing internal dialogue” of the researcher and this process of recording leads into the “final integrative statements and the writing for publications” (Strauss, 1987, p. 110).

The process of writing memos began with the first interview and continued throughout the research process (Charmaz, 1983). Memos written in this study included pre-data collection memos, coding of raw data, data analysis, and process notes (see Appendix K). Periodically, I gave samples of my memos to my peer debriefer and to members of my doctoral dissertation committee for review and feedback.

I analyzed these notes and memos in the same manner in which I analyzed the interview and archival data (see section on Analysis). My overall intent in keeping good notes and analyzing them carefully was to be aware as much as possible of my own tacit biases, assumptions, and preconceived notions as well as to keep track of my developing ideas and hypotheses.

Coding

Taylor and Bogdan (1998) define coding as a means of “developing and refining interpretations of the data . . . bearing on major themes, ideas, concept, interpretations, and propositions (p. 150-1).” Simply put, codes help to label, organize, and sort the data (Charmaz, 1983).

After completing each interview, I spent hours reading and re-reading each transcript before I commenced coding. Following the basic principles of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I coded and sorted all of the data (including interview, archival
data, memos, and notes) to identify patterns and routine practices. Whenever possible, I used “in vivo” codes (Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987), i.e. codes that were directly derived from the language of the respondents. In addition, I coded for negative and deviant cases. I took note if there were missing instances, for instance, examples of mentors not doing certain activities. I noted these because what is absent in the data can be as significant as what is present in the data (DeVault, 1995).

Coding followed three steps: “open” coding, “axial” coding, and “selective” coding (Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The first step of my analysis began with “open coding” which Strauss (1987) has defined as “unrestricted coding of the data” with the aim “to produce concepts that seem to fit the data” (p. 28). The process of open coding can be painstaking as it involves “scrutinizing the fieldnote, interview, or other document very closely: line by line, or even word by word” (Strauss, 1987, p. 28). “Open coding” involves coding “for as many categories that might fit” (Glaser, 1978, p. 56) so as to generate tentative questions and hypotheses about the data. This is a critical step in the data analysis because it forces the researcher to “step back” from the data and to “break the data apart analytically” (Strauss, 1987, p. 29). In this study, open coding meant reading and examining the transcripts multiple times for any words, phrases, sentences that had potential relevance for the topic of mentor activities and practices (see Appendix L). For instance, I had not initially coded for “humility” when I analyzed the first transcript. However, as I analyzed the second transcript, I noticed a theme of humility that brought to mind another instance of humility in the first transcript. Hence, I created a new category of “humility” and revisited the first transcript for other instances of humility.
After labeling the categories during the open coding process, I sorted similar concepts into groups (a process that Strauss and Corbin (1990) call “categorizing”). I then utilized the process of “axial coding” to gain a deeper understanding of the conditions, context, strategies, and consequences of these concepts (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Axial coding involves “intense analysis done around one category at a time” and results in “cumulative knowledge about relationships between that category and other categories and subcategories” (Strauss, 1987, p. 32). Although axial coding naturally flows from open coding, it also alternates with open coding during the analytic process. I began to use axial coding when I started noticing possible relationships with the following identified concepts: believing in protégé, building confidence, showing confidence, emotional support, encouraging, and saying positive things. I grouped these concepts into one category, which I termed “validation” and I analyzed the possible relationships between these concepts (see Appendix M for example of axial coding).

“Selective coding,” as its name suggests, involves coding in terms of one core variable pertaining to the emerging theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987). It is the process of “selecting the core category, systematically relating it to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116). Selective coding can occur early in the process of coding, but predominates at the later stages of the analysis (Strauss, 1987). After I had thought deeply about the category of “validation,” I suspected that “validation” was a pertinent component of my emerging theory. Hence, I then coded all subsequent transcripts with this variable in mind (see Appendix N for example of selective coding).
To ensure that my coding was accurate, I occasionally asked two colleagues (one a faculty member and another a doctoral student with years of qualitative training) to code my transcripts. I compared their codes with mine to ensure that I was not missing anything.

The Constant Comparison Method

The “constant comparison” method was used to identify emergent themes, document systematic patterns, and refine developing concepts (Fetterman, 1998). The overall goal of the constant comparative method is to generate a theory that is “integrated, consistent, plausible, close to the data” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 103). Glaser and Strauss (1967) identify four stages of the constant comparative method:

1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category;
2. Integrating categories and their properties;
3. Delimiting the theory;
4. Writing theory.

The constant comparison method requires finding multiple cases to test hypotheses and to constantly compare and analyze relationships between different instances in the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). I also noted negative cases and variations of identified themes to guide additional inquiry. As Miles and Huberman (1994) put it, “the outlier is your friend. . . . It not only tests the generality of the finding but also protects you against self-selecting biases, and may help you build a better explanation” (p. 269).

The process of constantly comparing codes and categories led to a refinement of categories when the categories became “theoretically saturated” with sufficient evidence.
“Theoretical saturation” has been defined as “the non(emergence) of new properties, categories, or relationships. . . . [it] refers to concepts, not data, and identifies a point where no further conceptualization of the data is required (p. 8)” (Dey, 1999).

Grounded Theory

The integration and accumulation of hypotheses about relationships between categories helped form and develop an emergent theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). There is a two-fold aim at this level of analysis: to find a broad enough conceptualization that both fits the data as well as the properties of each major analytic category (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

A large part of my goal was to uncover the meaning behind these practices. Hence, during the process of creating theory, I adopted a more constructivist approach to theory-generation, meaning that I was interested in not just the “how” but also the “why” of mentor practices (Charmaz, 2006). Moreover, I wanted to learn “how, when, and to what extent the studied experience is embedded in larger, and often, hidden positions, networks, situations, and relationships” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130).

The emerging theory formed around a “core category,” defined as “a category that is central to the integration of the theory” (Strauss, 1987, p. 21). Strauss (1987) delineates the criteria for a category to be given core status (p. 36):

1. It must be related to as many other categories as possible
2. It must recur frequently in the data
3. It connects easily to other categories
4. It contains significant meaning for a more overarching theory
5. It contains details that help the generation of the overarching theory

6. It allows for maximum variation.

The final step in discovering grounded theory is to validate the theory against the data through a systematic depiction (either narratively or pictorially) of the relationships between categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). These relationships between categories are validated and supported using the data. The pictorial depiction formulated from the data in this study is presented in Chapter Seven.

Qualitative Software Program

I found it helpful to use two different ways of coding the data in this study. First, I coded all the transcripts by hand, using just paper and pencil. I found that this old-fashioned method (as opposed to reading the transcripts on the computer screen) helped me to be more attuned to my data. After I coded each transcript by hand, I then re-read and re-coded the transcripts on the computer, this time using the coder that I had developed in the NVivo 2.0 program. Utilizing these two methods for coding helped ensure a careful reading of the data. Each re-reading of the transcripts often gave me a fresh perspective on the information presented, thus enabling me to interpret and find additional codes in the data.

Another useful function of the NVivo program enables the user to print out a list of all working codes. After I had input all the codes in a particular transcript, I would then examine my list of codes. This turned out to be another important analytic step as it enabled me to merge codes that seemed similar to each other. In turn I could put the codes into hierarchical order as necessary. For instance, codes that I had originally placed in the “e-mailing,” “personal phone numbers” and “meeting regularly” were re-organized
as sub-categories of the larger category that I termed "communicating." I found that
frequent examination of my list of codes facilitated axial coding by helping me to think
critically about the categories that were emerging in the data and to recognize
relationships between these categories.

I also used the NVivo program to retrieve interview excerpts that had been
grouped under specific codes. This function enabled me to examine and compare
relationships between different instances in the data, thus assisting me in the constant
comparison method.

Pilot Study

In preparation for this study, I conducted a pilot study of peer mentors who
worked with ethnic minority protégés applying to doctoral programs in psychology
(Chan, March 2006; Chan & Fetterman, April 2005). In all, four mentors and their
protégés (eight participants in all) agreed to participate in this study and were
interviewed. Mentors and their protégés were interviewed using similar semi-structured
interview protocols containing questions pertaining to the types of activities and practices
in their relationships. Following the basic principles of grounded theory (Glaser &
Strauss, 1967), the data were analyzed through repeated reading and coding of the
transcripts and other archival materials (e-mails, correspondence, and journals). The
codes utilized were changed and refined over time as emergent themes, patterns, and
relationships were identified.

Consistent with the principles of grounded theory, the processes of data collection
and analysis were interwoven -- each process informed the other throughout the research
process. As new themes and patterns emerged in my analysis, interview questions and
codes were changed or refined as needed. For instance, I added a question about self-disclosure after I noticed this emergent theme in the interviews. Another mentor gave illuminating examples of what her mentor had done with her and I subsequently asked the mentors about their mentors and what they had experienced in those relationships.

Data from this pilot study showed that the mentors engaged in quite a wide variety of practices and activities: providing information, coaching, providing economic help, giving time, sharing stories, maintaining regular communication, working on goals, being proactive, giving gifts, providing feedback, and providing reassurance. One surprising finding was the use of humor in establishing rapport in these cross-racial relationships. Not all of these activities were included in Kram’s (1985) often-cited conceptualization of mentor functions.

An unexpected pattern that emerged from this pilot was the theme of access and the role of the mentor as means of providing access to the protégé. I was especially struck by the use of the word “access” by several of the mentors. At the very beginning of my first interview, the mentor’s remarks on this theme were immediately striking: “There are so many people out there that don’t have the connections, they don’t have the resources and this kind of thing to be able to get into places like [name of prestigious university] or have the opportunities that I’ve had.” Toward the end of the interview, this same mentor used the word “access” when asked about her thoughts on her main contribution to her protégé: “Because I think I did do some practical things and like I was access to her. You know, just that I was access.” I initially coded these instances using the in vivo code “access.” After multiple readings of the data, I found other mentor activities that also provided access (such as introducing the protégé to networks of people or providing
information on unwritten rules). The theme of providing access actually became the overarching theme of this particular study – in a variety of ways, the mentors in this study were found to provide access into the inside world of academia for their ethnic minority protégés.

All aspects of this pilot study served as a basis for my work for the present study. In essence, the pilot study enabled me to refine my interview protocols, practice my interviewing skills, and refine my coding techniques. Above all, it gave me the opportunity to handle and analyze data similar to that collected for this present study.

Summary

The methods used in this study were specifically chosen to answer my research question about the types of practices that take place in mentoring relationships. These methods had their inherent limitations, but they helped me achieve my overall goal of attaining a deep understanding of mentor practices. In particular, the semi-structured interview format and the grounded theory research design allowed me to gain an in-depth look at these mentoring relationships and to provide a “thick description” of mentor practices. These insights would not otherwise have been obtainable by other research methods. The results from this study are presented and discussed in the following chapters.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Individual Dimension

Grounded theory, as discussed in the previous chapter, provided the analytic framework and tools for the derivation of the results of this study. The discussion of these results form part of the answer to the main research question driving this study: "What are the practices of outstanding mentors in cross-cultural mentoring relationships?" This chapter, together with the next two chapters, discuss the key mentor functions and practices discerned from the data. The mentor practices are organized around three main dimensions:

1. The individual dimension – mentor practices targeted at supporting and promoting the protégé's career and personal development;
2. The relationship dimension – mentor practices targeted at building the relationship between mentor and protégé and establishing trust and rapport;
3. The institutional dimension – mentoring practices targeted at introducing and socializing the protégé into the academy or field of psychology.

These practices were further grouped into larger categories/themes of mentor functions (see Table 6). As discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven, there is significant and meaningful overlap between the different dimensions and practices -- most of these practices do not belong exclusively in one category. For instance, the practice of writing letters of recommendation can be conceptualized as promoting individual development as well as introducing the protégé into the academy. Hence, it is denoted in both categories in Table 6.
### Table 6

**Dimensions, Functions, and Practices of Mentoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mentor Function</th>
<th>Mentor Practices</th>
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</table>
| Individual| Providing support and resources for individual professional and career development| Discussing possible careers, goals, and dreams of protégé  
Building protégé’s portfolio of skills - research, teaching, writing, publishing, presenting, and reviewing  
Giving quality feedback  
Providing assistance with crafting protégé’s curriculum vitae  
Providing financial assistance and practical support  
Writing letters of recommendation  
Affirming and building protégé’s confidence |
| Relationship| Building the relationship and developing trust and rapport                        | Talking about race, culture, and discrimination  
Listening  
Having a holistic understanding of protégé inclusive of multiple racial/ethnic/cultural identities  
Maintaining good communication practices  
Self-disclosing  
Using appropriate humor  
Acknowledging limitations and mistakes  
Giving gifts  
Behaving with integrity |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mentor Function</th>
<th>Mentor Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational and Institutional</td>
<td>Providing validation</td>
<td>Making positive remarks, expressing confidence in protégé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing letters of recommendation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nominating protégé for awards</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing emotional support and reassurance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Providing professional opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing protection</td>
<td>Protecting when issues such as discrimination or racism occur</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building supportive networks/ Professional community</td>
<td>Connecting protégé with influential people</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing access to the inside story</td>
<td>Being proactive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Giving information and advice on unwritten rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connecting protégé with influential people</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Being available</td>
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<td>Giving time</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Self-disclosing</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Providing career opportunities</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Role-modeling</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Providing financial assistance &amp; practical support</td>
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</table>

This chapter explicates in detail the mentor practices grouped under the category of “Individual Dimension.” Chapter Five discusses the “Relationship Dimension” mentor practices, and Chapter Six discusses the “Institutional Dimension” practices.
Individual Dimension

Both mentors and protégés in this study talked about the guidance and help provided/received in terms of support for the protégés’ individual professional and career journeys. My interviews with the participants in this study found that the mentors guided and provided support for professional development in the following ways:

- Discussing career possibilities and aspirations
- Building protégé’s portfolio of skills in research, writing, publishing, teaching, presenting at conferences, and reviewing
- Providing quality feedback on student work
- Assisting protégé with crafting the curriculum vitae
- Providing financial assistance and practical support
- Writing letters of recommendation
- Affirming and building the protégé’s confidence

I will be discussing the first four of these mentor practices in detail in the immediate following sections. The last three of these mentor practices ("Providing financial assistance and practical support," "Writing letters of recommendation," and "Affirming and building the protégé’s confidence") will be discussed later in Chapter Six, since these three practices have implications for the protégés’ individual development as well as organizational socialization.

*Discussing Career Possibilities and Aspirations*

“Possible selves” is a theoretical concept regarding future-oriented self-representation that is thought to influence self-concept, self-evaluation, motivation and
behavior (Markus & Nurius, 1986). It has been suggested that discussing possible selves is a useful intervention to explore career possibilities (Meara, Day, Chalk, & Phelps, 1995) and achieve academic goals (Pizzolato, 2006). Talking about the protégés’ “possible selves” as well as immediate goals and aspirations was found to be an important mentor practice in this study as well as in other studies (Hardcastle, 2001; Luna & Cullen, 1998). All the mentors took the time to understand their protégés’ desires and hopes, and to discuss with them different career possibilities. Indeed, one mentor felt that this was an integral part of her job as a mentor:

Mary (Mentor): “It’s critical to kind of know the whole person, to know what their strengths and limitations are and for them to know about mine as well and there’s a bond. So when we talk . . . it’s not just about the work but it’s also about their lives and the goals they have, where they want to be, and for them to be genuine with me, about really what they want to do (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

This type of conversation about the protégés’ career path was not a one-time event; instead, the mentors invested time in getting to know their protégés in-depth from the very beginning of their relationships. Said Mimi (Mentor): “I think it involves like years of planning. It’s not something you can tell them their last year here” (personal interview, May 12, 2005). Confirming Mimi’s statement about the time involved in discussing possible selves, one protégé in her first year stated that her mentor prepared her for the internship year right from the start of her graduate program. This was striking because the internship year typically happens at the tail end of one’s graduate program:
Camille (Protégé): He’s talked a lot about internship and how internship is really hard and it’s a really competitive application process so he guides us in how to best prepare for that so in terms of getting certain clinical practicum hours and applying for grants and getting publications. . . . I knew that it was going to be hard before I came here but he really has been really instrumental in helping us focus on those things that will give us better chances of getting into a good internship (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

For students of color, a conversation about career possibilities can open up vistas that were hitherto unknown to them – many of the protégés noted that they would not otherwise have known about different career pathways if not for their mentors. Hence, talking about different career possibilities can be particularly critical (and even life-changing) for minorities and those who are the first in their families to go to college (Zalaquett, 2006). Said one protégé who is now a faculty and who mentors students herself:

Nandita (Protégé): This is particularly true with the students of color: I work at a State institution and so a lot of those students are the first ones, maybe, to go to undergrad even and then the first ones in the master’s program, and so for them to go on to a doc . . . it seemed like a dream, unachievable. And so I talk, almost from the first time when they enter a master’s, I say, “Think about what your next step is. Do you want to go out and work? Do you want to supervise other folks? Do you want to counsel? Do you want to go on for a doc? These are all possibilities.” And the look in people’s eyes when you say that for the first time, they never heard it before (personal interview, December 17, 2005).
Likewise, one mentor spoke at length about expanding the horizons of two of her ethnic minority protégés who had only envisioned themselves as clinicians and did not believe they belonged in academia:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): I've been trying to remove that exclusion in their sense of themselves... they don't see themselves as going into academic positions, so I sort of see my role as their mentor and gradually bringing them into that world and letting them realize that there's a part of them that could enjoy that world (personal interview March 26, 2005).

Dr. Johnson actively and intentionally encouraged as well as provided opportunities for her protégés to get training and skills in research and teaching so that they would not have to "live their professional lives within constrictions" (personal interview March 26, 2005). Her protégé, Latisha, confirmed that Dr. Johnson's mentoring opened her eyes to new career possibilities: "She thought that I would be great for a faculty, a joint faculty clinician position and I didn't even know there was such a thing" (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

The importance of mentors attending to the goals of their protégés is illustrated in the following anecdote from a protégé whose professor was not comfortable talking to him about his career goals:

Jung (Protégé): I remember one time I was just sitting in front of his desk and I said, "I just was wondering if we could talk about, if you could help me sort out some stuff related to my career goals," and he seemed uncomfortable and he was fidgeting around and turning on his computer and looking around and very little eye contact and basically, I didn't feel heard. I didn't feel listened to. I felt like he
was a good teacher, he was a good researcher but there was no sense of support. I
didn’t feel heard . . . and I really struggled. I really struggled just to connect with
him and I had a lot of anger toward him (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Jung’s experience with this professor shows how vital it is for mentors to talk to their
protégés about career goals. Regardless of the professor’s capabilities in research (“he
was a good researcher”), a relationship that excludes the protégé’s personal interests
leaves the protégé feeling unsupported, unheard, and even angry (“I didn’t feel heard.
And I really struggled. I really struggled just to connect with him and I had a lot of anger
toward him”). In contrast, Jung’s mentor in this study provided him the space and support
to discuss career concerns, with the end result that he felt supported and empowered – so
much so that he even went on to pursue an academic career.

Building a Portfolio of Skills

A key mentor activity that was noted in this study was helping the protégés build
a portfolio of skills important for an academic career. These skills included:

- research, writing, and publishing;
- teaching;
- presenting at conferences;
- reviewing.

Each mentor provided support, advice, and coaching in these areas, notably in concrete
and practical ways. It is also important to note that the mentors did not stop at providing
advice and encouragement (even though these were invaluable) – instead, they often
proactively furnished opportunities that enabled their protégés to get invaluable career
experiences. This combination of providing opportunities as well as support and
encouragement was found to be critical in building the skills as well as the confidence of the protégés.

*Research, writing and publishing articles*

Doing research and publishing are important skills to acquire for students interested in applying for academic jobs (Glenwick, Mroczek, & MacDonall, 2001). Said one mentor:

Mimi (Mentor): If they want to go into a Research One university that it is expected that you graduate with a few articles. Having just chaired a search here, most people who applied who were doctoral students had four or five publications, some had 11 or 12... I think it's really important to know that and I had an opportunity as a doctoral student to work on articles and co-author things which I think really helped me because when you apply for an academic job, you have to submit three published articles (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Although publications are critical for those pursuing an academic career (Harley, 2001), the participants (both mentors and protégés) reported that students are generally uninformed about the process involved in research and publication. Noted Mimi (Mentor): “A lot of them don’t even understand the process of submitting a journal or getting reviewed... how to pick journals” (personal interview, May 12, 2005). Agreed her protégé, Ming: “Actually, honestly, I didn’t really know anything before I came in and so it was really just walking through the whole process of preparing a manuscript, how long it takes, how much work is involved” (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Many of the protégés credited their mentors for teaching and honing their knowledge and skills in research, writing, and publishing. They reported that their
mentors helped them learn the process of publication by carefully teaching them the nuts and bolts involved in getting an article published:

Nandita (Protégé): She taught me how to get published. She taught me how to think about all of these things and I had no idea what went into a publication, you know? I had no idea what to do with the feedback when you get it, when you get a revise and resubmit . . . nobody really says, “Okay, so if you get this feedback from revise and resubmit, you should literally take each point, make sure you address it and then write something up about it, point by point by point.” That kind of meticulousness when it comes to research -- she [her mentor] taught me all of that (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Nandita’s words point to the unspoken expectations underlying the publishing process ("nobody really says") and how she was initially ignorant about the whole process ("I had no idea what went into a publication . . . I had no idea what to do with the feedback"). By teaching her the standards and expectations involved in publishing an article, her mentor demystified a confusing process that could have potentially derailed her aspirations to publish. Another example of a mentor teaching her protégé about publishing was observed in one of the mentoring sessions taped for this study:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): Doing research, it’s very slow. So all these authors you see in all these studies, if you look at them, you’ll see, they sometimes will tell you when the data was originally collected but more often than not, you’ll see the data when the manuscript was first submitted and then the date that it’s published and it’s usually about a two year frame and that data is probably from two or three
years before that when they first submitted the first manuscript, and then it’s about a two year process before it gets into print. . . .

Latisha (Protégé): Wow.

Dr. Johnson: That is the process, you know? That’s the process. It’s not that people are not diligent but that’s just the process. Most data collection takes you a year or two (Dr. Johnson and Latisha mentoring session, June 23, 2005).

In this mentoring session, the mentor explains and illuminates the pace of the research process for her protégé (“It’s not that people are not diligent but that’s just the process. Most data collection takes you a year or two”). The protégé’s single word reaction (“Wow”) shows that this piece of information is revelatory to her – without her mentor’s edification, she might not have known about the long and slow road to publication.

The mentors in this study also taught their protégés about research by collaborating with them. Collaboration on research has been cited as a major mentoring practice in academic mentoring relationships (Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002; Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006; McMinn & Voytenko, 2004). Indeed, Mcminn and Voytenko (2004) point out that research collaboration often benefits both mentor and protégé. In this study, six of the mentors were found to lead research teams comprising of doctoral students. Through this team/apprenticeship approach, professors typically teach students about the process of doing research, writing, and publication. What was distinctive about the mentors in this study was the degree of closeness and collaboration within their research teams. Eight of the protégés noted that their mentors were exceptional in creating a sense of collaboration and involvement in their research efforts together. Said Nandita (Protégé):
She’s very, very collaborative with her research teams. And so when you join her
research team, you don’t feel like just a student. I don’t know how else to say it.
Like you do feel like a student because you’re not expected to know everything
and you are guided, but you’re really treated as an equal member of the team. I
know that some people have a model where their students do all the grunt work
and basically the faculty member does maybe very little work or does the final
touches but Mary [her mentor] does every piece with you. She does the coding.
She does the typing. She does the everything. So that’s really important to me --
the collaborative nature with her students (personal interview, December 17,
2005).

Nandita points out the difference between other professors who let “their students do all
the grunt work” and her mentor who treats each of her students as “an equal member of
the team” and models collaboration in all her actions (“She does the coding. She does the
typing. She does the everything”). The reports from Nandita and most of the protégés in
this study provide support for highlighting research collaboration as an important aspect
of mentor practice (Benishek et al., 2004; Fassinger, 1997).

Another concrete way in which mentors built their protégés’ skills in writing and
publishing was by sharing authorship. Twelve protégés explicitly mentioned co-authoring
with their mentors. The commitment to true authorship collaboration on the part of the
mentors can be seen in the following quote:

Mimi (Mentor): I’ve had over 25 co-authored journal articles with my students
and over 50 conference presentations. It’s like I don’t just talk the talk.

Everything they work on, I co-author with them. I have them as co-authors if they
do the work. If they're just kind of hanging back, then no, but if they help conceptualize it or if they help write it, ethically, I think it's my responsibility to really make sure their name gets out and that they get credit for it (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

The protégés recognized that sharing authorship was a generous gesture on the part of their mentors. As Ai Ling (Protégé) noted, not all professors were so magnanimous: “They would get you involved in their research activities but they wouldn’t include you in the publication at all or in their presentation activities so they get all the recognition” (personal interview, June 13, 2005). It should also be noted that sharing authorship is also a significant gesture because it involves extra effort on the part of mentors:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): It’s a lot of work ... I would probably be more productive in my research if I were just focused and not trying to find ways to involve students but then watching them sort of take hold of it and do well and be proud of themselves for what they’ve presented and published something that’s rewarding. I mean, the downside, it’s a lot of work but the upside is, it’s work that’s reinforced and people seem to really appreciate it (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Teaching

Classroom teaching is another important skill set, yet doctoral students in psychology are often inadequately prepared for a career in teaching (Korn, 2001). Since research institutions tend to value research over teaching, many faculty (particularly those who are untenured) often lack the time, motivation, and even the expertise to guide their students in developing teaching skills (Boice, 1992; Calkins & Kelley, 2005; Clark et al.,
The mentors in this study appeared to be going against the grain in being proactive about developing and supporting their protégés’ teaching skills. A key gesture observed in several instances was mentors not only informing their protégés about teaching but providing opportunities to teach as well. Five protégés said their mentors told them about opportunities to teach:

Joan (Protégé): One of the opportunities that she offered me and helped me figure out how to get was a teaching position . . . my teaching experience was probably the best experience that I had in grad school and it was something that I never would have even known was there, really, had she not kind of shown me that and opened up the door (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Notably, Joan was unaware of possibilities in teaching. Her positive teaching experience would not have occurred without her mentor (“it was something that I never would have even known was there”). Like Joan, another protégé said he did not envision himself teaching until his mentor encouraged him to do so:

Jung (Protégé): I didn’t feel confident about this but she said, “We have an opening for Stats 1 and we need someone to teach it,” and she recommended to the Chair that I teach it. And to me that was a little scary but at the same time, it showed that she had a lot of confidence . . . although I didn’t really have that self efficacy, I borrowed it from her and her belief in me allowed me to take that and allow it to become a self-fulfilling prophecy and so I said, “Okay,” and I took the class day by day and Stats went well. I was able to teach it and I developed a sense that “Hey, maybe I can teach. Maybe I can do this” (personal interview, June 20, 2005).
Jung's anecdote is compelling in its illustration of the power of mentoring. Initially, he had doubts about his ability to teach – he noted that his mentor "saw something in me that I didn't at the time." But empowered and inspired by his mentor's confidence in him ("although I didn't really have that self efficacy, I borrowed it from her"), he developed a sense of his own competence ("I developed a sense that 'Hey, maybe I can teach'"). His belief in himself and self-efficacy grew as a result of his mentor's demonstrated confidence in him (Lent et al., 1994).

Many of the mentors went far beyond simply encouraging their students to teach. Additionally, they provided psychological and instrumental support as their protégés developed their teaching skills. Vygotsky's (1978) concepts of scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) provide a useful framework for understanding the significance of the mentor practices in this arena. Vygotsky defines the ZPD as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (1978, p. 86). To bridge the gap between actual and potential development, the mentors provided individualized attention and support based on each protégé's level of teaching ability and experience. As Nandita (Protégé) said:

You work with them where they're at . . . if you worked with them above their heads, that's going to be problematic, way above their heads. If you work with them below where they're at, that's problematic too. So to meet them where they are and allow and push, support growth, and then meet them at that need place (personal interview, December 17, 2005).
In addition, the mentors “scaffolded” their protégés by giving them challenging assignments that further developed and challenged their knowledge base and skills. In Vygotskian terms, scaffolding consists of the opportunities and activities provided to extend the learner’s development. Such scaffolding can be seen in what Jung’s mentor did to support his teaching. Not only did she provide him the opportunity to teach by recommending him to the chair of the department, she also recognized that he did not have a syllabus or curriculum and generously shared her course materials with him:

Jung (Protégé): One of the main issues for me was I have no curriculum. What do you do? And I was very, very concerned and so she gave me her PowerPoints and all of her materials to assist me and I’d use that as a guide. I ended up using some of her stuff but the fact that she gave me her materials allowed me to say, “Hey, I have something to fall back on” . . . she was just going to give me this and that’s an awesome thing. So that was sort of one way and she recommended students to take the course and said it’s a great course and a great teacher and really just said positive things about me (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

By sharing her course materials with him, Jung’s mentor provided the support structures necessary for him to reach another level of development. Jung’s words show the value of this mentor’s gesture in helping him bridge the ZPD and accomplish the overall goal of teaching a class (“I ended up using some of her stuff but the fact that she gave me her materials allowed me to say, “Hey, I have something to fall back on”). Thanks to his mentor, Jung had a solid start in teaching and he actually went on to become faculty at another institution.
Mentors also scaffolded their protégés’ learning by providing individualized feedback, coaching, and supervision (Bean et al., 2004):

Joan (Protégé): She provided a supervision of teaching... it just gave me a space to talk about it first of all. And then second of all, to problem solve... Then also just to reflect on what are the deeper issues that have evolved here and how is it affecting me and what is it like for me and why I am contributing to it or not. So that was really helpful (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

As can be seen in Joan’s words, one of the ways in which mentors provided support was by helping their protégés come to a sense of themselves as teachers (“how is it affecting me and what is it like for me”). Mentors guided their protégés in terms of pedagogical issues:

Nandita (Protégé): I learned how to teach from her... We have very different styles but she really taught me to think through my teaching, think through, what does the grading mean? When you’re grading somebody’s assignment... what’s your point in giving them a B-? (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

The mentors also provided supervision and support when novice teachers were confronted with tricky situations in the classroom:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): Students will come in and say... what do you do with students who blow off class two or three times in a row... what do you do when students whine and complain or what do you do when students just don’t show up and then want you to schedule a time to teach them what they missed? ... A lot of times I find the students who are teaching just need a little back up to feel confident that they know that’s not an appropriate request... So some of it is
just [me] saying . . . it’s fine if you handle it this way and I’ll support you if the student goes and whines to the Dean or something. I’ll be in your corner (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Another way the mentors girded their protégés’ teaching development was by explicitly showing confidence in them and providing emotional support when necessary. It is worth noting that the above mentor goes beyond listening and advice giving. By standing up for their work, she demonstrates confidence in the protégé via her willingness to be an advocate (“I’ll support you if the student goes and whines to the Dean or something. I’ll be in your corner”). Another example of providing emotional support can be seen in one mentor’s e-mail to a protégé who was having issues with a student:

Hi Nandita,

Just wanted you to know that I am thinking of you. Good thoughts only. You are a GREAT professor who cares a lot about students and is really on the ball. I think students are more used to professors who let them get away with things and take the easier way out. Hang in there. Sounds like the student if [sic] feeling very insecure and this may account for tardies. Anxiety can be good thing in this case if he ‘owns’ his behavior and is motivated to make changes. You aren’t asking for anything unreasonable from him.

Take care!!

Talk to you tomorrow (e-mail from Mary (Mentor) to Nandita (Protégé), October 04, 2005).

In this e-mail, the mentor provides validation of the protégé’s decisions (You aren’t asking for anything unreasonable from him”), insight into the situation (“Sounds like the
student [is] feeling very insecure and this may account for tardies”), and reassurance
(“You are a GREAT professor who cares a lot about students and is really on the ball”).
This level and degree of support bolstered Nandita’s sense of confidence and competence in her chosen profession. Indeed, Nandita felt she was an “impostor” when she first started teaching, but her mentor’s faith in her and her support were key factors in crystallizing her confidence in herself.

Presenting and attending conferences

Attending and presenting at conferences are important aspects of professional life as an academic, particularly since conferences are the best avenues for networking and publicizing one’s research (Glenwick et al., 2001). Said Dr. Miller (Mentor): “You have to make connections. You have to get out there and you have to talk to people at conferences and that took a long time for me to learn” (personal interview, April 4, 2005). Important as it is, it can be difficult to get presentations accepted, particularly for newcomers to the field. Said Shanti (Protégé): “I know lots of people who went through graduate school and never had one presentation because no one ever asked them” (personal interview, January 10, 2006).

All the mentors in this study boosted the professional development of their protégés by encouraging their protégés to go to conferences, advising them on which conferences to attend (Connell, 1985), and giving them the names of key people to meet. Instead of leaving their protégés to fend for themselves at conferences, most of the mentors also made the extra effort to take their protégés under their wings at conferences. They personally introduced them to senior people in the field, and gave them opportunities to co-present with them. Said Dr. Miller (Mentor):
Well, I take them around with me. Like Maria (Protégé) and I have presented a lot. ... I try to involve my students in the work ... we really try to get out to as many conferences as we can to get them that experience. And that’s another thing that I didn’t really have somebody to take me around and show me things, but I want them to get the mileage. It’s easier to get the mileage when you have somebody with you (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Manjeet (Protégé) described how her mentor introduced her to a variety of “big name” scholars at the first American Psychological Association conference she attended: “He was just like, “You’ve got to come with me. I want to introduce you to a bunch of people” and we spent like two hours meeting . . . all of these big names that I had read about” (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

In terms of assisting protégés with conference presentations, many of the mentors included them in presentations. Said Solomon (Protégé):

I’ve presented a few times with her at professional conferences . . . the most notable example, I think of her professional generosity was the [a major multicultural conference] and I hadn’t actually submitted anything and I asked her, “I’m thinking about going. Do you have anything I can present?” And she said, “Sure,” and she invited me to present with her on a panel, this was a panel of [cites names of famous scholars] and so here I am with all these superstars in multicultural counseling and I’m the only student up there (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Solomon recognized that this was a magnanimous gesture on the part of his mentor to share top billing with him. Indeed, another protégé echoed his sentiment and described
her mentor as being “selfless” in including her in publications and presentations. This protégé noted the difference between the generosity of her mentor in comparison to other professors:

Ai Ling (Protégé): She has been very selfless in that way because there are some professors, they would get you involved in their research activities but they wouldn’t include you in the publication at all or in their presentation activities so they get all the recognition but she’s very good with including her students and making sure that her student’s name is on the publication or presentation (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Mentors also supported their protégés by giving them feedback on their conference presentations. Three mentors were particularly notable for giving their protégés opportunities to practice and prepare for their presentations:

Ai Ling (Protégé): She will always have each of us do presentations during the research team, like during the academic year... then she would give specific feedback. And also I think that at the beginning, I always feel okay doing presentations but then sometimes I feel unsure how to handle people’s questions and she will ask difficult research, like statistic questions but... after several trials then I feel that I’m much more prepared and so I think that’s how she coached me and others (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Another protégé appreciated that her mentor gave her concrete, practical advice when she was preparing for her first conference presentation:

Isabella (Protégé): She’d run off presentations she had made and then she’d show me things like this is the font that you need to have when you read it because if
you make it too small, you’re not going to be able to read it. She showed me how
to do those [for the overhead projector]. . . . she would run off things or give me
examples and that’s what I always needed. It’s like if I have an example, then I
know. If you just tell me, I’ll struggle forever because I’m not sure which way to
go with it. So I think very hands-on with that (personal interview June 16, 2005).

Isabella’s words indicate that even small gestures such as providing examples of
presentations and giving practical advice on font size can make a huge difference to the
protégé (“I’ll struggle forever because I’m not sure which way to go with it”).

Another way in which mentors supported their protégés was by assisting them
with the various costs involved in going to a conference. The cost of attending
conferences can be prohibitive, with expenses adding up from conference fees, hotel
rooms, and plane tickets. Several of the mentors were notable for helping their protégés
cushion the cost of attending conferences. One mentor (Terrel) paid for plane tickets,
meals, or gave them money when they were in need. Another shared a room with her
protégé and paid for meals. Said Tamika (Protégé): “What she did do was she took us out
for dinner and things like that . . . she was very generous or we stayed in the same hotel
and shared a room or something. Mary [her mentor] thought that kind of stuff was fun”
(personal interview May 25, 2005). Yet another mentor (Dr. Munoz) paid for tickets for a
conference dance and occasionally paid for the printing costs for her protégés’ posters.

Reviewing and Editing

Another skill set that mentors helped their protégés develop was editing and
reviewing journal articles. Two mentors proactively provided their protégés with
opportunities to be reviewers and taught them how to review articles:
Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): Whenever I get an article to review, I ask permission of whether my students will be able to do it with me and some journals will allow you and some won’t because it is a privileged document but, again, teaching them or helping them to learn how to review an article and whether or not they’re going to want to have an academic career or not, it’s really important to be able to critique, learn how to critique in a positive way so that’s another thing that I do on a regular basis (personal interview, March 25, 2005).

One student mentioned that she would not have even known about editing if her mentor had not opened her eyes to this option:

Camille (Protege): [Her mentor] opened my eyes to the whole opportunity of getting trained for being an editor. I did not even realize that was a possibility or an option or that it existed. I knew people had suggested that it was a good idea to look over articles that our mentors or advisors were reviewing to help get a sense of the evaluation process and the whole submitting and revision process but he really did encourage me to take part in this training program that he has (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

*Giving Quality Feedback on Student Work*

Eby et al.’s (2000) groundbreaking study of protégés’ negative mentoring experiences made the surprising finding that “distancing behaviors,” such as giving insufficient feedback, was a frequently reported negative experience. This finding regarding the deleterious effect of mentor distancing behavior was confirmed in a later quantitative study (Eby & Allen, 2002). In this present study, the exact reverse of mentor distancing was found: all except one of mentors in this study were found to be noticeably
conscientious about providing good feedback to their protégés. In fact, one of the protégés mentioned “giving feedback” as one of the primary activities of a mentor and expressed appreciation for her mentor’s ability to give her quality feedback in a short amount of time: “She’ll read my 46 page discussion draft on a Sunday and get me really good feedback by Monday” (Joan, personal interview, May 21, 2005). Another protégé likewise appreciated both the quantity and quality of her mentor’s feedback:

Nandita (Protégé): She really gave a lot of feedback on my work as a doc student and as a professional . . . If I’m writing something on my own, I’ll say, “Can you look at this?” and she’ll read it and she’ll give me in-depth feedback about it, telling me where to go from here or some things that look like they might be missing (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

The protégés’ use of words such as “in-depth” and “really good” denote the superior quality of the mentors’ feedback. Giving constructive feedback is often cited as an essential mentor practice since it enables the protégé to develop and grow through the experience, guidance and expertise of a mentor (Hudson, 2004; Rix & Gold, 2000). This study contributes to the literature on feedback with the finding that the actual quality of the feedback, not just giving feedback, is a key aspect of this mentor function. The importance of feedback quality was first observed in the pilot study (Chan & Fetterman, April 2005). Likewise in this study, protégés expressed appreciation for the type of in-depth, detailed feedback they received from their mentors. One example of the kind of feedback given can be seen in an e-mail that Mimi (Mentor) wrote to Ai Ling (Protégé):

I think you need to spend considerable time just reading the whole thing at once (rather than in sections) and see if you can organize and
rewrite for flow. It should read like a developing story, where the transitions across constructs and variables are seamless. The only place where this does happen is your description of the program and the method section (which is much closer to being done). Try to give the reader more transitions and connections between sections. also spend more time explaining what you are doing and why (e-mail from Mimi to Ai Ling, June 26, 2005).

Another key piece about this category of giving feedback was how the feedback was delivered. Cohen et al.’s (1999) study of feedback across racial lines found that Black students perceived more reviewer bias and reported decreased task motivation than did White students when both groups received unbuffered critical feedback. Cohen et al. conclude that race and stigma mediate responses to criticism. Further, they recommend that mentors provide rigorous, critical feedback in light of clearly expressed high expectations, a belief in the protégé’s ability to achieve these standards, and a communication of the mentor’s deep desire to help the protégé reach his/her potential. This three-pronged approach to giving feedback was observed in several mentors in this study. In terms of expressing high expectations, several mentors talked about the high standards they held for their students. One (Akiko) even mentioned that her students teased her about her high expectations. With regard to showing confidence, several protégés described their mentors’ unwavering belief in their abilities. One protégé noted that her mentor’s confidence overrode her own self-doubt:

Ai Ling (Protégé): I just felt that she really encouraged me to do a lot of things and she pushed me too because sometimes I will feel like, “No, I can’t do this,” but then she’s like, “Totally, you can do it,” and she encouraged me to submit to
APA journals and I think that she's always being very positive and I think she does that with all of her doctoral students, not just with me though. But I think that that would be the thing that all of us say about her. She's always very positive looking and she shows confidence in people (personal interview, June 13, 2005). Ai Ling's words ("she really encouraged me to do a lot of things" and "she pushed me") demonstrate that her mentor clearly sets high standards. At the same time, her mentor unequivocally expresses confidence in her protégés ("Totally, you can do it" and "she shows confidence in people").

Last but not least, the mentors' willingness to give quality feedback demonstrated their genuine commitment to helping their protégés reach their potential:

Wei (Protégé): I think Akiko is just very good at providing constructive feedback . . . I don't know how other mentors work but as far as Akiko goes, I can send her multiple drafts of things that I'm working on and she's always willing to give me feedback on every single draft so I can improve them (December 22, 2005). The mentors' feedback not only helped protégés hone their research, writing, and critical thinking skills, it also helped them develop a better sense of their professional identities. As one protégé said:

Joan (Protégé): Feedback on written work. Feedback on teaching. I think group meetings where the mentor is the leader and where you discuss not just what's going on and the content of what you're doing but also the process and what you're going through and how it's changing you and how it's changing you both personally but also helping you to develop an idea professionally of what
ultimately you see yourself doing or not doing (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Assistance with the Curriculum Vitae

One’s curriculum vitae is an essential piece of self-representation (Perez, 1993). There are specific ways of writing and formatting one’s curriculum vitae – a good curriculum vitae (CV) can result in a successful job application, as was seen in the case of one protégé in this study:

Tamika (Protégé): She taught me how to write a good CV and to always have my CV updated and current. . . . as a matter of fact, I was recently offered and accepted a tenure track position as an assistant professor at a university in Colorado and one of the things that got me in the door to interview was the quality of my CV (personal interview May 25, 2005).

Conversely, not having good mentoring advice on one’s CV can be fatal to the job search, as one mentor’s experience attests: "The format of your CV . . . It sounds like a mundane thing. But I started applying for academic jobs having the basic business resume. I started to wonder how come nobody is calling me?" (Dr. Miller, personal interview, April 4, 2005).

In this study, five of the mentors were found to provide detailed feedback on their protégés' curriculum vitae:

Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): For writing a vitae for an internship application, I always asked to see the vitae and comment on it and make suggestions. A lot of faculty don’t do that. But my sense is that part of the whole thing you’re presenting yourself to an internship setting and we need to be authentic in that. So if you’re
really interested in research, it shouldn’t be hidden, it should be there . . . you need to be very clear in your vitæ and so I think that’s part of how do you present yourself and helping students to be comfortable in how they want to present themselves in an authentic way in their vitæ, in their job search, in their cover letters for jobs and so forth (personal interview, March 25, 2005).

An example of the specificity of the feedback given on a protégé’s curriculum vitae can be seen in the following excerpt from a much longer e-mail from one mentor:

Ming, I am working on your references and I have lots of feedback on your resume. Please make the following changes:

1. More information about the University Fellowship. It is University-Wide competition. You should say that you were awarded stipend and tuition and where you conducted the community service.

2. Through out the document you say Department of Counseling Psychology but it is the Department of Counseling and Clinical Psychology. This matters to many people.

3. Include total amount of NIMH grant when you say you manage budget

4. Publication should be plural: Publications

5. Under publications, journal titles should be in italics (e-mail from Mimi to Ming, March 18, 2004)

Concluding Thoughts on Mentor Practices and Protégés’ Individual Career Development

There is a variety of ways in which one can provide support for another’s professional development. In this study, what stood out as distinctive about the mentors’ practices were the depth of their commitment and interest in their protégés and their
careers, and the concrete, practical help they provided in facilitating their careers. The mentors were clearly invested in the goals and aspirations of their protégés and they showed their personal interest by taking the time to understand them and discuss career possibilities with them. Moreover, they opened doors for their protégés to explore and attempt new opportunities that probably would not otherwise have been made available to them. The mentors did not simply provide good advice, encouragement, and opportunities, leaving their protégés to fend for themselves. Instead, they also provided emotional support, supervision, quality feedback, and resources as the protégés took on new professional challenges. Through these practical ways, the mentors helped facilitate and enhance their protégés’ career development.
CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS

Relationship Dimension

In the previous chapter, the mentor practices that supported, enhanced, and promoted the individual career and psychosocial development of the protégés were outlined. These mentor practices were found to have deep utility and meaning for the protégés and have been the focus of attention for the vast majority of mentoring research. Comparatively little attention has been paid to mentor functions that promote relationship-building (Rix & Gold, 2000). Yet, it is clear from the research that the interpersonal qualities of a mentor are vital to successful mentoring relationships (Allen & Poteet, 1999; de Bruyn, 2004). For instance, Hardcastle's (2001) qualitative study found the following mentor characteristics to be important to the protégés: wise, caring, commitment, integrity, high expectations, sense of humor, and the ability to act as a catalyst. Another study of female undergraduates found that the relational qualities of empathy, authenticity, and engagement are strongly influential in successful mentoring (Liang et al., 2002). Galbraith and Cohen (1996) are distinct for addressing the mentor's relational role: they view the mentor's relational skills as integral to establishing trust in the mentoring relationship. The findings of this present study are aligned with these research findings on the importance of mentor relational qualities. At the same time, this study extends current research with its findings on establishing cross-cultural trust as an important mentor practice. This chapter outlines the mentor functions and practices that were found to support relationship-building and trust.
In the present study, two protégés (one male, one female) in this study alluded to the depth of the relational bond between them and their mentors—both even went so far as to use the word “love” to describe the special regard between them. Said Jung (Protégé):

I think it was Scott Peck that said that you really have to love your patient. And in a lot of ways, you have to love your clients. You have to love your students. Show love to them and I think that’s something that I certainly felt from Dr. Miller [his mentor] (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Along the same lines, Tamika (Protégé) movingly commented:

To be honest with you, Mary [her mentor] tells me that she loves me and I tell her that I love her. Really, I don’t think I would have been able to predict something like that. We do have this great affection for each other (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

In the present study, mentor relational practices were found to have the overall function of relationship- and trust-building (Trubowitz, 2004). Through behaviors and gestures that established, promoted, and supported relations between them and their protégés, the mentors not only demonstrated caring and concern for their protégés but earned their trust as well. The mentor practice of building trust in the relationship is a major finding in this study, yet the topic of trust in mentoring has not been extensively researched. The few research studies available on trust in mentoring relationships confirm that trust-building is a vital component (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Bouquillon, Sosik, & Lee, 2005; Lucas, 2001; Thomas, 2001). Likewise, research on clinical/therapeutic relationships has shown that trust is an important ingredient (Jordan, 2000; Jordan, Kim,
The establishment and maintenance of trust may be of particular relevance in cross-racial relationships, as Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2002) cogently write:

On the surface, the concept of trust as it applies to mentoring appears simplistic: it needs to be reciprocal in nature and it’s a matter between the mentor and protégé. However, in cross-cultural mentoring what should be a simple matter of negotiation between two persons becomes an arbitration between historical legacies, contemporary racial tensions, and societal protocols. A cross-cultural mentoring relationship is an affiliation between unequals who are conducting their relationship on a hostile American stage, with a societal script contrived to undermine the success of the partnership (p. 18).

The findings from a few studies offer partial support for Johnson-Bailey and Cervero’s strong assertions about trust in diversified mentoring relationships. Two recent studies on interpersonal comfort between mentoring partners found that protégés in cross-gender (Allen et al., 2005) and cross-race (Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005) mentoring relationships reported less interpersonal comfort than those in homogenous relationships. Another study found that the participants’ race affected how they perceived critical feedback (G. L. Cohen et al., 1999). Cohen et al. note that a White mentor giving feedback to a Black student may be confronted by mistrust that arises not from the personal characteristics of either mentor or protégé, but from race.

Theoretical perspectives on trust-building provide a helpful lens for understanding the meaning of mentor relational practices identified in this study. McDermott’s (1977) definition of trust as a “product of the work people do to achieve trusting relations” (p.
199) is fitting for this study because of its framing of trust in terms of people's *actions*. Similarly useful along the same practice-oriented lines, Whitener et al. (1998) identify five types of managerial behavior that influence employees' trust: behavioral consistency, behavioral integrity, sharing and delegation of control, communication, and demonstration of concern. A third perspective on trust is pertinent in this discussion: McKnight's et al. (1998) model of initial trust formation distinguishes between an individual's disposition to trust and institutional-based trust. They define the latter as a belief that "the necessary impersonal structures are in place to enable one to act in anticipation of a successful future endeavor" (McKnight, Cummings, & Chervany, 1998, p. 478). McKnight et al.'s hypothesis regarding institutional-based trust are partially supported by one quantitative study which found that organizational context moderated trust in mentoring processes (Bouquillon et al., 2005). As will be discussed in more depth later in Chapter Seven of this dissertation, the mentoring relationships in this study were found to exist within interlocking contexts spanning the immediate school environment to larger societal forces. A key insight in this study was the finding that the outstanding mentors inspired trust, not only by attending to relationship concerns, but also by their ability to engage external levels such as "impersonal structures." The mentors' efficacy at both the interpersonal and institutional levels helped promote their protégés' institutional-based trust.

Although one's personal qualities are related to the establishment of trust in a relationship, the focus of this present study is the mentor practices or behaviors that engendered trust, promoted relationship-building, and demonstrated caring. As one protégé said: "It [Trust] was something that developed with time based on her *actions*
... Some things she proved to me through her actions” (Paula, personal interview, May 20, 2005). The three theoretical perspectives discussed in the above paragraph combined with the themes that I observed in the data resulted in the following list of mentor practices that promoted relationship-building and trust:

- Talking about race, culture, and racism
- Listening
- Having a holistic understanding of protégés inclusive of multiple racial/ethnic/cultural identities
- Maintaining good communication practices
- Self-disclosing
- Using appropriate humor
- Acknowledging limitations and mistakes
- Giving gifts
- Behaving with integrity

Each of these practices will be discussed in detail in the following subsections.

Talking about Race, Culture, and Racism

Addressing race in psychotherapy has been the focus of attention in the fields of counseling and clinical psychology (La Roche & Maxie, 2003), with some studies finding positive outcomes for therapists who choose to raise issues of race (Knox, Burkard, Johnson, Suzuki, & Ponterotto, 2003). In the mentoring literature, there has been recent attention to the topic of dialogue within a mentoring relationship (Rix & Gold, 2000), however, discussing race and racism has scarcely been explored. Hence, Thomas’ (1990; 1993; 2001; 1999) research on this topic is particularly noteworthy. His (1993)
qualitative study of 22 cross-race developmental relationships found that success and satisfaction in these relationships depended less on talking about race, and more on a shared strategy (i.e. avoidance or engagement) for dealing with this issue. Interestingly, in a later study comparing minority and White professionals at three U.S. corporations, Thomas (2001) noted that minorities tended to advance further when their White mentors acknowledged and understood the impact of race on their protégés. He also found that dyads that discussed race openly usually experienced greater career development for the protégé, as well as a broader understanding in both parties. Based on these findings, Thomas (2001) makes the strong recommendation that United States corporations train mentors on how to approach such charged topics. Consistent with Thomas’s (2001) findings, my pilot study found that open discussions about race and culture contributed to the overall rapport, understanding, and support in the mentoring relationships studied (Chan & Fetterman, April 2005).

Talking openly, frankly, and meaningfully about issues of race, culture, racism, and discrimination can be discomforting and difficult, particularly between members of different racial and cultural groups. Thus, it was striking that many of the mentors and protégés in this study talked candidly about race and culture with each other, particularly in the context of doing research. Most notable was the sharing of personal experiences of being a member of a minority/cultural group. These conversations were important to these relationships because they enhanced the mentors’ and protégés’ learning and understanding of each other. As one protégé said:

I would say that being of a different background, we would still have to explain to each other why we think, especially as I was doing my dissertation...
Mexican American women. She would have some ideas but it would be based on Black women’s experiences, and I would have to explain, “Well, that would be different from a Mexican American women’s perspective because of other things.” So we would have to talk about it, talk it out, but it was never hostile. It was always we were learning from each other about the different things that occur with women from different backgrounds (Isabella, personal interview, June 16, 2005).

Most importantly, these frank conversations about culture helped to solidify trust in these relationships. Although some empirical studies have found unexpectedly high levels of initial trust in new relationships (e.g., Kramer, 1994), it was clear from the reports of many of the protégés in this present study that trust was not automatically sealed at the beginning of their cross-cultural relationships. Instead, a “testing period” sometimes preceded the development of genuine trust and openness in the relationship:

Anne Chan: So how did you grow to trust her? What specifically did she do that made you feel that this is a person I can trust?

Jung (Protegé): I appreciate that question because I didn’t trust her at first. There were thoughts that I had similar to the notion of, “How is she going to be any different than some of the other White people?” . . . I would say there was kind of a testing period as well where we talked about things and we talked about issues related to race. . . . She really wanted to embrace multiculturalism and diversity, and I felt like she was on my side and I felt more comfortable with her and . . . I was able to open up more (personal interview, June 20, 2005).
Jung's words point to the significance and value of talking about race in the establishment of his relationship with his mentor—it is worth noting that he did not initially trust her, but gradually did so after a "testing period" in which they talked about "issues related to race."

This study found that there were two main ways in which mentors explored race with their protégés: directly and indirectly. At times they addressed the issues head-on and other times, their conversations alluded to race/culture in less direct ways. Many of the dyads talked directly about race by disclosing personal experiences, as can be seen in the exchanges between Tamika (Protégé) and her mentor:

Tamika (Protégé): She's from [state deleted]... it was interesting to know her and know that she's from there and also to see that she's also though very aware of what it means for her to be who she is here and also what it means for me to be an African American woman and how aware she is of that in terms of professional issues and also personal issues. So it was a difference but there were many similarities but even in the differences, to me, it was more just a learning experience and learning what it was like for her and talking about what it's like for me (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

As the above quotation shows, these direct exchanges about race were meaningful not only because they facilitated learning between mentors and protégés. They were also critical for building understanding and empathy for each other's position. In this instance, conversations about race helped the mentor understand the implications of being an African American woman, both in the personal and professional realms.
The dyads also discussed race in less direct ways that were found to be deeply meaningful to their relationships. One protégé revealed that they talked about issues indirectly related to race as they were in the process of getting to know one another. Indeed, when I asked how his mentor earned his trust, he replied by telling me the content of their conversations at the beginning of their relationship:

Jung (Protégé): I think one of the topics we talked about was food. And she was talking to me about how she loved Indian food and we talked about Indian food because I like Indian food as well and then we talked about other things. She talked more about her family so I think another aspect of being a mentor that I appreciate about her is that she shared stuff about her life . . . she has a relative who might be Chinese or is definitely East Asian. And somehow that made me feel a little bit more comfortable that she was close with some of her relatives who were of East Asian descent and at one time someone had told her that, in her past life, that she was an Asian American or something like that. And the fact that she would say that and even embrace that idea, I thought was cool (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

At first glance, talking about food or relatives may appear inconsequential. However, these indirect discussions on culture were meaningful to this protégé because they built the foundation for closeness and trust in their relationship ("that made me feel a little bit more comfortable"). Most importantly, these conversations signaled that his mentor acknowledged and was respectful and appreciative of cultural differences ("the fact that she would say that and even embrace that idea, I thought was cool").
Overall, these conversations about culture were significant because they added a depth of understanding, insight, and sensitivity to these mentoring relationships. Protégés reported that these dialogues were beneficial:

Maria (Protégé): She is very aware of me as a person of color and how that might affect me, like in the program, and she would talk about that with me. . . . she was very conscious of that and we talked a lot about our differences and how that was for me. So I think that was very helpful (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

These conversations about culture also enhanced the sense of comfort, connection, and trust that the protégés felt with their mentors. Jung (Protégé) noted his sense of alignment and trust with his mentor after they both got to know each other more deeply: “She really wanted to embrace multiculturalism and diversity and I felt like she was on my side and I felt more comfortable with her and I think I was able to open up more” (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

*Mentor Practices*

Given that conversations about race and culture do not generally happen naturally or easily, it was compelling to find that these dyads were able to have such open discussions. My analysis of the data showed that the mentors were able to facilitate and encourage meaningful dialogues about race and culture through the following attitudes and ways of being:

*Being transparent about racial and ethnic identities.*

For the most part, the mentors in this study were candid about their cultural identities. Their openness encouraged protégés to feel comfortable talking about issues of
race and culture. For instance, two mentors were open about their Christian beliefs. Another mentor noted that her commitment and passion for ethnic minority issues was always “on the table” with her students:

Anne Chan: What are specific things that you do as an ethnic minority mentor?
Dr. Munoz (Mentor): Well, I would say that making sure, first of all, that the students know that I’m aware, if they’re an ethnic minority person, that I’m aware of who they are and how important that is to me about who they are and how necessary it is for them also to value that and have that be part of their work world or their academic world. I think that all of my work is in the ethnic minority area and so it’s not a secret and nor is it a secret that a lot of my energy goes into promoting ethnic minority issues and social justice issues. So I think that this is always on the table with them and with me (personal interview, April 26, 2005).

Being enthusiastic and supportive about research on race and culture.

One’s research interests are often imbued with deep personal meaning. This is especially true for those conducting research on race and culture – the decision to research these topics sometimes stems from firsthand experiences of racism and discrimination. Yet, such research can be the target of criticism and disparagement (Burden et al., 2005; Harley, 2001; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002; Turner, Myers, & Cresswell, 1999). Said Sovann (Protégé):

I feel that there can be people in this department that don’t see it as a valid form of research or think it’s overly simplistic or don’t think it’s important. I’ve actually had another graduate student say to me that cross-cultural research is bullshit (personal interview, December 22, 2005).
Hence, the mentors' strong support for research on issues of race and culture can be critically important to the academic well-being of their protégés. Protégés appreciated their mentors' strong support because it denoted a powerful double affirmation -- both of their professional interests as well as their personal experiences. One protégé was eloquent about how validated he felt when his mentor expressed excitement about his dissertation topic on American Jewish issues. Her unequivocally positive reaction enabled him to share his personal experiences of what it meant to be a cultural minority:

Solomon (Protégé): I think it was really a strength and really validating in a lot of ways to have an advisor who was such an advocate and a supporter of me doing research on American Jewish issues . . . it would have not been a surprise if she didn't take any great interest because it's not her research area . . . the point is that because she was such a supporter of me doing that sort of research and because that research extends from my own ethnic background, I felt that it was very validating on a personal sense that she was an advocate for that work getting out there (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

The importance of mentor attitudes toward research on ethnic minority issues was also found in another qualitative study of ethnic minority special education doctoral students (Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999). The authors of this study emphasize the need for mentors to value the research interests of ethnic minority scholars.

*Being open to talking about race and culture.*

The mentors' willingness to discuss issues beyond purely academic matters were important to these relationships because they helped to make their protégés feel understood (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992; R. D. Hill, Castillo, Ngu, & Pepion, 1999;
Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004). Thomas (2001) notes that many cross-race mentoring relationships suffer from “protective hesitation” (p. 105) – a reluctance to engage in sensitive topics such as race. However, Thomas warns that such reluctance can be extremely detrimental to the relationship and to the protégé. His study found that dyads with open communication about racial issues typically resulted in greater opportunities for the protégé.

In this study, the protégés appreciated being able to talk about issues and aspects of race and culture that were personally important to them. Said one Mexican American protégé about the centrality of family in her life:

Isabella (Protégé): That’s been the key piece where we’re not just talking about work when we meet . . . family is important to me and her family is in her life and we have different approaches to our family but they’re both very present in our lives and so we can share that and I think when I feel that somebody knows what I’m dealing with in my life, both academic and clinical work, I feel understood because what’s been hard for me is that keeping up with my family responsibilities has, in a lot of ways, slowed me down and I needed somebody to know that that was a big piece and I couldn’t avoid that. So I felt like she got it. And she would try to encourage me to not get weighed down by things but she got it and I’m not sure other people would have wanted to hear all of that. For me, that was really important (personal interview June 16, 2005).

This protégé emphasized how important it was that her mentor understood her cultural background and her family responsibilities (Zalaquett, 2006), and was willing to go beyond discussing academic concerns with her (“we’re not just talking about work when
we meet”). She also recognized that other advisors might not be as open to talking about her culture (“I’m not sure other people would have wanted to hear all of that”), even though this was an integral piece of her life (“that was a big piece and I couldn’t avoid that”). The importance of her mentor’s openness to discussing her family life can be seen in her repeated use of the phrase “she got it.” Another protégé noted that her mentor’s openness to discussing personal concerns showed that she cared:

Maria (Protégé): I think another thing too is that she’s willing to listen to you whenever you want. Like if I wanted to go there and talk about a personal aspect of my life, I’m sure she wouldn’t say no to it. She would be open to hear that and give me suggestions of how I can deal with that. Even if I don’t mention something of my personal life, she will ask me, “Maria, are you sure everything is okay? Is everything fine?” Like it’s not just the academic part of it but it’s also the personal part of it too because she wants to make sure that you are doing okay (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Having awareness about specific challenges faced by students of color

Ethnic minorities’ experiences of overt and covert racism in academia have been documented quite extensively (Burden et al., 2005; Constantine & Sue, 2006; Hodge & Stroot, 1997). Some of the protégés discussed the difficulties they faced as ethnic minority doctoral students – some brought up instances of not feeling supported or respected for their research on race and culture, others divulged difficulties they had experienced as students of color. One protégé even had to deal with a professor who made racist comments in class. It was critical for these protégés’ academic and mental well-being that their mentors had a solid awareness of and sensitivity to their cultural
concerns, the challenges they faced, and their cultural identities. Noted Isabella (Protégé):
“I just always felt like she knew. The system is very difficult in [city deleted], in general, even in my clinical sites, I would have experiences and she knew. She gets it” (personal interview June 16, 2005). The succinct phrase “she gets it” tells volumes about her mentor’s understanding and grasp of the difficulties she faced in a discriminatory system. This protégé noted that her mentor’s cultural sensitivity helped her to feel connected in their relationship as well as to cement the relationship as a mentoring one.

My conversations with the mentors confirmed their deep sensitivity and awareness about the challenges faced by students of color. Said one mentor:

Bob (Mentor): Part of it is what I perceive as a cultural sensitivity. . . . that’s a general background for what I do. Just realizing that some of my students of color are first generation graduate students as I was and that they’re part of a community and that you just don’t come to a new place and kind of set up shop and go on as if the context doesn’t matter and so I’m very aware of social support and community issues. Since I’ve come to the University [name deleted], we’ve recruited a cohort of students of color and so I try to get them hooked up with students with similar interests who are going to be socially supportive. I try to be sensitive to issues that are going on, like family issues and things like that . . . that’s part of the backdrop. Also, within the field, I try to give them awareness of challenges they might be up against as people of color and sometimes their research is devalued and I emphasize that it’s really important to do rigorous work because sometimes the standards we’re held to are sometimes above those for other areas and talk about some of the challenges and doing work on ethnic issues
that may not be there for mainstream kinds of research (personal interview, April 21, 2005).

Like Bob, the mentors in this study were clearly well-informed about cultural concerns. Most of the mentors readily discussed these issues with their protégés, either one-on-one or in classroom settings. Noted Mimi (Mentor): “I think most of our conversations have some component of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation in it or religion” (personal interview, May 12, 2005). This same mentor noted that cultural concerns such as race, sexual orientation, and religion are “the basis through which we make our decisions and interact with others and our assumptions” (personal interview, May 12, 2005) and hence she makes special efforts to be upfront about these issues. Her protégé noted that her mentor’s understanding about the impact of race and culture was both of help and comfort to her because she did not have to explain herself: “She would know how I feel” (Ai Ling, personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Another mentor even went so far as to do what she termed "race socialization" with her protégés -- she described this as “prepping” them to cope with racism:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): With some of the other mentees, I’ve had to share, especially when they have disappointments that I feel are racially based, then I do what I consider to be racial socialization with a number who didn’t get that kind of socialization at home because of their family orientation toward it, especially a lot of the Asian American students. Their parents don’t tend to prep them for the racism that they’re going to experience out in the world (personal interview, March 26, 2005).
In a follow-up note to me, Dr. Johnson underlined the importance of mentors being aware of the specific challenges confronting ethnic minority students: “It would be important for a White mentor to be aware of the realities of the professional opportunities and/or barriers for their ethnic minority mentees. It’s not a “level playing field” even in psychology, so a White mentor needs to both acknowledge this and help mentees gain skills that they will need to negotiate this system” (Dr. Johnson (Mentor), e-mail, July 28, 2005).

Being humble regarding lack of knowledge about cultural/racial issues.

Mentors awareness about cultural concerns was important to these relationships. However, equally important was their willingness to acknowledge the limits of their knowledge regarding cultural/racial issues and their humility and openness to learning from their protégés. One mentor said he tried to “gain from the expertise his protégé brought to the relationship” (Bob, personal interview, April 21, 2005). Protégés expressed appreciation that their mentors were willing to learn from them. One protégé highlighted one of the strengths of their relationship as “a mutual appreciation and a mutual interest in learning more about each other’s cultures” (Solomon, personal interview, May 21, 2005). When asked what her mentor learned from her, another protégé responded:

Maria (Protégé): Definitely about the Latino culture. I think that is huge. I think that she definitely has. I helped her along with that, specifically in understanding the dynamics of relationships, that kind of stuff because I think Latinos communicate very differently than Euro Americans (personal interview, June 12, 2005).
It is telling that the mentors in this study were willing to learn from their protégés. Instead of claiming that they knew it all, they instead acknowledged the limitations of their knowledge and sought to understand their protégés by learning about them. One mentor was particularly remarkable in this regard. Indeed, her forthrightness about her limitations made a deep impression on her protégé:

Maria (Protégé): She did say, "There's only so much I can give you and how far I can take you. But I think you really need to have that support of somebody of color who can help you with some of the things... in what it's like to be a person of color who is a psychologist." Which to me was the greatest thing she could have ever told me because she acknowledged the situation (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

It is noteworthy that Maria, without prompting, rated her mentor's honesty as "the greatest thing she could have ever told me." What appears to be the critical piece here is not that her mentor was an expert on race and culture, but rather that she recognized and acknowledged her limitations regarding cultural issues and she took steps to counteract these limitations.

Instead of disdaining their mentors for not knowing everything, the protégés appreciated their mentors for being forthright about what they did not know. Said one protégé:

Isabella (Protégé): So I think what's good about Keisha [her mentor] is that she knows what she can do and gives me other things to follow up on that are separate from her. She knows she can't answer all my questions or give me the advice because I also know that she hasn't been out in the clinical world and doesn't
know it all and I think she knows that about herself too (personal interview, June 16, 2005).

This finding of mentors learning from their protégés directly contradicts commonly held misconceptions of the mentor-protégé relationship as a top-down hierarchy wherein the mentor transfers knowledge and expertise to the protégé (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002). Rather, the reports from both mentors and protégés showed that the mentors learned and benefited from the protégés as well (Ragins, 1997).

Acknowledging the impact of race and racism.

Several of the protégés talked extensively about the importance of their mentors’ acknowledgment of the impact of race and racism in their lives. Conversely, one protégé recounted an incident during clinical supervision when his supervisor brushed aside the racist comments he endured as a psychologist in training:

Jung (Protégé): I was talking about how some of the African American kids I was working with were making comments about me being Asian and actually specifically saying, “Oh, you’re a chink,” and making comments about me being a Chinese delivery boy and things like that and as I expressed this in supervision, one of the faculty members who was actually supervising at this clinical site said something to the extent of, “Well, you know, there are women in Bosnia being persecuted at this very moment.” She was a feminist therapist, but nevertheless, it just wasn’t appropriate and it did not validate me at all and it made me feel like I was wrong for mentioning it... it just showed perhaps that this professional did not feel comfortable discussing things -- which was common among many of my supervisors (personal interview, June 20, 2005).
The supervisor's quick dismissal of this protege's painful experience as a person of color left him feeling invalidated ("it did not validate me at all") and belittled ("it made me feel like I was wrong for mentioning it"). Fortunately, his own mentor reacted quite differently:

Jung (Protégé): She was open to talking about those things and she listened to me about those experiences and she didn’t shutdown and she created a kind of holding environment for some difficult issues that I had to hold myself during my experience as a doctoral student and she was the container and she understood. She got pissed off with me, so there's an ally. She was an ally as well (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

By acknowledging rather than denying the impact of race on the lives of her ethnic minority protégés, this mentor demonstrated respect and validation for Jung's experience. Instead of being dismissive of his reality, she provided a safe space for him to talk about the race-based challenges he faced. It is significant that Jung uses the therapeutic term "holding environment" to describe the secure and reassuring space that he felt with her. In addition, his use of the word "ally" to describe his mentor showed that he trusted her. Jung's mentor confirmed that she strove to be open and non-defensive when her protégés brought up uncomfortable topics such as racial bias:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): I think part of what would make me trustworthy would be my students tell me a lot of very painful things that have happened to them in terms of racial bias and I think that those sometimes are very painful for White people to hear and I don't blow them off or, despite my own discomfort and guilt and all of that, don’t try to change the subject or anything. Like I will listen to
them and be very honest about my feelings about that and just clearly agree that it
sucks and . . . rather than becoming defensive about that. I think that maybe part
of it . . . I’m willing to take responsibility for my part in whatever institutional
racism exists and I’m not trying to dodge that (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

As the above quote shows, it is not always an easy or comfortable process to converse
about race and culture. For this European American mentor, it demanded a commitment
and willingness to tolerate her own guilt and discomfort, be non-defensive, and take
responsibility for institutional racism rather than ignoring or minimizing the impact of
race in the lives of her students of color. By acknowledging rather than denying the pain
of discrimination, she also helped create trust in her relationships.

_Not making assumptions._

What the mentors did in this study was as significant as what they did _not_ do. One
noteworthy instance of this was the mentors not making assumptions about their
protégés. Said Bob (Mentor): “I’ve tried to be as sensitive as possible, tried to listen to
these students, not make assumptions about them” (personal interview, April 21, 2005).
In these cross-cultural relationships, not making assumptions was key in enabling the
mentors to attain a deeper and fuller understanding of their protégés. One critical aspect
about not making assumptions was that the mentors did not engage in stereotypic
thinking, as the following quote shows:

_Anne Chan: How has [your mentor] supported you as an ethnic minority person,
in both the professional and personal realms?

Manjeet (Protégé): In the personal realms, mostly by really getting to know the
dynamics that exist within my own cultural background and being sensitive to_
that, knowing and not making assumptions that just because I was Indian, I was going to have an arranged marriage and that my parents didn’t let me date or whatever. [He] didn’t make any assumptions (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

As Manjeet’s words show, a mentor’s sensitivity to cultural concerns as well as the ability to not make assumptions contribute to a protégé’s feeling supported as an ethnic minority person.

Being curious and asking questions about the protégé’s race and culture.

Asking questions might appear to be an obvious mentor practice, but the protégés noted that they felt supported as well as understood when mentors asked them about their culture. Said Manjeet (Protégé): “He asked everything. He was very sensitive about that and in bringing up anything, he would just want to know, what was my perspective or how did family kind of deal with that?” (personal interview, January 11, 2006). Noted another protégé:

Nandita (Protégé): Other things that she did was she would ask me about my life when she saw me -- ask me about my studies, obviously, but also ask me about my life. Like how’s your family? She knew my folks lived close by. She’d ask me about my folks and she would talk about her own family. And so she would very much connect on a personal level and not shy away from that. Not inappropriately -- she wouldn’t tell me her problems and things. She would give me sort of genuine interest and genuinely share (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

One negative case example of this practice was noted in one relationship where the protégé did not feel that a mentor had a full understanding of her cultural background.
Although she emphasized that she had a good relationship with him, she suggested that the relationship could have been even better if he had a better understanding of her culture:

Protégé [Name withheld]: So sometimes I feel like I don’t think he understands my cultural background as much, which isn’t particularly necessary. He doesn’t need to understand it a lot but I suppose I think that it would be nice if he understood my history and my culture, I suppose.

Anne Chan: If you had like the ideal mentoring relationship, how would you like your mentor to address that with you?

Protégé: I guess by showing more of an interest in that part of me (personal interview, date of interview withheld).

Concluding Thoughts about Mentor Practice of Talking about Race and Culture

This discussion showcases the importance and meaningfulness of talking about culture and race in cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Protégés reported that these conversations with their mentors helped to establish as well as solidify trust in their mentoring relationships. They also appreciated that these conversations helped deepen their relationships by enhancing their mentors' understanding of their values, lives, and perspectives. One protégé sums up the importance of these conversations when she said that it meant everything to her:

Anne Chan: . . . this may seem like an obvious question but I’d like to hear from you what it means to have the cultural piece addressed.

Nandita (Protégé): It means everything . . . when we learn, for example, multicultural counseling, the idea that you need to take somebody in context . . .
So if you take one of those levels out, you don’t get the person. They won’t make sense or you may simplify them. If you get the cultural piece, you get the layer. You get that middle contextual layer about a person that shapes how they think, how they dream, how they work how they prioritize things in their life . . . for a mentor not to understand that, then it’s meaningless (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Listening

Relational-cultural theorists have written about the significance and importance of listening actively and empathically in the development of healthy relationships (Jordan, 2001). Listening may seem to be an obvious mentor practice (Galbraith & Cohen, 1996; Trubowitz, 2004). However, it is a skill that does not come naturally to most people. Even aspiring therapists are required to take coursework in “listening skills” as part of their training programs (Eriksen & McAuliffe, 2001; C. E. Hill, 2004; Levitt, 2001). In fact, one protégé was very articulate about his difficulties working with a former advisor who was not a good listener:

Jung (Protégé): I remember one time I was just sitting in front of his desk and I said, “I was wondering if we could talk about, if you could help me sort out some stuff related to my career goals,” and he seemed uncomfortable and he was fidgeting around and turning on his computer and looking around and very little eye contact and basically, I didn’t feel heard. I didn’t feel listened to. I felt like he was a good teacher, he was a good researcher but there was no sense of support. I didn’t feel heard . . . and I really struggled. I really struggled just to connect with him and I had a lot of anger toward him . . . I felt like the relationship was quite
hollow. And to me, that affected my quality of life as a doctoral student (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Jung’s former advisor displayed subtle yet unmistakable signs of his unease listening to Jung’s concerns: he fidgeted, did not maintain eye contact, and fiddled with his computer. His inability to listen had dramatic consequences for their relationship – Jung not only felt disconnected from him but was even angry with him. Without good listening from the mentor, the relationship felt superficial to the protégé (“quite hollow”). Moreover, Jung notes that his advisor’s disinterestedness had ramifications beyond the relationship – his inability to listen affected Jung’s quality of life as a doctoral student. In stark contrast to this advisor, Jung’s mentor listened and this seemingly simple act of listening momentously impacted his doctoral experience as well as the trajectory of his professional development:

Jung (Protégé): I just remember talking to [her]. For the first time, a faculty member actually listened . . . and she actually kind of put her counseling hat on and it was really helpful and she heard me and she listened to me and finally, I felt connected to her and I felt connected to the program. . . . So she kind of humanized a very dehumanizing experience.

Anne Chan: And that’s really a beautiful way of putting it and it may seem obvious but can you explain to me why it was so important that she listen to you and that she made a connection with you as a whole person?

Jung: . . . I think being a clinician has some prerequisites and some of them include getting to know yourself and being able to explore yourself and being connected to others and to me it was important that I felt more connected to my
mentor and other faculty, particularly my mentor, because I think that was an important clinical aspect as well (personal interview, June 20, 2005). Jung’s quadruple use of the word “connected” in this short quote is significant: he reported feeling previously disconnected with his doctoral program and his previous advisors, and his disconnection was apparent to the faculty in the program. What turned his graduate life around was a sense of connectedness to his mentor, who joined the faculty a few years after he started his program. Unlike his previous advisor, his mentor “put her counseling hat on” and listened to him. In his words, his mentor’s listening skills were profound in their repercussions – she “humanized a very dehumanizing experience.” This act of listening also had significant consequences for this protégé beyond the comfort of feeling heard. It in fact inspired a turning point in his life by sparking a connection with first his mentor, and then the program. He dramatically transformed from being a student who almost dropped out of the program to one who was lauded by his department for being its top student. Jung even went on to become faculty at another college. In effect, his mentor’s listening intervention had a ripple effect far beyond her relationship with Jung.

Mentors in this study were found to balance listening with advice giving. When asked what she is careful not to do in mentoring, one mentor replied that she tries to listen more than she talks. Jung noted that his mentor intuitively knew when to listen and when to give advice:

Jung (Protégé): I felt connected to her because of her desire to really get to know her protégés and but it was also neat because she was very good about keeping the boundaries and was able to offer support, advice and just knew when to listen,
knew when to provide kind of an exhortation or advice, and just support you as a student and help you as a student to do what is right for you (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

The protégés also reported that their mentors practiced good listening skills by being absolutely present. In contrast to the aforementioned advisor who fidgeted and turned on the computer, these mentors demonstrated attentiveness by being focused on their protégés:

Camille (Protégé): He doesn’t rush around a lot so he doesn’t make you feel like he’s squeezing you in. He’s very busy but it’s not like he’s doing other things when you’re in the room. He’s very focused on our conversations and he doesn’t ever make me feel like he’s rushing me out or pushing me out of the door (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Another protégé noted that she could tell at their first meeting that her mentor was genuine by her listening skills and eye contact:

Tamika (Protégé): How I felt that she was genuine was just really based on my intuition, my feeling intuitively that we were connecting, like she was listening to me when I was talking. She was looking at me, and the basics, the eye contact (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

The protégés also reported that their mentors’ openness to listening to different aspects of their lives helped to solidify trust and connection in their relationships:

Maria (Protégé): I think another thing too is that she’s willing to listen to you whenever you want. Like if I wanted to go there and talk about a personal aspect of my life, I’m sure she wouldn’t say no to it. She would be open to hear that and
give me suggestions of how I can deal with that (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Echoed another protégé:

Camille (Protégé): If I did have an advisor that was constantly caught up in things and didn’t really ask me questions about myself and didn’t actually bring his family to functions, then I just wouldn’t feel as connected to that person. I wouldn’t feel as warm towards that person and it would just be really hard for me because I do like being able to connect with the people that I’m working with closely (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Overall, the above quotes from the protégés in this study show that seemingly banal practices such as eye contact, asking questions, showing interest, being focused, listening attentively, and not rushing are actually critically important pieces of mentoring. These practices aggregated to help the protégés feel that they were being listened to, that they were cared for, and that they were connected with their mentors. As such, these were vital practices for providing emotional support and building trust and genuineness in these relationships (McManus & Russell, 1997). As one protégé put it, listening well is one of the “essential components” of a mentor (Isabella, personal interview, June 16, 2005).

Having a Holistic Understanding of the Protégé

Anderson and Shannon (1988) believe that true mentoring involves a concern for the “comprehensive welfare” of the protégé (p. 40). Indeed, Krumboltz (1993) notes the interrelationship and importance of both the personal and professional in career counseling. A striking finding in this present study was that the mentors did not limit
themselves to knowing about their protégés’ work and professional issues; rather their understanding of their protégés extended to different dimensions of their personal lives. A similar finding was observed in Blanchett and Clarke-Yapi’s (1999) qualitative study of the mentoring of ethnic minority doctoral students – the protégés perceived assistance with personal issues as one part of a mentor’s role. Interestingly, the mentors in this study did not share in this particular perception. Instead, they saw nurturing professional growth as part of a mentor’s role.

In the present study, the mentors acted in ways that showed their recognition of the connection between the professional and personal, and they sought to understand their protégés in both realms. Notably, four protégés and one mentor made use of the words “holistic,” “multidimensional,” or the phrase “whole person” to describe the mentor’s understanding of the protégé. As one protégé described it:

Solomon (Protégé): I really feel 100% supported in my professional life and recognizing that that extends over to . . . like in my career and when I say career, like in a very holistic sense, including my marriage and including my relationship with my family and all of those things. I feel as a mentor, she’s not looking narrowly at you have to do this and this and that and the hell with everything else (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

In this study, the mentors did not limit their conversations with their protégés to strictly academic and professional matters (“the hell with everything else”). Instead, they addressed “everything else” that might affect the protégés’ career development, including the protégés’ cultural worldviews, marital problems, family issues, psychological issues, and even the timing of starting a family, as seen in the following quote:
Latisha (Protégé): I think a mentor is more holistic. . . I had an advisor at [name of college deleted] who told me which courses I needed to take in order to graduate and told me, “Oh, you need these credits. Oh, this is the order, that kind of thing.” Whereas my mentor, Dr. Johnson is more -- I can talk to her about my family. I even talk to her about the fact that I was trying to get pregnant and the timing and how was that going to work, all of those things plus getting my degree done (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

It is striking that this particular protégé talked in-depth with her mentor about an extremely personal issue – the timing of having a child. Some advisors might shy away from getting too involved in their protégés’ personal lives – however, the mentors in this study, to varying degrees, sought to understand the multiple facets and contexts of their protégés. One such aspect was the racial and cultural identity of the protégés – many of the protégés reported talking to their mentors about their racial and cultural identities, and the implications of these personal identities on their professional development. Several of the protégés reported that their mentors made special efforts to understand their cultural backgrounds. As Shanti (Protégé) put it: “He asks me questions about my culture to understand things” (personal interview, January 10, 2006). Another protégé, Tamika, noted that her mentor had a sensitivity, awareness, and interest in “what it means for me to be an African American woman and how aware she is of that in terms of professional issues and also personal issues” (personal interview, May 25, 2005). In contrast, one protégé described feeling misunderstood by an advisor who did not understand her cultural identity and thereby failed to fully understand her:
Nandita (Protégé): One of my faculty members who was on my dissertation as well didn’t really get the cultural piece. Didn’t understand it. Didn’t respect it. Well, let me put it this way: didn’t understand it. She tried to get it but she didn’t get it and that’s an important piece to who I am. That was a major struggle for me during my graduate education that I was single and that I was a woman and that I was Indian, and that combination is challenging at that age. . . . I needed more at some point and she wasn’t able to give that, not more time but more understanding maybe (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Many mentors talked about having this special “understanding” of their protégés as a key piece of mentoring. In fact, one mentor believed that knowing about the “whole person” was essential to the quality of her mentoring:

Mary (Mentor): In my thinking, a mentor is someone who knows about the whole person . . . even though the overall goal is basically to mentor them in terms of a profession, I think that in order to really do that effectively, that it’s critical to know the whole person, to know what their strengths and limitations are and for them to know about mine as well and there’s a bond. So when we talk . . . it’s not just about the work but it’s also about their lives and the goals they have, where they want to be, and for them to be genuine with me about what really they want to do (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

Another mentor pinpointed her deeper, more personal conversations with her protégés as a key difference between working with a protégé as opposed to someone with whom she does not have a mentoring relationship:
Dr. Johnson (Mentor): And with mentees, there's a quality to that conversation that is deeper than it is with a student that I'm directing their dissertation but we don’t have a mentoring relationship because I've done a lot of those too. So you still do the meetings. You still do the conversations to help them clarify their thinking about what question they want to ask and how to conceptualize a study. . . with a mentee though, there’s a lot deeper conversation about those issues and how they relate to their personal life and how you see their dissertation fitting in with both their personal life as well as their professional life in the future (personal interview, March 26, 2005).

Dr. Johnson’s words show that she clearly recognizes the connection between the personal and the professional. As she sees it, a dissertation does not have to be merely an academic, work-related project, but can have the potential to be deeply relevant to her protégés’ “personal life.”

It is important to note that the mentors in this study stated they were aware of how deeply they should get involved in their students’ lives and when it was more appropriate for the student to seek professional help. One mentor framed this dilemma in the following way: “If it’s something that can be resolved fairly straightforward, then you can go there but if it looks like it’s something that needs more long term intensive work, then we try to get somebody else involved” (Terrel, personal interview, April 28, 2005). The mentors were cognizant of appropriate boundaries and were able to show interest in their protégés’ personal concerns without being untowardly invasive, as can be seen in Camille’s description of her mentor:
Camille (Protégé): When I come in, he’s like, “So how are things going?” and we talk about our research but then after that he’ll talk about my research and give me feedback on things but then before I leave he always thinks to say, “Okay, but how are you doing otherwise?” And so it’s like he doesn’t push you to say more than you’re comfortable saying. So sometimes I might just say, “Oh, things are fine,” or I might say, “Well, I’m taking this dance class and I’m also moving to a new apartment which I’m really excited about it” and he’ll say, “Oh, really? What kind of dance class?” and I’ll tell him and sometimes he’ll tell a funny story about his family or something. So it’s not like he asks really personal questions . . . you can reveal whatever you’re comfortable with but you don’t get the feeling just by his tone or the questions that he asks that he’s prying or that he’s being inappropriate (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Achieving a Holistic Understanding of the Protégés: Mentor Practices

Achieving an understanding of the multiple facets of an individual is not a simple feat, however, the process toward deep understanding boiled down to two deceptively simple mentor practices of showing genuine interest and asking relevant questions (Connell, 1985). The mentors took the time to ask questions in order to get to know their protégés, and their efforts demonstrated a sincere interest in their protégés’ lives: “He spent just hours with me getting to know me, asking about my family history, how it was about growing up. It wasn’t like a psychological interview. It was just very genuine and interested” (Manjeet (Protégé), personal interview, January 11, 2006). After one such conversation during a conference, her mentor followed up with an e-mail to express his genuine interest in all parts of her identity:
I am glad things worked out so we could spend some time together in the process of getting to know you and defining who you were, who you are now, and what you are becoming as a person, a woman, and a psychologist. I think all the pieces are coming together, and the internal voice is emerging stronger every day (e-mail from Terrel (Mentor) to Manjeet (Protégé), 15 Apr 2003).

Another mentor’s genuine interest is evident in the following quote from his protégé, Camille. She noted that she initially glossed over his question “How are you doing?” but was pleasantly surprised to see that he was truly interested in her answer when he slowed her down and repeated the question:

Camille (Protégé): We’re constantly doing all this work . . . and so if we forget to take care of ourselves and so it’s just nice to walk into somebody’s office and to have them say, “So how are you doing?” And then you start talking about research and they’re like, “No, no, no. How are you doing, Camille?” And so it’s just nice to have someone care to ask about you outside of this student role (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

As Camille’s quote shows, her mentor was intentional in asking questions so as to achieve a fuller and better understanding of his protégés. Rather than settling for her perfunctory answer, Camille’s mentor made sure that she really answered his question of concern: “No, no, no. How are you doing, Camille?” Likewise, Nandita’s mentor made the effort to ask her about her life both within and outside academia:

Nandita (Protégé): She would ask me about my life when she saw me, ask me about my studies, obviously, but also ask me about my life. Like how’s your family? She knew my folks lived close by. She’d ask me about my folks and she
would talk about her own family. And so very much for me, she would very much connect on a personal level and not shy away from that. Not inappropriately. She wouldn’t tell me her problems and things. She would give me sort of genuine interest and genuinely share (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

The practice of asking questions looks easy and even simplistic, yet it involves a commitment to giving time and attention, careful attention to nuance, and an acute sensitivity to protégé concerns. For instance, some mentors made special effort to create safe physical as well as psychological spaces for these deep conversations to occur. One mentor took new students out for coffee so that they would not be interrupted by other students working in her office. Another mentor closed the door and turned on her sound machine so that her protégés could feel secure that their conversations would be private. In addition, mentors had to be alert and sensitive to unexpected moments of protégé self-disclosure, as seen in the following quote:

Terrel (Mentor): Sometimes I have to be alert when I’m not alert. Now that sounds like a wordsmithing but a person came to talk to me the other day and I thought they were going to talk about some difficulty they were having with the dean. That’s what I thought. And that’s what we had been talking about. But when she sat down, it seemed like we were talking about one thing but something else was going on. I mean, we were talking about the dean and the problem with a class that she was teaching but something else was going on and it took me about nine minutes to say, “Now, something is happening here.” So I just sat there and sure enough, a whole big thing came out about a relationship [details of the relationship deleted] and I had kind of known something about it but it was like a
White elephant between the two of us. We wouldn’t talk about it. We were going to let it alone. Both of us had silently agreed to do that but then it just came gushing out.

Anne Chan: So how did you handle that?

Terrel Davis: I handled it by being a half hour late for my next appointment and just shifted back for that 40 minutes . . . we had an hour but I had stayed an extra time. I shifted back into my training as a therapist which was just to be there for her (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

This mentor recognized the significance of his protegé’s unexpected disclosure, and he responded in kind by giving her both time (“I handled it by being a half hour late for my next appointment”) and emotional support (“just to be there for her”). At times, mentors also had to be alert to moments when their protégés were facing difficulty but were not voicing their hardships. Four mentors alluded to taking the initiative in approaching their protégés when they suspected something was amiss.

Mentors’ Holistic Understanding: Protégés’ Perspectives

The protégés had much to say on the subject of their mentors’ holistic understanding of their lives and identities. In the course of my analysis, it became apparent that the protégés deeply appreciated and valued their mentors’ efforts to get to know them. The protégés reported five major ways in which their mentors’ holistic understanding had a positive impact: they felt cared for, they felt emotionally supported, they were recognized as individuals, they received stronger letters of recommendations, and their research efforts were strengthened.

Protégés felt cared for.
One protégé noted several times during our interview that her mentor’s interest in her personal and professional well-being demonstrated deep and genuine caring:

Anne Chan: And how does she demonstrate that she cares about you?

Maria (Protégé): She will ask me, “How are you doing, Maria, outside of school? Is everything okay?” She would do that. That’s when I know that she really cares. But I don’t know about any other professors but I know with her, she’s not afraid to bring it up. . . . she really does care how you’re doing (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Protégés felt emotionally supported.

Several protégés openly discussed various difficulties and challenges they faced as they progressed through graduate school. Some of these challenges were school-related, others pertained to personal and family problems. Some of the protégés stated that their mentors played critical roles in providing emotional support because they (unlike people outside academia) truly understood the stressors of the academic life (Trubowitz, 2004). One protégé said her family was supportive but their support was limited because it precluded a true working knowledge of what goes on in a graduate student’s life:

Camille (Protégé): They haven’t been unsupportive but they don’t really know about the processes since they never really went to college themselves or applied for graduate school or anything, it’s kind of hard for them to understand how stressful it is sometimes. When I talk to them about being stressed out about things, they’ll say, “Just don’t stress out,” . . . it’s harder for some of them to understand (personal interview, May 23, 2005).
Another protege noted that being able to talk about personal struggles meant that she felt she had a support system in place during difficult as well as celebratory times:

Anne Chan: And so what does it mean to you that you are able to share so much with Terrel? What is the significance of that for you?

Shanti (Protege): I think going through graduate school is a very hard process and I think without support, it would have been really hard for me. Because [with the support of mentors] I always know that I’ll always be okay, like if something bad happens, I’m going to be okay because there’s always people in my corner. So when the good stuff happens, they’re there to celebrate with me. You know what I mean? I guess it’s a support system in a different way than your friends because it adds like a guidance component. . . . I’ve had a lot of family problems and I think what he [another mentor] offered me was kind of like an older brother, father figure type. And I think Terrel (Mentor) offered me, I don’t have any grandparents but I think Terrel offered me what I imagined it would be like to have a grandfather (personal interview, January 10, 2006).

It is significant that Shanti uses intimate descriptors such as “brother,” “father,” and “grandfather.” Another protege, Ming, described her female mentor as her “academic mom” (personal interview, June 12, 2005). These proteges’ use of such familial terms attests to the warmth and closeness of their ties with their mentors and the level of emotional support they received from their mentors. This finding is in line with that of another quantitative study which found similar familial terms used by proteges (Schrodt et al., 2003).

Protégés felt recognized and treated as unique individuals.
The mentors' willingness to address personal as well as professional concerns signaled that they recognized each protégé's uniqueness as a person and an individual (Brinson & Kottler, 1993). Thus, in making the effort to get to know their protégés, they honored each protégé's individual and personalized priorities and goals, instead of treating them generically. While reflecting on the shared characteristics of the different mentors in her life, one protégé said,

Ai Ling (Protégé): I think they see me as a person, an individual, unique person and not just like one of their students and one of their many students. And almost make me feel that the advice they gave me or the path they suggest me to take is customized for me (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

This protégé also said it was very important that she shared personal information with her mentor because she wanted to be seen as a person not as just one of many students taking courses and doing research and writing papers . . . a paper writing machine . . . but a real person and I have my personality. I have my difficulties. I have my weaknesses . . . and I think it's important for her to see me as a person and I see her as a person too (Ai Ling (Protégé), personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Protégés received stronger letters of recommendation.

The protégés noted that their mentors' intimate knowledge of them contributed to them writing extremely strong letters of recommendation. The protégés who had the opportunity to view these letters marveled at their detail and quality. Noted one protégé: “It showed that she knew me as a person. It wasn’t one of those letters, “Well, I’ve never met her before,” (laughs) you know?” (Joan, personal interview, May 21, 2005). Another
Protégé said that her mentor’s letters are “not like a standardized letter” but instead showcase her in-depth knowledge of her (Ai Ling, personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Protégés felt that their research experience was strengthened.

Five protégés reported that their discussions of personal and cultural experiences with their mentors added richness, depth, and even inspiration to their research projects. The protégés stated that their mentors’ receptivity to hearing about personal experiences enhanced their discussions of research ideas, conceptualization, methodology, and analysis. Noted one of the protégés:

Maria (Protégé): I think that when we talk about personal aspects of our lives, it always touches into our research. The exception to the rules and how are those things going to impact the study and what type of people you want to recruit for our study, that’s kind of how we do it (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Maria also added that she and her mentor had discussed skin color and within-group racism in her ethnic community and this discussion led to a research project and a conference presentation for both of them.

Significance of Holistic Understanding for the Relationships

It seems clear from the above discussion that self-disclosure benefited the protégés in different ways. Since the protégés were not forced or obliged to self-disclose, they had the discretion of choosing what to disclose to their mentors. None of the protégés or mentors mentioned any issues they experienced with protégé self-disclosure. Only one protégé [name withheld] lightheartedly mentioned that their conversations sometimes got off-track.
Aside from the positive benefits to protégés outlined in the above section, the mentors’ holistic understanding of their protégés also had two key implications for these mentoring relationships: first, cultural sensitivity was demonstrated and second, trust was established in these relationships.

_Demonstrating cultural sensitivity and understanding._

Zalaquett (2006) suggests an imperative for teachers and counselors to be conversant of the values, beliefs, and traditions of the culturally different. Several protégés talked at length about their appreciation for their mentors’ interest and understanding of their cultural and family backgrounds. Shanti, a South Asian woman, described how her mentors made her feel validated by listening to her experiences as a person of color. In contrast, she noted that other professors did not look at the “whole picture” of the student, thus devaluing the individual’s experience:

_Shanti (Protégé):_ I think a lot of times like individual experience isn’t even valued, like how I hear professors talk about graduate students outside of class... they don’t look at the whole picture, that they had other stuff going on and just felt like it should be this rigid way and this is the only way to do it and they didn’t even listen to what was going on with the different students (personal interview, January 10, 2006).

Another protégé, Isabella, a Mexican American woman, discussed with her mentor the importance of her family and how her family responsibilities impacted her academic progress:

_Isabella (Protégé):_ I think there’s a friendship in there that’s been the key piece where we’re not just talking about work when we meet. It’s personal, you know,
family is important to me and her family is in her life and we have different approaches to our family but they're both very present in our lives and so we can share that and I think when I feel that somebody knows what I'm dealing with in my life, both academic and clinical work, I feel understood because what's been hard for me is that keeping up with my family responsibilities has, in a lot of ways, slowed me down and I needed somebody to know that that was a big piece and I couldn't avoid that. So I felt like she got it and she would try to encourage me to not get weighed down by things. But she got it and I'm not sure other people would have wanted to hear all of that. For me, that was really important (personal interview, June 16, 2005).

Isabella’s phrases “she got it” and “that was really important” may be terse but they effectively sum up the importance of her mentor’s recognition and understanding of her multiple, overlapping identities and challenges as a student, member of an extended family, and a person of color. An instance of this mentor’s understanding and sensitivity to Isabella’s cultural values can be seen in how she thoughtfully made special allowances for Isabella’s family’s presence at her defense hearing. Although the defense is technically open to the public, Isabella stated that it is not a common practice to have family present. However, it was meaningful and important to her that they attend her defense. The following e-mail from her mentor shows her understanding of the importance of family in Isabella’s life and her sensitivity and respect for Isabella’s cultural values:

Since your family is coming for the hearing, we'll do a slightly different plan for the defense. You'll present, we'll ask questions/make comments, and then the
family and you will be asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates.

We will invite everyone back into the room and congratulate you officially (see, I'm believing and "claiming" that you will pass the defense!!). I won't meet with you at that point to go over the changes that the committee is recommending .... you and I will meet the following day (alone) to go over these. You can tell your family as much, or as little, about this process as you feel is appropriate.

Most people have revisions that they need to make to the dissertation after the hearing (and before submitting the final copy to the Dean's office) so this is the usual procedure. You can work on them whenever your family leaves town - and have the time to focus again (e-mail from Dr. Johnson to Isabella, May 18, 2005).

Yet another protégé talked about how vitally important it was for her that her mentor understood her at the level of culture and ethnicity:

Anne Chan: ... I'd like to hear from you what it means to have the cultural piece addressed.

Nandita (Protégé): It means everything. ... when we learn, for example, multicultural counseling, the idea that you need to take somebody in context and family and culture and as an individual ... So if you take one of those levels out, you don't get the person. They won't make sense or you may simplify them. If you get the cultural piece, you get the layer. You get that middle contextual layer about a person that shapes how they think, how they dream, how they work, how they prioritize things in their life. ... For a mentor not to understand that, then it's meaningless (personal interview, December 17, 2005).
Nandita went on to state that her mentor’s understanding of her as a person of color meant “everything” to her.

**Building trust.**

Being interested and open to the multiple personal dimensions of the protégé was found to be a key way in which trust was developed and sustained in these mentoring relationships. Indeed, Camille noted that her mentor’s interest in her inspired her trust:

Camille (Protégé): Ever since I first came, he’s always asked me how I’m doing, not just business, not just how’s your research going? Are you going to meet this deadline? Just how are classes going? How is this going? How are you doing? Are you going to get to go home soon? Are you homesick? Like how is your apartment? Are you making friends? Just everything . . . so I sort of began to trust him [italics added] in that summer program and then it sort of carried over until now and I think it really is that he is asking about other things other than just school and research and because it makes me feel like a person and that he cares about me as a person, not just as a researcher or as another student (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

This mentor’s practice of “asking about other things other than just school and research” had the profound result of demonstrating caring, thus establishing his protégé’s trust.

Intimate self-disclosure often signifies trust in a confidante (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Trubowicz, 2004); likewise the protégés’ sharing of personal information not only indicated trust in their mentors but also provided a means for mentors to respond to their confidences in a respectful and accepting manner that in turn strengthened trust in the relationships:
Terrel (Mentor): When people open up, that means they trust you and you can’t say, “No, no, no, don’t tell me that,” and “I don’t want to hear that -- that ain’t the mentor’s job,” . . . it’s going to be a long time before they open up to somebody else and it may damage the ongoing relationship. . . .

Anne Chan: So on that issue of trust, how do you develop trust with your mentees?

Terrel Davis: You develop trust by accomplishing little steps and trust comes through experience with a person. I mean, you can’t sit down and say, “Trust me,” You know? It comes through. People will test you. They will give you a little and then they’ll give you a little more and they’ll give you a little more and like Shanti (Protégé) said the other day, . . . “Well, you treat me with unconditional, positive regard.” Because I know personal stuff. I don’t want to know it but I know it and she knows that I know it . . . and she said, “Well, you never dissed me or anything or looked down on me because of this and that” . . .

Anne Chan: I just want to clarify, at the beginning when you said you go a little bit at a time. What exactly do you do so you keep the relationship at a trusting level?

Terrel Davis: Well, people are going to tell you things. There’s no way you’re going to get in a close human relationship and not find out things about their family. Some are positive, some are negative. Things about their current relationship. Some positive, some negative. Something about the triumphs and something about things that didn’t go right. Now if, for any reason, once a negative comes up on the table and you, in some way, devaluate the person
because of that, because their family life wasn’t good or their marriage is not working well or whatever . . . if they sense that you’re making flippant remarks about it or this and that, then they’ll back way off of that (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

As Terrel notes, it is impossible to establish a close, meaningful relationship without self-disclosure. Like many of the mentors in this study, he believed that understanding the protégé at a personal level is part of his work as a mentor. He also recognized that protégé self-disclosure is a “test” of the mentor’s trustworthiness. In short, the mentor’s accepting response to protégé self-disclosure is critical in maintaining trust within the relationship – the mentor needs to treat this information respectfully, seriously, and nonjudgmentally, thereby solidifying trust in the relationship.

*Maintaining Good Communication Practices*

Initiating and maintaining regular contact has been identified as an important mentor practice (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Boyle & Boice, 1998b; Connell, 1985; McMinn & Voytenko, 2004; Morrison-Beedy et al., 2001). The dyads in this study communicated in three main ways: e-mail, face-to-face meetings, and phone calls.

E-mail was ubiquitous as a communication mode – an indication of the technology readily available at this time. One advantage to using e-mail was that it enabled the dyads to maintain contact very easily, even when they were geographically apart. An additional hidden advantage to e-mail is evident in its democratizing quality: e-mentoring helps to attenuate power differences in the relationship (Goldman, Chaiklin, & McDermott, 1994; Kasprisin, Single, Single, & Muller, 2003). In this study, the dyads
used e-mails very frequently, but e-mails were clearly not a substitute for actual face-to-face meetings. Said Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): “The e-mails are great in terms of I can look at the data analyses or I can look at drafts, but . . . for the conceptual part . . . it’s just really important to have face to face meetings” (personal interview, March 25, 2005).

Phone calls served to supplement the other communication modes – oftentimes, mentors talked on the phone with their protégés when face-to-face meetings were not possible:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): There was one student who needed to talk to me and I still don’t know what she wants to talk to me about but she said, “It’s very, very important. Can I talk to you on Friday?” Well, Friday, I was booked all day so I said, “Can we talk on the phone?” So we booked a phone meeting (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Another mentor was notable for using phone calls as his main method of communication. Since his protégés were scattered across the nation, he would talk to them on the phone, sometimes as often as once a week.

It was striking that seven mentors shared personal phone numbers (such as their cell phone or home numbers) with their protégés, thus ensuring that their protégés could be in touch with them outside regular business hours. Trubotwitz (2004) notes the importance of this practice in providing comfort and assurance of the availability of the mentor.

Frequency of Communication

It is impossible to make a generalization about the frequency of communication in these dyads, since frequency differed depending on the status and needs of each
individual protégé – in general, those earlier in their careers tended to have more frequent contact with their mentors than those collecting data for their dissertations or those who were on internship. In addition, protégés who worked as research assistants for their mentors had more frequent e-mail and face-to-face communications. For instance, Camille was in the first year of her doctoral program at the time I interviewed her and she had fairly frequent contact with her mentor:

Camille (Protégé): So I meet with him in person once a week . . . but I also meet with him every other week with the rest of our lab. He has lab meetings every other week and if I need to I e-mail him, I would say, usually depending on what I’m working on that week, maybe two to five times a week (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

On the other hand, Joan, a protégé at the dissertation stage, communicated about twice a week with her mentor via e-mail. As these two examples show, the frequency of communication in these dyads varied tremendously and depended, in large part, on the individual needs of the protégés. One striking exception to this general observation was the frequency of communication between Mary (Mentor) and Nandita (Protégé). Even though Nandita had graduated six years prior to my interview with her, it was noteworthy that she still maintained close and frequent contact with Mary:

Nandita (Protégé): Every Monday morning, we touch base. We usually talk on the weekends but not always, depending on if I have a crazy schedule on the weekend or she does, but, definitely every Monday morning to start our week we talk . . .

And I would say at least once or twice before I see her again which is on Thursday, and then on Friday, usually, or Saturday, I’ll talk to her so I would say
probably . . . three times a week on phone. Once a week in person and probably
depending on the week, depending on what's going on, the average of two times
by e-mail (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Responsiveness

A key finding in the pilot study was the importance of mentor responsiveness.
Responsiveness is an aspect of "behavioral consistency," i.e. the predictability and
reliability of an individual's actions (Whitener et al., 1998). Whitener et al. assert that
behavioral consistency undergirds trust in a relationship. Certainly, in this study,
regardless of the mode or frequency of communication, what stands out as critical in this
mentor practice was the responsiveness and reliability of the mentors in their
communications. Another term used by some of the protégés was having "good follow
through." It appears that the importance of this mentor practice cannot be overstated – all
the protégés were emphatic about the importance of responsiveness in their relationships
(Boyle & Boice, 1998b). Indeed, when I asked one protégé what contributed to the
success of her mentoring relationship, she replied: "We're both completely neurotic about
e-mail. We're both really good about checking in and responding to e-mails" (Joan,
personal interview, May 21, 2005).

It seems banal to state that having good communication is important in personal
relationships. At the same time, horror stories of unreliable advisors indicate that
responsiveness cannot be overrated:

Anne Chan: And how important is that to you that she's very responsive?

Wei (Protégé): I think it's very important. It's nice to know that if I send her an e-
mail that I can expect to hear back pretty soon. . . . having other classmates have
not so great experiences with their mentors and whether it be not getting back to
them in a timely manner or whatever, I really appreciate that Akiko [her mentor]
is so responsive to e-mails or if I want to meet, she’s definitely very, very
available to do that.
Anne Chan: And what have you heard about other people’s mentors that have
made you appreciate Akiko more?
Wei: Things like mentors or advisors missing lab meetings because they have
massages to go to or not reviewing their masters that they’re trying to turn in
because they want to go away for the weekend with their boyfriend, things like
that, pretty bad. So hearing about those things has definitely made me appreciate
Akiko all the more (personal interview, December 22, 2005).
For the purposes of this study, I define responsiveness as being prompt in
responding to e-mails and queries from protégés. However, it is important to note that the
meaning of “promptness” is subjective and is contingent in part on the mode of
communication, the nature of the communication, and the expectations of both parties.
For instance, 24 hours might be regarded as “prompt” for returning a phone call, but not
for an urgent e-mail. On the other hand, a protégé requesting feedback from a mentor via
e-mail might deem two or more days to be an acceptable turnaround time.

In this study, the protégés universally described their mentors as being very
responsive. To gauge how responsive the mentors were, I noted their response times to e-
mails initiated by their protégés. Of the 298 e-mails forwarded to me by the protégés, 72
e-mails from seven protégés could be analyzed. The other e-mails could not be included
in this analysis because they lacked a time stamp or were initiated by the mentors.
My analysis of 72 e-mails initiated by the protégés showed that their mentors responded to these e-mails in a mean of 10.5 hours. It seemed reasonable that there would be a lag in response time when e-mails were sent during weekends and evenings – hence, I performed a second analysis that excluded e-mails initiated outside regular business hours as well as e-mails that necessitated a longer response time (for instance, requests for lengthy feedback). This analysis of 50 e-mails showed that the mentors responded in an average of 2.7 hours when protégés e-mailed during business hours with queries that could be answered easily. Evidently, the mentors expended a great deal of personal time and effort to be responsive to their protégés, as the following quote from Dr. Miller (Mentor) shows:

Students tell me that...if they e-mail me at home, I usually e-mail them back in five minutes . . . I work some of every single day so if they need me, I'm there. I don't leave them hanging for weeks at a time and if they need to meet with me, I pretty much make an appointment with them and, usually, unless I'm in a crunch period, try to make it within the next couple of days. I do a lot of going out of my way and changing my schedule which, actually, I get feedback from my colleagues that I shouldn't be doing (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

It is noteworthy that Dr. Miller, an untenured professor at the time of the interview, placed a high priority on being responsive to her students (“I do a lot of going out of my way”), even though this meant going against the advice of her colleagues and sacrificing her own time and needs (“I get feedback from my colleagues that I shouldn’t be doing”).

Understandably, the mentors were not always able to respond promptly. When they were unable to respond right away, I noted several instances when mentors
apologized for not being prompt. Two mentors also explained to their protégés that they
would not be as responsive because of personal crises. These gestures on the part of the
mentors were significant because they demonstrated a clear commitment to maintaining
excellent communication with their protégés.

**Impact of Mentor Responsiveness on Protégés**

Protégés described two ways in which mentor responsiveness impacted them:
first, protégés indicated that their mentors’ responsiveness demonstrated caring and made
them feel important, and second, protégés reported that mentor responsiveness
contributed to creating trust in their relationships.

*Demonstrating caring.*

When asked how their mentors’ responsiveness impacted them, five protégés
spoke about feeling cared for:

Anne Chan: And how important is it to you that he is so responsive, especially
through e-mail?

Camille (Protégé): I think it’s really important because I have lots of questions a
lot of the time and I don’t always have time to meet with him and there aren’t
really that many times where we both have an hour free and so sometimes it’s just
easier to e-mail something, especially when it’s something that could be answered
in an e-mail. I think if I didn’t have that, I would get really frustrated because I
like a lot of feedback and I like bouncing ideas off of people so I think if I was
constantly waiting for a response, I would just be irritated and just feel very sort
of insignificant or like he didn’t care or something, even if it was because he was busy (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Camille’s words show that her mentor’s responsiveness signals to her that he cares about her and that she is important to him (“feel very sort of insignificant or like he didn’t care”). Ming, another protégé, had similar feelings about her mentor’s responsiveness:

Anne Chan: How does it make you feel that she responds right away?
Ming (Protégé): I feel very good about that. I definitely know that my e-mail is one of priority compared to students who have less contact with her. That definitely makes a difference (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Both Camille’s and Ming’s words indicate how vital mentor responsiveness is to the quality of these mentoring relationships. This one simple act of being prompt in communication is critical to making the protégés feel worthy, cared for, and respected.

Creating trust.

For some protégés, mentor responsiveness was also instrumental in creating trust in their relationships. When asked how they learned to trust their mentors, three protégés reported that having good follow through was key in the development of trust:

Nandita (Protégé): You have to really trust somebody to be able to have them help, to have them guide you. And I don’t think I trust anybody as much as I trust her . . . I can’t trust anybody else to read a feedback and give it back to me in a relatively timely manner, to be honest about feedback, to be thoughtful about their feedback (personal interview, December 17, 2005).
In this quote, Nandita strikingly connects her trust in her mentor with her mentor’s ability to give her quality feedback in a timely fashion. The importance of mentor responsiveness in the establishment of trust is likewise noted in another protégé’s words:

Anne Chan: How much do you trust her?
Solomon (Protégé): I’d say pretty close to 100%.
Anne Chan: Okay. How did she create that trust in you?
Solomon: I think by following through, like doing what she said she would do... If I set up a meeting with her, I know she’ll show up. If I send her an e-mail, I know she’ll respond. If she says that she’ll do something for me, she’ll do it. So I think it’s really by following through. So I just know I can count on her when she gives her word (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Interestingly, Solomon noted that it is *de rigueur* in his department, and even in the field of psychology, to be less than responsive: “It’s socially acceptable in our field, at least in our program, for people to miss a meeting every once in a while or be late or that sort of thing” (personal interview, May 21, 2005). For Solomon, his mentor was exceptional because she had never missed a meeting with him. He was warm in his appreciation for her responsiveness, even going so far as to say that “she operates with a very high level of integrity” (personal interview, May 21, 2005) and that her professionalism had influenced him a great deal. Clearly, for Solomon, his mentor’s high level of integrity in her dealings with him not only inspired his trust, but also instilled in him an enduring image of what it means to act in a professional manner.

*Concluding Thoughts about Mentor Responsiveness*
Responsiveness as a mentor practice has not been extensively covered in the mentoring literature— it strikes me that this is a practice that requires considerable time, effort, and even sacrifice on the part of the mentor, yet is easily overlooked. Boyle and Boice's (1998b) study is one of the few studies that I could locate that found quick response times to be a characteristic of exemplary mentors. Indeed, a few of the protégés in this study appeared somewhat oblivious to their mentors' efforts in being responsive:

Anne Chan: How important is it to you that he is responsive? . . .

(Protégé's name withheld): To the e-mails? I guess it's important. It's something that I don't really think about, I suppose. . . . Now that I think about it, I think that that's actually really great because I know other graduate students who don't receive such quick responses. . . . I think it's good that you asked that and it's something that I probably take for granted (personal interview, June 17, 2005).

However, when queried about the value of mentor responsiveness, all the protégés (even the ones who had hitherto not paid much attention to the subject prior to the interview) unanimously agreed on its importance. The protégés' reactions to their mentors' responsiveness show clearly that being prompt and having good follow through is a key mentor practice, even though it is easily overlooked. As Solomon (Protégé) put it:

I just see her really staying on top of her work and really getting it done and being on top of her e-mail is another example that we talked about . . . it all sounds like basic, boring things but in the context of just watching her manage all the things that she's managing and . . . when you break it down to the sort of details of what she does, it's sometimes pretty boring. You know, writing an e-mail, finishing a
paper, assigning work, delegating work to someone else but, I think, it’s really been impressive (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

In this quote, Solomon captures perfectly the paradoxical quality of mentor responsiveness as being both “pretty boring” yet “impressive.” Echoing his words, the findings from this study strongly suggest that maintaining good, responsive communication is a critical mentor practice, even if it may seem mundane and “boring” on the surface.

**Self-Disclosure**

Psychoanalytic theory has traditionally prescribed that the therapist maintains a blank slate with patients, meaning that therapists divulge little or no information about themselves (Goldfried, Burckell, & Eubanks-Carter, 2003; Ioannidis, 2004; Psychopathology Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 2001). Although most psychotherapists recognize the impossibility of being completely neutral (Goldfried et al., 2003), part of the rationale behind the concept of being a blank slate is to enable patients to project their thoughts and feelings onto the “neutrality” of the therapist. Since the mentors in this study were clinical/counseling psychology instructors who would be well versed in the concept of the blank slate, I had expected that they would maintain a tabula rasa approach to their mentoring and be reserved about sharing personal information. Much to my surprise, all but two of the mentors in this study were very open with regards to talking about their personal lives with their protégés. In fact, two protégés clearly distinguished between a therapeutic relationship from a mentoring one by citing self-disclosure as a key difference between these two types of relationships:
Anne Chan: And how important is it for you that she shares personal information about herself rather than kind of keeping strict therapy boundaries?

Latisha (Protégé): That is very important.

Anne Chan: Okay. Tell me why.

Latisha: Well, because then otherwise, it would be like going to a therapist which is fine but that's not the same thing as a mentor (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

Self-disclosure can be defined as a verbalization that reveals personal information (Psychopathology Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 2001). The types of personal information disclosed by the mentors ranged from stories about family (typically about spouse, parents, and children), illnesses and deaths (usually of a family member), and stories about their personal experiences in graduate school. All of the mentors seemed clearly intentional about what they chose to disclose. For instance, one mentor talked about experiences with discrimination when it was helpful to his protégés of color:

Anne Chan: It sounds like you don’t try to keep a rigid policy of not divulging information.

Bob (Mentor): No, no. And I think that part of that may be being Asian American too. I know that sometimes it’s useful and not just with my Asian American students but with all of my students of color in particular. Sometimes it’s just useful for them to know that I’ve had some personal experiences that are similar to their own and that I can kind of understand what discrimination means or what it means to be part of a community where your family is important, or your
relatives are important and the community is important and you have some kind
of context and why it might be difficult to move from San Francisco to _____
[city of University deleted] (laughs). You just don’t have an ethnic context that’s
there so I share those things as I see they might be useful or helpful (personal
interview, April 21, 2005).

Even the two mentors who were the most guarded about their privacy were found to
disclose select personal experiences. One protégé reported that his mentor was guarded
about her privacy, but that “she’s capable of sharing things that are meaningful but she
definitely doesn’t do any sort of gossiping” (Solomon, personal interview, May 21,
2005).

Certainly, inappropriate self-disclosure could result in boundary violations and
interfere with healthy functioning of the relationship (Psychopathology Committee of the
Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 2001). It is important to note that the mentors
in this study did not indiscriminately disclose personal information and did not burden
their students with unnecessary information. To varying degrees, the mentors maintained
personal boundaries and limits in terms of how much they chose to disclose. Two
mentors were noted for being particularly “boundaried,” as described by their protégés.
Another protégé reported that her mentor maintained appropriate boundaries, yet at the
same time exuded an engaging openness:

Ming (Protégé): She actually is fairly open about her relationship with her
husband and family kind of stuff. But she also has a boundary. I wouldn’t
necessarily [say] that professor is my good friend. It’s more like a very good
teacher... Actually, I would say that she’s more like my academic mom
(personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Perhaps because the mentors in this study were careful about maintaining appropriate
boundaries, their self-disclosure did not appear to be problematic for their mentoring
relationships -- none of the mentors or protégés reported difficulties as a result of sharing
personal information. Even protégés of the mentor who was the most self-disclosing
evined deep respect and even love for her. On the other hand, one of the protégés whose
mentor was more guarded about sharing personal information said that she wished to
have a more personal relationship with her mentor. When asked what this would add to
her relationship, she replied, somewhat wistfully: “I think it would just serve to make the
relationship deeper... it would serve to deepen the relationship for me and make it
perhaps more lasting, you know?” (name of protégé withheld).

The theme of sharing personal information was so prominent in this study that
over 125 passages were coded as pertaining to this theme. There has been some attention
paid to this theme in the mentoring literature (see Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999;
However, to my knowledge, this topic of mentor self-disclosure has not been extensively
researched. Self-disclosure and emotional disclosure have been studied in other fields,
with generally positive outcomes seen for social sharing in terms of health
(Panagopoulou, Maes, Rimé, & Montgomery, 2006), couple relationships (Sprecher &
Hendrick, 2004), and classroom learning (Goldstein & Benassi, 1994). Most pertinent to
this study are studies on self-disclosure between individuals who are not coequals or
peers. In particular, studies of therapist self-disclosure have shown that this gesture can
help clients feel understood, even in cross-cultural dyads (Burkard, Knox, Groen, Perez, & Hess, 2006; Constantine & Kwan, 2003). Another important feature of self-disclosure is storytelling. Swap et al. (2001) show that storytelling is an important mechanism for newcomers learning about the core features, history, values, and tacit knowledge of an organization.

My personal awareness and appreciation for this commonplace gesture of social intercourse was further illumined when I read Eric Liu's (2004) book about influential mentors. In his first chapter, he details how a famous Hollywood acting coach, Ivana Chubbuck, worked with her student, actress Eva Mendes:

She and Eva began to know each other this way. “I learned that anything Ivana asks of me,” Eva says, “she will give to me first. She personalized our relationship, and she would teach me using examples from her life and mine. The woman knows my issues.” Or as Ivana says, “I put my stuff on the table so we both would have something on each other.” The aim, in part, was to build trust (p. 16).

This short anecdote lays out the different levels of significance of sharing personal information – it creates intimacy in the relationship (“personalized our relationship”), serves to enhance teaching and learning (“teach me using examples from her life”), facilitates understanding of each other (“The woman knows my issues”), and provides a means for negotiating the hierarchy in their relationship (“I put my stuff on the table so we both would have something on each other”). Each of these levels of significance contributes to the building of trust in the relationship (“The aim, in part, was to build trust”). As Liu illustrates beautifully in this short excerpt, the easily overlooked act of
talking about one's life contributes complexly to human relating, connecting, and trusting. To my knowledge, these levels of significance have not been comprehensively examined in the mentoring literature, but extant studies do point to similar positive outcomes in non-peer relationships wherein self-disclosure is done by the person with higher power status. For instance, research in therapy and educational contexts provide partial evidence for self-revelation on the part of teachers and therapists to foster caring and connection (Constantine & Kwan, 2003; Goldfried et al., 2003), create safety and trust (Constantine & Kwan, 2003; Goldfried et al., 2003), encourage participation (Goldstein & Benassi, 1994), and enhance involvement in the relationship (Goldfried et al., 2003). These different levels of signification of self-disclosure were also noted in this present study and were found to be instrumental in building trust and connection in the mentoring relationships.

Creating Intimacy in the Relationship

The mentors' sharing of personal information solidified trust by encouraging a deeper level of conversation that in turn helped establish a genuine, intimate relationship between mentors and protégés (Goldfried et al., 2003; Psychopathology Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, 2001). Noted Mary (Mentor):

I'm a fairly open person about my own life and so a lot of my students know stories about my daughter, for instance, and the trials and tribulations of motherhood that I've gone through and things like that and I think that that opens up a level of sharing (personal interview, March 8, 2005).
One protégé concurred that it was very important that her mentor shared personal information with her. She emphasized that knowing her mentor in this way helped her feel that they had "a real relationship."

Latisha (Protégé): It feels more like a real relationship whereas a therapy relationship is a type of relationship but it's not the kind -- you can't go and have coffee. Do you know what I mean? And so with a mentoring relationship, it feels like a real relationship. We could potentially really have an argument or really care or really have a strong opinion about something (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

The use of the phrase "real relationship" indicates that this protégé feels true caring and emotional investment in her mentoring relationship. The adjective "real" was also used by another protégé, who said that she learned to trust her mentor because she was open about her own difficulties and struggles going through her doctoral program. This consolidated trust in her mentor when she realized that her mentor's encouraging words came from actual experience -- these were not perfunctory words uttered just to make her feel better.

Facilitating Understanding

The mentors' divulging of personal information further established trust in these relationships by fostering deep understanding between mentor and protégé. One protégé saw it as advantageous that she knew different dimensions of her mentor:

Anne Chan: And in what ways is it an advantage that you had this close relationship with her and that you knew personal things about her?
Tamika (Protégé): Well, it was an advantage because it helped me see her in a multidimensional context. She wasn’t just Professor T., Dr. T. She was Mary who has a mother, father, siblings, boyfriend, whatever and during the time I knew her, she got married, she had a baby . . . I became multidimensional to her too and she became multidimensional to me and I think it just helped us appreciate the complexity of our personalities and how we do work and things like that more (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

Another protégé added that her mentor’s openness facilitated understanding of her mentor’s personal situation:

Ming (Protégé): I think definitely the way Mimi [her mentor] is makes her more personable. And also it makes it easier for us just because we know her situation with her husband and two kids and all the family stuff so . . . me and also my other doctoral students, we’re more considerate and supportive of her decisions about stuff (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Three mentors confirmed that their self-disclosure was important in painting an accurate picture of themselves, flaws and all:

Anne Chan: I’m curious, how much personal information do you share with your mentees?

Terrel (Mentor): Well, when you first said that, my life is an open book. I’m willing to share 96% of my life and I’ll share the other 4% if I ever decide to let somebody write a book about my life. So I’m going to share that I’ve been through relationships that didn’t work. I have children. I’ve been mad, angry, drink, whatever.
Anne Chan: Yeah. So that’s your first reaction?

Terrel: Um hum.

Anne Chan: Do you have a secondary reaction?

Terrel: Well, my secondary reaction is maybe my life is not the open book I think it is (laughs). I would say I used to be forthcoming but what I want the person to understand in the very beginning is I’m not perfect and sometimes younger people have a way of setting up the older person to perfection and then the older person can’t meet that standard, then the younger person is disappointed, “I thought you was perfect!!” So I tell them in the beginning, “I ain’t perfect! Just don’t come around me with that because then you’re setting me up for failure!! But I do have some strengths. Now if we could relate around those, we can flow” (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Another female mentor concurred with Terrel when she said she shares personal information so as to “humanize” herself to her protégés:

Akiko (Mentor): It humanizes me to the students . . . I think to try to paint myself (laughs) as a person with a limited expertise and knowledge so they kind of know what I’m capable and I feel like if they know what my family circumstances are, they’ll know that I can’t be available around the clock or sometimes I have to leave at five because I have to pick up my kids or what not and so some of it, I think is just to kind of show them what the parameters of my everyday life are about (personal interview, May 13, 2005).
These efforts to show their humanness made an impression on one protégé who said, “It reminds you that the professors are people too (laughs). They’re people not just professors” (Camille, personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Even the two mentors who were the most guarded about their privacy did a small amount of self-disclosure. This had the effect of helping the protégés understand who they were, both personally and professionally:

Joan (Protégé): She shares very little information about herself and . . . sometimes I’m curious (laughs) to know more . . . On the other hand, she’s a feminist so she believes in a certain amount of self disclosure, and she went through a difficult time the past couple of years . . . and so she shared that with me and it was somewhat in the sense of, you need to know this because you need to know why I’m not going to be very responsive to you but also you need to know this because you’re a person who cares about me and my life and you need to know that I’m going through this. So she shared a little bit about that. . . . I think when she self-discloses it’s either because it’s something really big or it’s something that kind of informs who she is professionally (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

**Negotiating Hierarchy in the Relationship**

It is important to note that many of these relationships, although deeply caring and nurturing in nature, were also relationships situated within a clear power structure -- the mentors wielded significant authority and influence over their protégés’ careers in graduate school and beyond (Benishek et al., 2004; Fassinger, 1997). The mentors and protégés in this study were clearly cognizant of the power differential, yet were able to successfully negotiate this differential in establishing solid relationships with each other.
One of the ways many of the mentors de-emphasized the power differential was through self-disclosure (Humble, Solomon, Allen, Blaisure, & Johnson, 2006). All but two of the mentors shared relevant personal information with their protégés to downplay the power structure and to establish a sense of openness and trust in their relationships. As Mimi (Mentor) put it:

Being just open and honest with them . . . Like one thing I know about me which is different from professors who I think have more difficulty is I don’t have a huge ego or anything like that, I don’t really care about power or hierarchy kind of stuff and I think some people do and I think that can get in the way of trusting. I never think about that stuff really (laughs) so I’m a little bit informal about it (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Her protégé concurred that her mentors’ actions bridged the gap between them and helped establish closeness:

Ai Ling (Protégé): I felt distant from a lot of professors . . . but with my mentors, I really feel close to them. I feel they’re someone I can turn to and that they stand by me and look out for me when I’m in trouble, when I encounter difficulties or challenges (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

The complex interplay between the mentors’ sharing of personal information, the de-emphasis of social distance, and the development of trust is beautifully summed up in the following quote, where the protégé describes the duality in his relationship with his mentor ("authority figure" and "friend"), and shows how the duality is negotiated in his relationship through the sharing of personal information:
Jung (Protégé): In terms of mentorship, mentoring there's a certain trust. There is a trust that we have. I think we’ve actually called it the vault.

Anne Chan: The vault?

Jung: Yeah. “There’s a lot of stuff that we have in the vault, isn’t there?” we would say because sometimes we would have to present at a conference together and we talk. . . . There was a professional relationship there and a trust and I think it just helped to have that personal relationship there in the midst of what can be a very hostile academic environment. In a way, she was a friend but at the same time she was someone who was someone I respect very much and respected very much and I think that’s part of my Asian cultural background viewing her as an authority figure but in many ways, being Korean American and having the American side of me also seeing her as a friend and that’s kind of like a complex relationship (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

*Enhancing Teaching and Learning*

The above sections have focused on self-disclosure and its impact on the relationship between mentor and protégé. However, not only was mentor self-disclosure found to have interpersonal benefits, it was also found to enhance the teaching, learning, and overall professional development of the protégés (Swap et al., 2001; Trubowitz, 2004). Indeed, using a Vygotskian perspective, Valadez (1998) has argued that learning of higher order skills occurs most optimally through social interaction, rather than through conventional modes of teaching. One way in which mentor self-disclosure facilitated learning was that it provided a means for informal, friendly conversations that led to, and enhanced discussions on research. One mentor remarked that she had in-depth
discussions about interracial dating with her students and this resulted in the students
pursuing an actual research project on interracial dating. Another mentor shared (and
joked about) her personal experiences with regard to religion and her self-disclosure
helped her protégé operationalize their study:

Maria (Protégé): Those types of things that she talks about and although it’s a
funny joke . . . but then we started focusing a lot on like, “Well, what does this
mean for our study? And are we going to have people only who are Catholics or
are we going to have people who are spiritual and people from other religions?
Like how is that going to affect our study?” . . . So those types of things, it’s
what I mean by personal. It ties it into our research (personal interview, June 12,
2005).

Two protégés also reported that their mentor’s self-disclosure was inspirational
and gave them the confidence to develop different professional skills. One said he was
doubtful about his teaching skills but felt encouraged when his mentor shared that she
stumbled at the beginning:

Jung (Protégé): Even when I said, “I suck at teaching,” then she would share with
me how she sucked at the beginning and made me feel like, “Oh, you can’t suck.
You’re great when you teach.” And to hear her talk about a time when she wasn’t
so good made me feel, “Wow, maybe I can also develop in that same way” . . .
when she shared some of her experiences and how she really felt nervous at times
and just was really vulnerable and transparent, it empowered me. Maybe I can do
it too (personal interview, June 20, 2005).
Jung had not even considered teaching as a career and balked when his mentor first suggested he teach a course. However, as the above quote shows, his mentor's openness regarding her own rocky start to teaching encouraged and empowered him to try teaching, despite his initial nervousness and self-doubt.

**Building Trust**

The reports from the protégés in this study indicated that their mentors' sharing of personal stories had multiple positive effects on their mentoring relationships, namely, creating intimacy, promoting deep understanding, supporting teaching, and reducing social distance. The capstone of these positive effects was that trust was established, maintained, and secured in these relationships. As one protégé put it, it was "the relationship, the personal relationship" that enabled him to trust his mentor:

Anne Chan: And tell me about the things that she did that earned your respect and your trust.

Jung (Protégé): A couple of things. First, she’s first with the relationship, the personal relationship that the openness and the trust that was there. I felt like I could trust her and that’s because she’s an excellent clinician and I think she brought that into the mentoring relationship. So there was a sense that I felt connected with her and that I could trust her (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Similar statements from other protégés indicate that it is not possible to overemphasize the development of trust in these relationships.
All but two of the mentors in this present study described humor as an important component of their relationships; one described it as "critical" in her relationships (Mary, personal interview, March 8, 2005). The protégés confirmed that they appreciated being able to laugh with their mentors and two even cited humor as part of the reason for their successful mentoring relationships. One protégé, Camille, even went so far as to say, “I can’t really think of a person I’ve considered a mentor who I haven’t been able to laugh with” (personal interview, May 23, 2005). Conversely, one protégé (identity withheld) whose mentoring relationship had a more serious tone said that having more humor would be one of the few things she would change about her mentoring relationship.

Humor in mentoring has not been extensively studied, but one quantitative study found that the mentors’ playful communication helped establish a positive relationship between mentor and protégé (Young & Cates, 2005).

The type of humor used in the dyads seemed to be consistent across the board – based on protégé reports and my observations from the taped mentoring sessions, it seems that the humor in these relationships was lighthearted, gentle, and amiable. Some mentors said their protégés teased them in a good natured way:

Mary (Mentor): My office is a mess and it’s gotten progressively worse since I’ve become a mother (laughs) and so we always make jokes about my office and the absentminded professor because I’m pretty absentminded lately and not always on top of things all of the time and so sometimes they joke about having to stay on top of me to get things done (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

The dyads also joked about life situations that they found funny:
Tamika (Protégé): We talk about our weight and stuff like that and we talked a lot about popular issues of the day and things that we might want to write about that were funny and topical. Mary [her mentor] is not a gossipy person or anything like that. She doesn’t talk about other people in a negative way . . . the things that we laugh about are usually just genuinely life things, funny things that happen to us and humor around those particular issues . . . she tells me about her daughter now and the funny things that her daughter does. Things like that. Or if I had a date or something that I thought was really funny, I would tell her. We would laugh about that (personal interview May 25, 2005).

Echoing Tamika, two mentors and two protégés were careful to emphasize that their jokes were not in any way negative, unkind, demeaning, or done at the expense of others:

Bob (Mentor): We joke around and I try to be careful that it’s not in a sarcastic way that’s going to demean anybody, any individual, either present or not present . . . we have a good time but we do that not at anyone else’s expense (personal interview April 21, 2005)

As with most of the analytic categories in this study, there was a continuum in the degree to which humor was used in these relationships. On one end of the spectrum were relationships with lots of humor -- one mentor described himself as always “cracking jokes” (Terrel, personal interview, April 28, 2005) and another said she does “a lot of pranks” (Mimi, personal interview, May 12, 2005). On the opposite side of the continuum were two relationships that seemed more serious than the others, with one mentor acknowledging that she does not have “a great sense of humor” (mentor identity withheld).
Humor has been found to contribute positively to relationship-building (Goldin et al., 2006; Swartz, 1996). One particularly striking finding was uncovered in a study of mentors of Dutch pupils in their first year of secondary school: humor was found to be the best predictor of the pupils' acceptance of mentors, with the Humour Scale explaining 31 percent of the variance on acceptance levels (de Bruyn, 2004).

My interviews with the mentors and protégés in this study uncovered three major ways in which humor contributed to these relationships: reducing stress (Hampes, 1999), building trust, connection and rapport in the relationship (Hampes, 1999, 2001; Swartz, 1996), and facilitating access to the mentors.

*Managing Stress*

The stress of graduate school comes from a myriad of sources, such as the intense competitiveness of the environment (Sumprer & Walfish, 2001):

Mimi (Mentor): This place is really competitive and cutthroat at times. It is. There’s some really great things about it but it’s super competitive. Students are competitive with each other. Faculty are competitive. The college as a whole ... it’s a pretty stressful place (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Studies have been conducted showing that humor can help manage and reduce stress levels (Giacobbi Jr. et al., 2004; Martin & Dobbin, 1988; Martin & Lefcourt, 1983) and that exposure to comedy results in significant increases in pain tolerance and thresholds (Martin, 2001). Though the humorous exchanges between the dyads in this study probably do not qualify as "comedy," many of the protégés and mentors stated that the humor in their mentoring relationships helped to alleviate the stress of graduate school:
Anne Chan: And how important do you think it is that you have humor in your relationship?

Manjeet (Protégé): I think it's very important because what we do is so stressful and humor is a way to relieve that and laughing is so beneficial not only psychologically but physiologically for your body too, so I think it's really important (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Several of the ethnic minority protégés spoke about having to cope with the stressors of racially-based discrimination, on top of the usual graduate school stressors. For instance, one protégé cited three separate incidents in which she felt targeted because of her race [I have withheld details of these incidents to protect her identity]. Reflecting on the impact of these incidents, she reported being “devastated” and “really hurt.” The protégés noted they felt completely supported by their mentors when such incidents occurred. At the same time, they also said their mentors’ use of appropriate humor helped them feel supported as well as gain a sense of perspective during these stressful moments. One protégé specifically mentioned that her mentor’s humor helped her get through initial struggles with discrimination at her school:

Manjeet (Protégé): He just makes light of everything and he’s really helped with that. Even like when were talking in the beginning about struggles I was having in graduate school, he really knew how to make light of those White professors and those White folks (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Manjeet’s mentor, Terrel, confirmed in a follow-up interview that he uses “gallows” humor with his protégés, and that he believes one has to “laugh and cry when bad things happen” (personal interview, March 8, 2007). Another protégé noted that her mentor’s
counsel and humor was critical in helping her deal with the stressors of academic life, particularly when issues of race and racism were at the fore: “The humor . . . it serves to put things in perspective sometimes, especially when I get all worked up and I can get worked up well. Her sense of humor will really help me put things in perspective” (Nandita, personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Overall, through the use of humor, the mentors helped alleviate the stress of graduate school (Hampes, 1999), thus easing the protégés’ adjustment and socialization into the academy (Young & Cates, 2005). By sharing jokes with their protégés, they helped them cope with the stressors of being in academia as well as created a work environment that was not only productive, but friendly and fun as well:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): In terms of the social aspect, my research team is always giggling. Somebody is always making jokes about something. . . . it makes me feel like there’s a nice atmosphere in the team and not that we don’t ever do work but the people feel comfortable just joking around and so I think it’s a friendly environment (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

**Establishing Trust, Connection, and Rapport**

Studies have shown a correlation between humor and trust (Bordansky, 2004; Hampes, 1999; Swartz, 1996) in intimate relationships. It was clear from most of the protégés and their mentors that humor was integral in contributing to the connection, rapport, and trust in these relationships (Hardcastle, 2001). As one mentor noted: "it just softens the relationship so that it's not all going very serious . . . I think it provides more basis for rapport" (Akiko, personal interview, May 13, 2005). The protégés confirmed that humor helped consolidate the emotional connection in their mentoring relationships.
Said Solomon (Protégé): "I think it helps to lighten the mood and I think it helps, allows us to connect at a more personal level making jokes and stuff" (personal interview, May 21, 2005). This “lightening” of mood set the tone for a friendly, non-threatening environment that encouraged intimacy. As Ai Ling (Protégé) described it:

She would tease us and then she’s very humorous. I think that really helps establish a very friendly and very conducive atmosphere in our research team.

People feel much more comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings and I think that’s very helpful. I really like that (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Three protégés explicitly stated that humor was one of the ways in which they grew to trust their mentors.

Jung (Protégé): It [Humor] makes the relationship less stuffy and I think it enhances the trust because there’s a sense of transparency that you have to have when you let go and when you joke around about something, when you make a comment or make an observation that’s funny. There’s a risk there. You take that risk and if you’re both laughing and both think it’s okay, then it’s successful (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Facilitating Access to the Mentors

Research on leadership and use of humor has found that appropriate humor in the workplace can enhance employee performance by encouraging communication, fostering appreciation for the workplace, reducing intimidation, and enhancing socialization (Clouse & Spurgeon, 1995; Young & Cates, 2005). This concept of creating access and accessibility through humor was observed in this study. Although a power differential was certainly inherent in these relationships, the mentors, for the most part, did not
heavy-handedly emphasize or underscore the power disparity. Humor was a key component in helping “make the relationship a little bit more egalitarian” (Dr. Lombardi (Mentor), personal interview, March 25, 2005). By being light-hearted and not enforcing a serious, business-like tone to their relationships, most of the mentors fostered a connection with their protégés:

Maria (Protégé): It’s like I know the power differential but it’s not noticeable in our conversations. . . . for her to be joking is just very nice because it just shows that she’s very human. I guess what I’m trying to say that there are some professors who you can tell that there is a power differential where they make it known like I’m the professor, you’re the student, that’s it. But Dr. Miller (Mentor) is not like that. She tries to very much go down to our level and make us feel very comfortable and she makes these types of jokes to ease off some of the pressure and stress that we go through as students and I think that that’s very nice because it shows that she’s connecting to us not as just students but as people (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Maria’s words show Dr. Miller’s authority and power position is still intact (“I know the power differential”) but her use of humor helps make her more accessible to her protégés (“go down to our level and make us feel very comfortable”). Maria clearly appreciates being able to joke with Dr. Miller and to feel a shared human bond with her (“for her to be joking is just very nice because it just shows that she’s very human”). Other mentors also concurred that humor was important because it enabled their protégés to perceive them as human beings, with understandable limitations. Noted Bob (Mentor): They see that I have a sense of humor and that I’m a human being and I make mistakes sometimes
and so I think that makes me more accessible to them” (personal interview, April 21, 2005). Bob’s protégé, Camille, confirmed that his use of humor helped to increase her comfort level in approaching him: “He laughs a lot at his own jokes which makes me laugh (laughs) so I think that really helps in making me feel more comfortable around him. . . . It makes me feel better because he’s not very intimidating or not all business” (personal interview, May 23, 2005). Both Camille and Maria highlight the implications of having humor in a mentoring relationship – by establishing a friendly tone rather than one that is “all business,” their mentors established interpersonal comfort and became more accessible and approachable (“making me feel more comfortable”).

The following section on the institutional dimension of mentoring addresses the role of mentors in providing access to the inside story. Not only was humor found to be relevant as a relational practice, it was also found to aid in protégé socialization as well. Humor served to give protégés access to the inside story by giving them lighthearted, but insightful glimpses into the life of an academic. For instance, the mentoring session between Dr. Johnson (Mentor) and Latisha (Protégé) interspersed serious conversation with playful humor in ways that were meaningful and instructional. Dr. Johnson regaled Latisha with horror stories of dealing with challenging clients. This humorous exchange took place within the context of a serious conversation about the difficulties of being a newly hired assistant professor and maintaining a private practice. By sharing her personal story in a light-hearted way, Dr. Johnson gave Latisha access to an important facet of her life as an academic. Dr. Johnson also gave Latisha inside information and advice regarding the work load of a new academic: “You cannot be a newly minted
practicing psychologist and have a practice when you’re trying to be, running on tenure, new faculty” (Dr. Johnson and Latisha mentoring session, June 23, 2005).

The topic of humor in mentoring has not been extensively covered in the literature. Yet, the findings from this study point to the relevance and significance of humor in many of these mentoring relationships. Both mentors and protégés reported that humor had many positive benefits for their relationships, including enhancing closeness, establishing rapport, reducing stress, creating fun, making the relationship more egalitarian, and increasing the accessibility of the mentor.

Acknowledging limitations and mistakes

Mentoring is most often depicted in rosy terms, with hardly any attention paid to the negative aspects to mentoring (Eby et al., 2000). However, Eby et al. remind us that mentoring relationships are interpersonal relationships subject to the same kinds of issues, problems, limitations, and disappointments as other normal or healthy human relationships (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2000). Consistent with Eby et al.’s ideas, the participants in the present study did not idealize their relationships, even though the protégés clearly held their mentors in high regard. In addition, even though I framed this research as a study of “outstanding” mentors, many of the mentors shied away from this descriptor and instead took pains to emphasize that they were strictly human. Indeed one of the mentors emphasized at the beginning of his mentoring relationships that he is not perfect:

Terrel (Mentor): What I want the person to understand in the very beginning is I’m not perfect and sometimes younger people have a way of setting up the older person to perfection and then the older person can’t meet that standard, then the
younger person is disappointed. "I thought you was perfect!" So I tell them in the beginning, "I ain't perfect! Just don't come around me with that because then you're setting me up for failure!" (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Likewise, some of the protégés stated that they did not expect perfection from their mentors. As Nandita (Protege) said, “Yeah, she has flaws. I have flaws. But I’m not expecting perfection. It would be boring” (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Another protegé, Sovann, echoed Nandita’s statements in her thoughts on how mentors should deal with their mistakes:

There have been times that I felt that Bob (Mentor) has made a mistake and I’m sure that there are times that he was a little bit disappointed in me or he felt like I could have done a better job but I think the important part of having a mentoring relationship is that you are able to realize if you’ve made a mistake . . . and then you work hard at improving that or making it better. But if you’ve made a mistake, you don’t just leave your graduate student to fend for themselves. Try and fix the mistake that you made. I think a good mentor is able to recognize his faults and his weaknesses as well as his strengths and not not acknowledge those mistakes. Because if you don’t acknowledge it, then you can’t fix it and you don’t take responsibility for it. I think a really good mentoring relationship doesn’t mean that things always flow smoothly and that you are never frustrated with your advisor or your advisee but that you can work through those things and just overcome them (Sovann (Protégé), personal interview June 17, 2005)

Sovann’s thoughts provided a useful organizing framework for this analytic category of mentor limitations and mistakes. I noted that many of the mentors shared a common
strategy for dealing with their limitations and the occasional mistake made: 1) they recognized their faults and limitations ("a good mentor is able to recognize his faults and his weaknesses"), 2) acknowledged their faults or limitations to the protégés ("acknowledge those mistakes"), and 3) addressed these lapses ("fix the mistake that you made"). By doing so, the mentors confronted, rather than ignored problematic issues, and thus were able to rebound from their mistakes, and maintain strong mentoring relationships ("you can work through those things and just overcome them"). Sovann’s (and other protégés') observations of how their mentors dealt with mistakes is consistent with research findings on the importance of communication, prosocial behaviors, and proactive stances on marital maintenance and repair (Baxter & Dindia, 1990; Dainton & Stafford, 1993; Stafford & Canary, 1991). The three ways in which the mentors handled their mistakes and limitations will be discussed in the following sections.

**Recognizing Faults and Limitations**

Six of the mentors were frank about their limitations and their mistakes in the interviews. These included moments when they felt they could have been more effective as mentors ("to be very honest . . . I think there were instances where I could have done a better job of that" {Mary (Mentor), personal interview, March 8, 2005}) and when they offered disclosures about their personal failings ("I’ve been through relationships that didn’t work. I have children. I’ve been mad, angry, drink" {Terrel (Mentor), personal interview, April 28, 2005}). One protégé appreciated that her mentor knew her limitations regarding her lack of knowledge about the clinical world:

Isabella (Protegée): so I think what's good about Keisha (Mentor) is that she knows what she can do and gives me other things to follow up on that are separate from
her. So she knows she can't answer all my questions or give me the advice because I also know that she hasn't been out in the clinical world and doesn't know it all... I think she knows that about herself too (personal interview June 16, 2005)

**Acknowledging Limitations and Mistakes to Protégés**

Some of the mentors were explicit about their limitations so as not to disappoint their protégés:

Akiko (Mentor): I try to paint myself as a person with a limited expertise and knowledge... so they know what I'm capable and I feel like if they know what my family circumstances are, they'll know that I can't be available around-the-clock or sometimes I have to leave at five because I have to pick up my kids (personal interview, May 13, 2005).

Another mentor acknowledged making a mistake when he put an inexperienced protégé in charge of a big project:

Terrel (Mentor): I had set the bar too high. He said he really didn't have the skills... but he didn't know how to tell me that he didn't have the skills. And so it was me who had set the bar too high. As the mentor I'm supposed to be able to try to think through better than the less experienced person. Because if you put the bar too high, then you're asking for failure (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Most compelling was one mentor's forthrightness about her limitations as a European American mentor:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): I said [to the protégé], "You ought to connect with Dr. Fuentes [name changed] because there were things about being a Latino mental
health professional that I just won't know and in terms of learning the ropes and things that, as a woman of color, things that you’re going to experience that I have not personally experienced so I think it’s probably a good idea for you to connect with people, get involved in LPA [Latino Psychological Association] and the National Latino Psychological Association just so you have professional role models because I can’t teach you everything” (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Her protégé, Maria, said that this was both "the greatest thing she could have ever told me" and "the most honest thing I've ever heard someone say” (personal interview, June 12, 2005). Clearly, Maria deeply appreciated Dr. Miller’s awareness and acknowledgment about her limitations in this area.

Fixing Mistakes

Research on apologies has shown that this spoken gesture of contrition has the power to smooth over transgressions (Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Agarie, 1989; Scher & Darley, 1997). One of the ways in which mentors dealt with their mistakes was by apologizing. I noted several instances where mentors apologized when they thought they had let their protégés down. For example, mentors apologized to their protégés when they were delayed in responding to e-mails: “Hi Ai Ling, Sorry for the delay. I wanted to have a moment to think about your e-mail before just responding off the top of my head” (Mimi, e-mail, February 1, 2005). Another noteworthy example was when Terrel (Mentor) apologized to Manjeet (Protégé) for forgoing an annual psychology convention (APA):

I really feel bad about disappointing you regarding APA. I know the SARS scare has passed, but it just won't work out for me this summer. Every time I think
about you and APA, I feel guilty. I just got a note from the Executive Director who expects to see me there. I'm probably going to have to hide out for a few months. Now the challenge for me is to figure out a way that we can hook up somewhere before you leave on internship (e-mail from Terrel (Mentor) to Manjeet (Protégé), July 11, 2003).

In his apology, Terrel does not hold back from expressing his regret ("I really feel bad... I feel guilty"). Most importantly, he does not merely apologize, but also demonstrates that he is thinking about how to make it up to her ("the challenge for me is to figure out a way that we can hook up somewhere before you leave on internship").

Conclusions About Acknowledging Mistakes

The mentors in this study occasionally made mistakes that impacted their protégés in negative ways. What was critical in these relationships was not the mistakes themselves but how the mentors acknowledged and took responsibility for their limitations. The mentors' ability to deal with their mistakes and limitations was an important component in the smooth running of many of these relationships. As Nandita (Protégé) put it, being able to "deal with it and move on" is a necessity for maintaining a good mentoring relationship (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Giving Gifts

An unexpected finding in the pilot study was the significance of gift-giving in the mentoring relationships studied. Gift-giving was also a compelling theme in this present study - mentors were found to give their protégés a wide variety of gifts, as shown in
Table 7 (this is not an exhaustive list since it is based primarily on recollections of the protégés interviewed for this study):

Table 7

*Gifts Given by Mentors*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Mentor</th>
<th>Gifts given to Protégés</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akiko</td>
<td>scholarly journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Miller</td>
<td>syllabi and Power Point slides for teaching, meals/snacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob Sato</td>
<td>seed money for research projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Lombardi</td>
<td>office space, assistantships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Munoz</td>
<td>wedding gift, trinket, money for poster sessions, tickets for a dance at a conference, dues for professional organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Johnson</td>
<td>wedding gift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>books, meals, sharing rooms at conferences, necklace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimi</td>
<td>office chair, lumbar support pillow, books, food for meetings, assistantships, perfume</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrel</td>
<td>coffee, meals, drinks, money and plane tickets for conferences, flowers, watch, money for cable TV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is evident from Table 7, the types of gifts given by the mentors varied widely. Some mentors gave gifts that were personalized for the recipient, for instance, a lumbar support pillow, jewelry, or perfume. Other gifts were less personal in nature, such as office space, seed money, and scholarly journals – the protégés who received such gifts tended not to recognize or label them as “gifts.” Nevertheless, these gifts were similar to the other more
personalized gifts in that they were thoughtful gestures initiated by the mentors to benefit specific individuals they cared about.

**Meaning of Gift-Giving**

Gift-giving is a highly symbolic activity. As Levi-Strauss writes, “The point is that there is much more in the exchange itself than in the things exchanged” (1969, p. 59). One of the protégés in this study echoed Levi-Strauss’s assertion when she said that her mentor’s gifts were “important – not for what they were but rather for what they said about her, me, and our relationship” (Nandita, e-mail to Anne Chan). The following sections describe the significance of gift-giving as reported by the participants.

*Denoting caring.*

Providing instrumental support, such as money or aid, has been identified as a form of social support (McManus & Russell, 1997). Five of the protégés said that their mentors’ gifts denoted a deep level of caring. Wrote Solomon (Protégé):

Dr. Munoz [his mentor] always made an effort to bring back gifts to her advisees from her various travels. Her gift giving impacted our relationship in that it demonstrated her caring and generous nature. The objects she gave were much less significant than her thoughtfulness (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 26, 2006).

Concurred Ai Ling (Protégé) whose mentor (Mimi) gave her a chair and back pillow:

I would really consider her as my mentor because . . . like I would tell her that I have back pain and then she would say, “I have a chair that I’m giving away and it’s comfortable and you can take it,” or, “I have a lumbar support pillow, you can
use it.” So it’s that kind of level of caring and attending to student needs that’s way beyond academic advising (personal interview, June 13, 2005). Mimi’s gifts denote genuine caring, thus distinguishing her from a generic advisor (“it’s that kind of level of caring and attending to student needs that’s way beyond academic advising”). It is striking that Mimi’s solicitude, as demonstrated through her gifts, helps reify her role as mentor in Ai Ling’s eyes (“I would really consider her as my mentor because . . .”).

Likewise, when asked about the meaning of the gifts, Paula (Protégé) simply responded, “It meant that she cared about me as a colleague” (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 12, 2006). Indeed, the magnitude of caring and thoughtfulness is clear in the following quote from Tamika’s mentor who described her purchase of a graduation gift for Tamika:

Mary (Mentor): I don’t always give students gifts when they graduate but this one, I felt like we had been through so much together. I gave her a necklace. . . . I went to [state deleted] to get it but it had different words embossed on little silver medallions on it, like faith, hope and I can’t remember what the other thing was. But I thought it really focused in on what a special person I thought that she was (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

Understanding the protégés and their needs.

Seven protégés remarked that their mentor’s gifts demonstrated a level of understanding about them and their needs. Said Tamika (Protégé): “It also demonstrated that she knew me well enough to always get me something that really meant something to me or represented a part of me that I didn’t really see myself (e-mail to Anne Chan).”

Demarcating the Relationship
Gifts not only demonstrate caring on the part of the giver, they also denote the special relationship between giver and receiver. Sherry writes, “Those to whom we give differ from those to whom we do not give. Those from whom we receive may differ still. Gifts are tangible expressions of societal relationships” (1983, p. 158). Illustrating Sherry’s point, the gifts signaled to the protégés the nature and meaning of their relationships with their mentors (Lucas, 2001). Noted Solomon (Protégé): “It impacted my perception of her as caring, thoughtful, and generous. Additionally, it created a personal dimension to our relationship in that I felt honored beyond what is expected in professional settings (e-mail to Anne Chan).” Echoed Nandita (Protégé):

It [gift-giving] represented that it was indeed a relationship. So, she was not just a professor that I had and I wasn't just a student that she had. It was a mentorship, support, and teaching/learning experience that would last a lifetime” (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 22, 2006).

For these protégés, gifts from their mentors not only made them feel special (“I wasn't just a student”), they also served to infuse a personal tone to the relationships (“it created a personal dimension to our relationship”), as well as to emphasize the depth, quality, and distinctiveness of these relationships (“It was a mentorship, support, and teaching/learning experience that would last a lifetime”).

*Demonstrating culturally sensitivity and awareness.*

Particularly in cultures where interdependent and relational bonds are valued, gifts serve an important societal and interpersonal function of affirming and sealing ties between self and other. In fact, Green and Alden argue that gift exchange may be one of the most important methods for “group-oriented, self-concept reinforcement” (1998, p. 208).
Indeed, the gift exchange can be an important method for conveying a depth of meaning and understanding to another person without the use of words. In this study, gift-giving was also meaningful because it gave some mentors the opportunity to act in accordance with certain cultural norms. For instance, when asked about the meaning of gift-giving in her mentoring relationship, Shanti, a South Asian protégé, said, “I think it’s a way . . . in my culture is like a way to express gratitude or something like that without having to say it” (personal interview, January 10, 2006). Noted Nandita (Protégé): “It [giving gifts] was culturally appropriate because it said things that she may not normally say in our day-to-day conversations” (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 22, 2006).

For some protégés, gift-giving was a gesture that demonstrated cultural sensitivity on the part of the mentors. Ai Ling, a Chinese protégé, said that her mentor’s gift giving was appropriate because it is a “cherished notion in Chinese culture” (e-mail to Anne Chan, June 5, 2006). She also added that her mentor’s gifts demonstrated “care through action” (e-mail to Anne Chan, June 5, 2006). When asked about gift-giving, Ai Ling’s mentor concurred that it was partially in deference to the cultural values of her students, many of whom are East Asian:

Mimi (Mentor): I think there’s more of an emphasis on interdependence and on attention to their families and their family situations because a lot of my students are international students so I know that they’re away from home for the first time. I think kind of the fact that I’m always feeding them is probably somewhat cultural . . . All those things, like food, gift giving, those things are kind of Asian American traditions and expectations. I think just also the community building
and the strong emphasis on cultural awareness (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

**Conclusions about Gift-Giving**

Although not all of the mentors in this study gave personalized gifts, gift-giving when it occurred was found to be a profoundly meaningful practice in this study. Indeed, when one of the mentors was asked how to mentor ethnic minority students, his first suggestion involved gift-giving, i.e. sponsoring a student to a conference:

Terrel (Mentor): White folks back in [a university] were saying, “Well, we know mentorship is important and we know you’re a good mentor but we don’t know how to mentor these Black students . . . . I took one to lunch but she was nervous” and so they don’t have the foggiest idea of how to break through the barrier.

Anne Chan: Yeah. What do you tell them about breaking through the barrier?

Terrel: Take their time and take baby steps. I mean, anybody can say, “Look, hey, I’m no racist and I want to help you.” We’ve been hearing that all our life but take your time and take baby steps. If you’re going to a conference, get some extra money and take them with you (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

The complexity of meaning inherent in the gesture of gift-giving is apparent in Ai Ling’s (Protégé) observations about her mentor’s actions toward research participants:

Ai Ling (Protégé): She’s been such a good role model that she genuinely cares about the population, like when we do a program, she will always think about what kind of gifts we can give them and also it’s culturally sensitive too. And what kind of things that we can do for them and I think she really genuinely cares about people and not just like what can we get from them. Of course, she cares
about the data but on the other hand, she also wants to give and I think that’s such a nice balance, so, it really makes a difference in how I look at my career as well as my life -- that it’s not just about me (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Ai Ling’s words in the above quotation nicely illustrate the multi-layered significance inherent in gift-giving. Not only does gift-giving denote caring (“she genuinely cares about the population”), thoughtfulness (“what kind of things that we can do for them”), and a willingness to reciprocate (“not just like what can we get from them . . . she also wants to give”), it also demonstrates deep sensitivity to and awareness of cultural values (“it’s culturally sensitive”). These different layers of significance are applicable not only to Ai Ling’s relationship with her mentor, but to several of the other relationships as well. In all, they attest to the profundity of gift-giving in cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Hence, even though gift-giving is not as frequent a mentor practice as other practices identified in this study (for instance, communicating or giving feedback), it is nevertheless a richly and powerfully symbolic gesture that is deserving of attention.

**Behavioral Integrity**

Whitener et al. (1998) identify behavioral integrity as one factor that shapes subordinates’ views of managerial trustworthiness. They define behavioral integrity as the “consistency between what the manager says and what he or she does” (p. 516). Research has shown that integrity is an important characteristic of mentors (Hardcastle, 2001). Six protégés explicitly talked about their mentors’ behavioral integrity. One protégé succinctly said that her mentor earned her trust “by being consistent in word and deed” (Tamika, personal interview, May 25, 2005). Another protégé stated the same sentiment in a different way: “She’s just never done anything to sort of let me down.”
Strikingly, four protégés independently used the phrase “follow through” when describing their mentor’s consistency in word and deed:

Anne Chan: You talked also about trusting her. How did she create that trust for you? What did she do so that you learned to trust her?

Ai Ling (Protégé): If she make a promise or if she say something, she will follow through. For example, she promised me to give me certain funding, she will follow through. She promised me to look up something and she will fulfill her promise (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

One mentor’s behavioral consistency across different settings also made a deep impression on one protégé:

Anne Chan: And what did he do to deserve your trust like that?

Sovann (Protégé): I guess it’s just by watching him interact with people and the way that he handles his life outside of academics so I think more it’s the way that he is as a person as opposed to anything that he’s done explicitly for me. I mean, he hasn’t done anything to betray my trust and the way that he handles himself in his own personal life, makes me feel that he can be someone that can be trusted.

Anne Chan: And can you tell me a bit more specifically what you mean by the way he handles himself?

Sovann: Well, he just treats everyone with respect, every single person he treats with respect. And he’s a good father and a good husband and he’s a good friend to people and a good advisor to people and he helps others when they need him to and it’s just how he is like as a person . . . in his relationships with his colleagues and his family (personal interview June 17, 2005).
Another way in which mentors demonstrated consistency and trustworthiness was by keeping confidentiality: “I would hope that professionally, there would be a level of belief that I would have integrity and if somebody shared something with me, that I would not blab it to the world” (Dr. Miller, personal interview, April 4, 2005).

The above examples show that the mentors demonstrated behavioral consistency in their words and deeds. By demonstrating and role-modeling behavioral reliability, they earned their protégés' trust and respect, thus establishing a positive foundation for their mentoring relationships.

Concluding Thoughts about Mentor Practices and the Relationship Dimension

This present study found that the mentor practices of talking about culture, listening, having a holistic understanding of the protégé, maintaining good communication, self-disclosure, using appropriate humor, acknowledging limitations and mistakes, gift-giving, and behavioral integrity contributed to the rapport and trust of the mentoring relationships. The topic of relational practices of mentors has been under-researched. Much more work needs to be done in this area to further examine and extend the present study's finding of the importance of mentor practices that facilitate the establishment and maintenance of trust in cross-cultural relationships. As Nandita (Protégé) said: “You have to really trust somebody to be able to have them help, to have them guide you” (personal interview, December 17, 2005). It is clear from the reports of protégés in this study that trust is foundational to a mentoring relationship. In particular, this appears to be particularly true in cross-cultural dyads where the conditions are ripe for cultural mistrust.
CHAPTER SIX

RESULTS

Institutional Dimension

The preceding two chapters focused on mentor practices that supported and targeted development at the individual and relational dimensions. A third dimension of mentor practice was identified through the course of my data analysis: mentor practices that enabled the protégés to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills necessary to integrate and interface successfully at the organizational and institutional levels. The data from this study show that each of these three dimensions of the individual, relational, and institutional is necessary in any consideration of mentoring practices. As Gilbert and Rossman (1992) point out: “Mentoring, then, involves a relationship between two people, but the relationship itself occurs within and is maintained and influenced by the roles, rules, and norms of the relevant social systems and institutional structures” (p. 234). This present chapter examines the mentor practices targeted at the institutional and organizational levels.

The literature on socialization theory provides a useful framework for the institutional and organizational aspects of mentor practice. Organizational socialization has been defined as the process by which “new skills, belief systems, patterns of action, and, occasionally, personal identity, are acquired (or not acquired) by people as they move into new social settings” (Van Maanen, 1984, p. 211). Chao et al. (1994) propose six dimensions of organizational socialization: becoming proficient in work tasks, establishing successful work relationships, learning about work politics, knowing the language of the profession and organization, learning specific organizational goals and
values, and having knowledge of the organization's history. Successful socialization into
the organization is deemed to be critical in the adjustment, learning, and retention of
newcomers to work (Chao et al., 1994; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993) and educational
environments (Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999; Hendricks, 1998; Keith & Moore,
1995; Laden, 1999; Schrodt et al., 2003). Much research has been devoted to this topic,
with consistent findings documenting the importance of socialization activities in
different institutional settings and professions, including that of new employees (Ostroff
& Kozlowski, 1993), aspiring school administrators (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004),
teachers (Gratch, 1998; Walkington, 2005), new college faculty (Hendricks, 1998;
Schrodt et al., 2003), and doctoral students (Keith & Moore, 1995).

Although it is critically important for newcomers to learn the ropes and become
socialized into the organization or field, the actual processes of socialization are often
informal and not explicit (Keith & Moore, 1995). Hence, socialization can be a
confusing, frustrating, and stressful process (Schrodt et al., 2003), due to multiple forms
of uncertainty (Teboul, 1994) and the imperative to acquire diverse types of new
knowledge (Morrison, 1993) in a short amount of time. For ethnic minorities, the
transition into academia can be even more tumultuous, since they are often confronted
with additional challenges of isolation and racial insensitivity at the personal and
programmatic levels (Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Burden et al., 2005; Keith & Moore,
1995; Turner et al., 1999). For instance, Burden’s et al. (2005) qualitative study of
African American faculty in kinesiology-based programs found social isolation, the
“chilly climate,” and disengagement to be particular challenges confronting these faculty.
These participants stressed the need for effective mentoring to support and facilitate the
organizational socialization of ethnic minority faculty. Similarly, many first-generation ethnic minority college and/or graduate students also have compounding challenges of having to juggle competing and sometimes conflicting cultures – that of their own ethnic culture and that of the institution (Laden, 1999; Pavel, 1988; Valentine & Mosley, 2000) -- while they are transitioning into and learning about a new organizational culture.

Mentoring has been found to be an effective intervention in the organizational socialization of protégés. For instance, mentors have been found to be instrumental in teaching newcomers about organizational culture, politics, and history (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). Schrodt’s et al. (2003) study of the socialization of new faculty underscore the importance of mentoring for the socialization of new faculty, particularly in terms of the protégés’ sense of connectedness with their departments. Similarly, Keith and Moore’s (1995) quantitative study of sociology doctoral students found that mentoring is essential for the students’ development of professional confidence and their level of involvement in professional activities. Peer mentoring relationships have also been found to enhance socialization of newcomers (Allen et al., 1999).

In this study, the mentors were found to engage in practices that helped guide and socialize their protégés into their immediate school environments as well as the larger organizational field of psychology. The mentors did not confine themselves to furnishing instrumental help to support their protégés’ individual career development, instead they actively guided and facilitated their protégés’ socialization into the academic world, both in terms of the immediate university environment as well as the larger field of psychology. In doing so, they acted in accordance with Keith and Moore’s (1995) prescription that teaching “must extend beyond classroom pedagogy to include an
understanding of the organizational milieu in which professional development occurs” (p. 212). Some researchers consider socialization to the task (or task mastery) as one dimension of organizational socialization (Chao et al., 1994; Feldman et al., 1999). Certainly, mastery of work tasks is essential to successful integration into an organization. However, for the purposes of this study, a distinction is made between mentor practices that involve personal task mastery and those that involve interfacing with larger institutional or organizational structures. Such a distinction is important in discerning and understanding the different types of mentor practices and interventions targeting different contexts. The mentor practices that facilitated the protégés’ personal task mastery was discussed earlier in this chapter in the “Individual Dimension” section. The mentor practices identified in this study that addressed the organizational milieu is discussed in this section. These practices are grouped into the following four broad categories:

- Providing validation
- Providing access to the inside story
- Building supportive networks
- Providing protection

Each of these categories will be discussed at length in the following sections.

Providing Validation

A number of protégés utilized the words “validation” and “validating” when I asked how certain actions of their mentors impacted them. For instance, Tamika (Protégé) noted:
And it makes me feel good because I know that she thinks well of me . . . in terms of my accomplishments. . . . I have really great friends. They’re like my family but it’s nice to have your mentor be proud of you. And validating (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

In this quote, Tamika distinguishes between the support she receives from her mentor and that from her friends – she evidently appreciates the support of her friends, but makes special note of how validating her mentor is.

I was deeply struck by the recurring use of the word “validating” and puzzled over what exactly the protégés meant when they said they felt “validated.” Initially, I intuitively understood the term as referring to emotional support provided by the mentor. Indeed, providing emotional support and encouragement is a well-recognized mentor function (see Ganser, 1994; Kram, 1985; Sanchez, Reyes, & Singh, 2006; Williams, Brewley, Reed, White, & Davis-Haley, 2005). Kram (1985) uses the term “confirmation-and-acceptance” and defines this function as enabling “both individuals [to] derive a sense of self from the positive regard conveyed by the other” (p. 35).

Certainly, psychosocial support seemed to be an integral part of the protégés’ conception of validation. However, their reports indicated additional layers to the meaning of validation beyond psychological support. As I mulled over the significance of the word, I turned to the dictionary for help with this endeavor and was struck by the multiple meanings for “validate:” “1. To make legally valid; 2. To grant official sanction to by marking; 3. To declare the validity of an election; 4. To support or corroborate on a sound or authoritative basis” (Webster’s ninth new collegiate dictionary, 1987). These dictionary definitions of “validation” connote a conferring of legitimacy, tenability,
sanction, and support by someone in a position of power and authority. Validation does not only refer to emotional support but has the additional important meaning of being a form of official hand-stamp of approval and legitimacy. These attendant layers of meaning illuminate the deeper significance behind a number of mentor practices that the protégés reported to be validating. Such practices not only provided emotional support, they also served the larger function of making the protégés feel affirmed and confirmed as a member of the academy. This aspect of empowerment has been shown to be vital in different types of supportive relationships, such as the mentoring relationships of college women (Liang et al., 2002).

Having confidence that one belongs in the academic world can be critical since academia is fairly well known for having a competitive, oftentimes hostile and rejecting atmosphere (Burden et al., 2005; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004). As one mentor described it: "This place is really competitive and cutthroat at times. . . there’s some really great things about it but it’s super competitive. Students are competitive with each other. Faculty are competitive. The college as a whole is . . . it’s a pretty stressful place (Mimi (Mentor), personal interview, May 12, 2005). For ethnic minority students who lack role models in academia, the experience of being in the academic world can be particularly painful, discouraging, and disheartening (Zalaquett, 2006). Said Shanti (Protégé): “I think going through graduate school is a very hard process and I think without support, it would have been really hard for me” (personal interview, January 10, 2006). This sense of discomfort can be particularly acute for ethnic minorities in predominantly White institutions (Enomoto, Gardiner, & Grogan, 2000). Another protégé
who was a faculty member at the time of the interview connected her “imposter syndrome” with her status as a person of color in a predominantly White university:

Anne Chan: And what do you think makes you have that impostor syndrome?
Nandita (Protégé): I think it’s being a person of color.
Anne Chan: Okay. And can you explain that further? Why would that make you feel that you’re a fake or that you don’t belong?
Nandita: I think that part of it is . . . maybe in my own head but the majority of it comes from the outside world. So whenever I would go to an office in the university, they would assume that I’m a student and some could say, well, I look young. Well, yeah, but there’s other faculty that look young and they don’t get that. So this assumption that I can’t be faculty. . . . People will say, “Well, I’m not going to say your name. I can’t say this. It’s too hard.” Well, what do you mean, you can’t say it? I’m a freakin’ faculty member here. You say my name. Like how do you think that that’s okay not to have to learn to say my name? You know, things like that . . . that would minimize you in some way, right? Other things, these systems, universities are still predominately White so oftentimes you’re one of the very few faculty members who are of color in your department. Even I’m lucky . . . I have a few but in the university, when we go to college meetings and university meetings, I’m still one of the very few. And just a simple visual that nobody looks like you. It makes you feel like, well, I don’t belong (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Nandita’s words powerfully demonstrate the feelings of being unaccepted and discounted as a person of color ("just a simple visual that nobody looks like you. It makes you feel
like, well, I don’t belong”). Her colleagues’ refusal to say her name is powerfully symbolic of her marginalization from the department. Nandita credited her mentor for giving her the space and support to process these feelings and overcome her feelings of being an imposter. Other protégés likewise talked eloquently and appreciatively about being supported and affirmed by their mentors. Their mentors’ support appeared to have the added benefit of girding their feelings of competence and sense of belonging in the academic world.

In this study, several mentor practices were found to be validating in terms of the dual meanings of the word, i.e. these practices provided emotional affirmation and, at the same time, served to boost and support their protégés’ confidence that they belonged in academia. The mentor practices discussed below are quite diverse but they all share the same common characteristic of giving the protégés an official seal of approval of sorts as they traversed the sometimes rocky road of completing their doctoral programs and establishing their professional identities.

Validation Practices

*Making positive remarks and expressing confidence about the protégé’s skills, efforts, and performance.*

Many of the mentors were notable for expressing their confidence in their protégés with encouraging words. Ming noted that her mentor had a way of being extremely positive and encouraging by saying things like “You can totally do it” (personal interview, June 12, 2005). Indeed, the following e-mail from her mentor illustrates her genuine enthusiasm and regard for Ming’s work:
Hi Ming! I totally KNEW you would get this award! You really deserve it. I think your research is very cutting edge and highly significant. I can't wait to celebrate all of your wonderful achievements (dinner and party!). I know this sounds motherly but I am so amazingly proud of you and your work (e-mail from Mimi to Ming, June 13, 2005).

Another protégé, Camille, spoke about her mentor being supportive of her ideas:

Whenever I talk about an opportunity that I'm considering, he always says, “I think you’re a great candidate for this,” and he’s always willing to help me out practically speaking, as in writing a recommendation letter and reading over my proposals, but he always does say things like, “I think you have a really good chance. I think you’re a good candidate for this” (Camille (Protégé), personal interview, May 23, 2005).

It is striking that Camille distinguishes between two types of support she receives from her mentor: practical support (“writing a recommendation letter” and “reading over my proposals”) and emotional support (“he always does say things like, “I think you have a really good chance”). It is evident that the latter, though not a material form of support, was still extremely meaningful to her, given that she took such pains to provide me with three examples of her mentor’s encouragement.

These positive remarks from mentors carried weight because they were voiced by a trusted and respected person of authority. As one protégé put it:

Manjeet (Protégé): You’re getting feedback from somebody [who is] such a giant in the field. Somebody that’s really made a mark and hearing from him that you’re of value and that you do great things and that you’re going to be the future,
is something my family and my fiancé could never do (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

The mentors’ positive comments were found to be doubly meaningful to the protégés because they reinforced their confidence in two ways: 1) that they were capable of performing well in academic tasks, and 2) that they belonged in academia. As such, these positive messages had significance both for individual task mastery as well as for the individual’s socialization into the field (Cawyer et al., 2002).

*Writing personalized letters of recommendation.*

All the protégés talked appreciatively about the significance of their mentors’ writing letters of recommendation for them. What was meaningful for the protégés was not so much the act of writing letters, but the highly personal and personalized endorsement reflected in these letters. Many protégés were touched and humbled by the special personal quality of these letters:

Joan (Protégé): I’ve probably asked Dr. Lombardi for 20 letters of recommendation over the past three years ... internship was probably one of the biggest things. It was probably THE biggest thing that she wrote me a letter for ... and I had a copy of the letter and after the internship applications, I read the letter and it was a very personal letter, ... it really reflected me ... and ... it made me sound really good so (laughs) ... you couldn’t read that letter and think that she probably had some kind of formula, that she just kind of signed and replaced somebody else’s name with mine. And I really appreciated that, you know? I thought it ... expressed, first of all, to the person reading it that I really know this person. I can really recommend this person based on that knowledge.
but also that it was a really good reflection of what I thought my strengths were in terms of the more academic research oriented piece and teaching (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

As Joan’s words show, these letters of recommendation were found to be validating in two significant ways: first, as forms of emotional support and affirmation (“it was a really good reflection of what I thought my strengths were”); second, as “hand-stamps” of approval (“to the person reading it that I really know this person”). In terms of emotional validation, the letters gave the protégés concrete proof that their mentors thought very highly of them. One of the mentors even made a practice of giving her protégés a copy of their letters as a way of telling them how well she thought of them:

Mary (Mentor): Generally when I write letters of recommendation for students that I really feel very strongly about, I give them a copy and I know that some of them, not all, but some of them that meant a lot . . . putting it down on paper your genuine impressions of that person I might not necessarily say to their face (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

The letters also served an important validating function as “hand-stamps” of approval because they were important forms of endorsement of the mentors. With these letters of approval in hand, the protégés felt that they had their mentors’ solid endorsement and backing when they applied for positions and grants. When asked about the significance of these letters to her, Tamika (Protégé) replied,

Huge. . . it’s almost like I have an image of . . . it’s like worth jewels or something . . . it’s very precious. To have someone who is very highly respected endorse you and support you. It’s just a huge form of support. And to endorse you in that way.
of course, it’s going to open a door or two. You have to do the work but . . .
those are the things that I was talking to you about earlier that I never had . . . I’m
talking about in terms of someone having an ongoing relationship with you
professionally and writing something like that, it’s tangible proof that they’re
supportive of you (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

Tamika’s jewel imagery captures the incomparable value of having a mentor’s
endorsement. Tamika clearly recognized that her mentor’s public expression of approval
served to pave her career for her (“it’s going to open a door or two”). In essence, such
endorsement facilitated her entry into the academic world.

Nominating the protégé for awards.

Some of the mentors independently nominated their protégés for awards. Dr.
Lombardi even went so far as to get letters of recommendation from her protégés’
students so that she could be nominated for a university teaching award. Joan, her
protégé, said that this praise and recognition from Dr. Lombardi was “very validating, . . .
it feels really genuine . . . really authentic because she doesn’t just throw that around”
(personal interview, May 21, 2005).

The validation inherent in these awards signified to the protégés that their work
and excellence were recognized by well-respected seniors in the field. Again, this gesture
served as a validating hand-stamp by giving concrete proof to the protégés as well as
colleagues in the field that the quality of their work was more than up to par.

Providing emotional support and reassurance
Providing emotional support is a well-recognized mentor function (see Ganser, 1994; Kram, 1985; Sanchez et al., 2006; Williams et al., 2005). Not surprisingly, the mentors in this study were noted for being available and open to their protégés when they needed emotional support. Said Mary (Mentor): “I think that she knows that I’m always available to her. So she really could call me any time and I would be there to talk about whatever might be bothering her or celebrate her successes” (personal interview, March 8, 2005). Two mentors even referred themselves as “mothers” in terms of the way they took care of and supported their protégés. One protégé, Manjeet, described her mentor as “Kind of like a cheerleader in a sense” (personal interview, January 11, 2006). Dr. Miller (Mentor) described how she provided moral support when her protégé was going through the job search process: “When he was just needing to be bucked up . . . I think sometimes he just needed to talk. Like he needed to feel like somebody was listening” (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

Such emotional support appeared to be vital for the protégés, several of whom disclosed that the process of getting a doctoral degree or a job undermined, at times, their sense of competence and confidence. Camille (Protégé) discussed feeling occasionally that she did not belong in graduate school:

Sometimes it’s really hard in graduate school and being a woman and being a minority and coming from a family who hasn’t really done this before, it’s really hard to believe that I belong here and that I’m just as qualified as everyone else” (Camille (Protégé), personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Camille’s feelings of not belonging were further exacerbated when she had a public conflict with a professor. Understandably, this heated clash with an authority figure
prompted thoughts about leaving the program because she did not feel that she belong. Camille’s mentor was critical in helping her weather this crisis by providing her with both emotional support and guidance. More importantly, his support gave her the confidence to feel that she did belong in academia. Strikingly, when asked to sum up the benefits she receives from mentoring, Camille replied:

The most important thing is that he treats me with respect and support and really does, as cheesy as it sounds, really does believe in me and my abilities . . . and then those times where it’s hard for me to believe in myself, it’s really comforting to know that when I don’t believe in myself that someone else does (Camille, (Protégé), personal interview, May 23, 2005).

It is significant that Camille rated the emotional support and affirmation she received from her mentor as outstripping any other perceived benefits.

Doctoral students can feel self-doubt at various moments during their doctoral career (R. D. Hill et al., 1999; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004), even without a dramatic incident such as the one Camille experienced. When such moments of intense self-questioning occur, mentors can be extremely influential in helping their protégés regain a sense of belonging and equilibrium by simply giving them verbal reassurance that they are competent and worthwhile, or by giving them a reality check of sorts. This is illustrated in the following quote from Camille’s mentor:

Bob (Mentor): Sometimes with first year students . . . they feel sort of like, well, gee, do I really belong here? . . . I do work on those issues with first year students. Like I have one student now who is very sharp but still is kind of not feeling like she really deserves to be here and I just was pretty matter of fact and tell them that
they deserve to be here and kind of review what they have accomplished to get here and try to contrast their views of themselves with what their actual behavior is (personal interview, April 21, 2005).

Another mentor was particularly notable for building her protégés’ confidence by pointing out their strengths to them. When asked what a typical mentoring conversation sounded like, Dr. Johnson (Mentor) promptly replied,

What you’re going to hear is me reinforcing or pointing out their strengths in those areas. The strengths that they and I have done together so I know they have them; I’m not just like making this up. . . . So each opportunity in those mentoring conversations and the material was there, I’m reinforcing, “You can do it. You can do it. You’ve got the skills. You just didn’t think you did. Now you do” . . . So it’s using those opportunities each time to point out the skill area that they minimize or aren’t aware of and reinforce it and support it and encourage and continue to develop it (Dr. Johnson (Mentor), personal interview, March 26, 2005).

In particular, Dr. Johnson worked to build her protégés’ confidence in the skill areas where they had little or no confidence. Not coincidentally, these skill areas (research, presentations, writing and publishing) are core areas for anyone wanting to be a part of the academic world. By building up her protégés’ confidence in these areas, this mentor not only validated their ability to be a part of the academic world, but also shored up the skill sets needed to perform well in this world. When asked in a follow-up e-mail interview why she took such pains to build her protégés’ confidence in these areas, Dr. Johnson (Mentor) wrote, “Because I think that having a research background/skills gives
ethnic-minority psychologists broader career opportunities. . . . I just feel an obligation to prepare ethnic minority psychologists with the range of skills that they will need in the field” (e-mail to Anne Chan, July 28, 2005).

By being attentive to their protégés’ feelings and providing reassurance when needed, these mentors provided emotional validation and support. At the same time, there is added meaning and significance in the process of validating someone emotionally. Through their nonjudgmental listening and understanding, the mentors gave the protégés the sense that they did belong in academia, despite having occasional negative feelings, frustrations, or self-doubt.

*Giving the protégé opportunities to do research, present, teach, and publish.*

The importance of developing skill sets in research, presenting, teaching, and publishing was covered in the earlier section on the individual dimension of mentor practice. By providing their protégés with opportunities to develop these skills, the mentors enhanced their protégés’ career development. Another level of significance was observed in this mentor practice – by giving their protégés these opportunities, the mentors also expressed confidence in their protégés’ abilities to master these skills. Reminiscing about her own mentor, one of the mentors in this study recounted how she felt her mentor’s confidence in her when she gave her the opportunity to help teach the class. Another mentor, Dr. Johnson, encouraged her protégés to present and publish with her, even though they lacked confidence in their abilities to do research. Noted Dr. Johnson (Mentor), “It took pulling teeth and holding hands and encouraging her to know that she could write and it could make sense” (personal interview, March 26, 2005).
These opportunities also gave the protégés the necessary credentials and skills to be a part of the academic world. Noted Dr. Johnson (Mentor) of two of her protégés:

They’re very good clinicians but they have no confidence and had not confidence in their research skills and in their ability to do scholarly production. So they were both very much headed for clinical only practices and I’ve been trying to remove that exclusion in their sense of themselves (personal interview, March 26, 2005).

Concluding Thoughts About Providing Validation

Overall, this mentor practice of providing validation is similar to Kram’s (1985) confirmation and acceptance function. However, a key piece of this mentor practice that was highlighted in this study was the sense of acceptance, approval, and reassurance that the mentors conveyed to their protégés. As such, the multiplicity of meaning embedded in the term “validation” is apt in capturing the full importance and significance of this mentor practice. Additionally, it is critical to note that this function was particularly important for the ethnic minority students in this study because of potentially debilitating feelings and experiences of being isolated and misunderstood, and of feeling that they did not belong in academia (Burden et al., 2005; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002).

Building Community

All the mentors in this study made considerable efforts to introduce their protégés to senior people in the field. These efforts included giving advice to protégés about networking, telling them names of key people to meet, and personally introducing the protégés to the more established members of the field, either by e-mail or face-to-face. Oftentimes, these introductions and connections were made in a distinctively
personalized manner – many mentors introduced their protégés to their special circle of colleagues and friends, thus including the protégés in their personal networks. For instance, the following e-mail is one of seven such introductions that Manjeet’s mentor sent her:

I enjoyed talking with you the other day. The lady's name at the University of Connecticut is Dr. Jane Good, Department of Clinical Psychology; e-mail: janegood@uc.edu; office phone: 555-5151 [details changed]. I e-mailed her about you so feel free to start a correspondence with her. Let her know that you are a mentee of mine, that you live in Connecticut, that you graduated from the University of Connecticut, that you are at CSPP, that you hope to meet her at APA, and that you would like to visit her sometime when you're in Connecticut. Professor Good is a first class lady who is very interested in young people. I think the two of you will really click (e-mail from Terrel to Manjeet, April 23, 2003).

What is notable about this e-mail is the attentiveness to detail that this mentor devoted into facilitating this introduction: not only did he provide all relevant contact information, he also contacted Dr. Good prior to this e-mail (“I e-mailed her about you”), reminded Manjeet to use her relationship with him as an introduction (“Let her know that you are a mentee of mine”), told Manjeet how to begin the contact (Let her know . . . that you live in Connecticut”), reassured Manjeet that Dr. Good would be receptive to her (“Professor Good is a first class lady who is very interested in young people”), and lastly provided his reasons for making the connection (“I think the two of you will really click”). This attention to detail clearly shows the mentor’s commitment to making this connection work for Manjeet.
Another common mentor practice was taking protégés to conference social hours and personally introducing them to people in the field. It is worth noting that the mentors did not merely give advice about networking, but went the extra step of personally making these introductions, thus easing the way for their protégés to meet important people in the field. Mentors also introduced their protégés by sending personalized e-mails to internship or job search committee members when the protégés were applying for positions, as Paula noted in the following quotation:

So I had the summer before printed out a list of all of the places that I was applying to and printed out the names of the Training Directors and the two psychologists at all of those counseling centers that I was applying to and she went through that list with me and said, “Okay, I know people at this site, this site and this site. I’ll try to e-mail them for you and . . . put a bug in their ear that you’re applying.” So she helped me in that regard (Paula (Protégé), personal interview, May 20, 2005).

Several of the mentors also introduced their protégés in subtler, but no less deliberate ways, as can be seen in the following example:

Manjeet (Protégé): I was working with [a professor] but [he’s] hard to kind of approach. Well, Terrel [her mentor] took an interest in me and Terrel is a big player and my professor wanted to be president of the Division of Research Psychology [details changed] and he started talking with him and talking about me, and . . . every time he talked to him, he talked about me. And we’ve been doing this for several years and now that he’s the president and I wanted on the graduate education committee [details changed] which is a fully funded position,
he wrote me a letter and I knew exactly why I got on. . . . getting access to the inside game is, it takes time . . . you can’t just get in. You have to find different ways in and that was Terrel’s way of helping me get access (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

This anecdote reveals Terrel’s commitment to increasing Manjeet’s visibility to a key person in the field. In this instance, he achieved this by inserting her name into all his conversations with her professor (“every time he talked to him, he talked about me”). As a result, Manjeet was able to procure a coveted, fully funded position on the graduate education committee, an achievement she credited to Terrel’s efforts. In a similar vein, another mentor (Dr. Munoz) made positive comments about her protégé, Paula, and the quality of her research, and she publicized her protégé’s achievements whenever the occasion arose. For example, Dr. Munoz sent a congratulatory e-mail (Subject: “A Winner!”) to a large group of people when Paula received an award: “Please join me in congratulating Paula for receiving the Doctoral Student of the Year Award [details changed]. Stiff competition so this makes her selection even more exciting. Needless to say, I am feeling pretty proud at the moment!” (e-mail from Dr. Munoz (Mentor) to a group of people, April 20, 2005).

Kram (1983) outlines “exposure and visibility” as one of the career functions of a mentor and defines it as “assigning responsibilities that allow a lower-level manager to develop relationships with key figures in the organization who may judge his or her potential for future advancement” (p. 27). The corporate context of Kram’s research is evident in her definition; however, “exposure and visibility” was also found to be relevant, albeit with a different flavor and with added meaning, in this present study of
mentors in academia. As discussed in the previous paragraphs, the mentors in this study introduced their protégés to important people in the field and, in some cases, made it possible for the protégés to work with these key people. These efforts not only increased the visibility of their protégés, they also added to their networks and paved the way for new opportunities. Further, the findings from this study point to another significant layer of meaning to this mentor practice. What seemed to be key in this practice was that many mentors went beyond Exposure-and-Visibility to help their protégés cement meaningful relationships that provided a sense of belonging and community (Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006). As Bob (Mentor) said, the intent is not to “rub shoulders with famous people,” but rather for his protégés to get to know people who might be helpful and who share common interests (personal interview, April 21, 2005).

The mentors’ intent of building community for their protégés was evident in the personalized and special way in which they made their introductions. For instance, Nandita was especially eloquent about how her mentor’s introductions created meaningful relationships for her:

Nandita (Protégé): The most important thing she did, I guess, career-wise for me is to get me connected with people that she was connected to, and so one of the things that she did was introduce me to a whole bunch of people that she was collegial with. . . . the thing that she did is introduce me to people and introduce me to people not in that kind of “Hi, this is Nandita, Nandita, meet so and so” but “Let’s go, I’m going to meet . . . my colleagues or my friends for coffee. Why don’t you join me?” And so then it becomes a meaningful interaction when you meet people rather than a superficial interaction. So I got to know a lot of people
in that way. And that, I think, was really influential in making me feel like a professional.

Anne Chan: Yeah, and why do you say that is something that really made a difference in your life?

Nandita: Because those circles don’t open. Like you have your circle, doc students that you’ve graduated with. Some of their friends. Some of the people that you meet when you’re all students. Some of the people you work with or the cities you work with. People you bump into or meet or share interests but you don’t meet people that are established in areas that may be a little different than yours . . . I’m not meeting them as professionals, I’m meeting them as friends of Mary’s [her mentor]. So it takes the edge off of it and also just they’re meaningful . . . I feel like now I have people that I could ask questions of or if I ever needed help, that if Mary couldn’t help me with something, that they would help me (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Nandita’s words show that her mentor had not only increased her visibility, but had in the same stroke helped her feel that she belonged to a scholarly community (“really influential in making me feel like a professional “) and that she was supported by members of this community (“if I ever needed help, that if Mary couldn’t help me with something, that they would help me”). The way in which Nandita’s mentor introduced her promoted a sense of welcoming and inclusiveness (“I’m meeting them as friends of Mary’s”). Especially striking is Nandita’s repeated use of the word “meaningful” in this excerpt – clearly, she recognized and appreciated this special quality of the relationships that she had access to, via her mentor. In her case, the personalized way in which her
mentor introduced her to new colleagues made it possible to create new relationships that went beyond superficial acquaintanceships to foster a sense of community.

Another way in which mentors promoted a sense of community for their ethnic minority protégés was by introducing them to experienced members who shared their cultural backgrounds. Said Isabella, a Latina protégé with an African American mentor:

She would refer me to people, Latina psychologists to talk to and I remember when I was trying to decide whether or not to pursue the doctoral degree, she gave me names of people to talk to to see why I should and why I shouldn’t pursue it. So I think what’s good about Keisha Johnson [her mentor] is that she knows what she can do and gives me other things to follow up on that are separate from her . . . she knows she can’t answer all my questions or give me the advice because I also know that she hasn’t been out in the clinical world and doesn’t know it all (Isabella (Protégé), personal interview, June 16, 2005).

Another mentor who was European American encouraged her Latina protégé to get a second mentor who could guide her on cultural issues:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): I had encouraged her to connect with . . . the head of LPA, Latino Psychological Association . . . I said, “You ought to connect with Dr. Fuentes [name changed] because there were things about being a Latino mental health professional that I just won’t know and in terms of learning the ropes and things . . . that I have not personally experienced so I think it’s probably a good idea for you to connect with people, get involved in LPA and the National Latino Psychological Association just so you have professional role models (personal interview April 4, 2005).
These efforts to build community for the protégés were important for a number of reasons, including helping them build a supportive network for research on race and ethnicity, and buffering them from feelings of isolation. Bob (Mentor) exemplified this in his statements regarding social support and research:

I’m very aware of social support and community issues and since I’ve come to the University, we’ve recruited a cohort of students of color and so I try to get them hooked up with students with similar interests who are going to be socially supportive. I try to be sensitive to issues that are going on, like family issues . . . Also, you know, within the field, I try to give them awareness of the sort of challenges they might be up against as people of color and sometimes their research is devalued and, I emphasize that it’s really important to do rigorous work because sometimes the standards we’re held to are sometimes above those for other areas and talk about some of the challenges and doing work on ethnic issues that may not be there for mainstream kinds of research. Part of it also is getting them hooked up into these ethnic minority professional associations that provide support. These are issues that perhaps a non-minority mentor might not be aware of (Bob (Mentor), personal interview, April 21, 2005).

As Bob recognized, these introductions are invaluable in fostering a sense of belonging and community for ethnic minority students. He also noted that professional associations can serve as additional sources of emotional as well as professional support for the protégés. This finding was also found in Allen and Finkelstein’s (2003) study of alternative forms of developmental support that found professional organizations to be a substantial source of career development support for their participants.
Overall, the results from this study support Kram's findings regarding the mentor practice of exposure-and-visibility. However, an additional dimension to this mentor practice was identified in this study: building supportive cultural/ethnic communities for the protégés. There have been very few research studies addressing this cultural aspect of exposure-and-visibility. One empirical study of Black and White managers found that same-race developmental relationships furnished significantly more psychosocial support than cross-race relationships (Thomas, 1990). Hence, the author of this study advocated that organizations supported blacks in establishing same-race developmental relationships in the workplace. Likewise, this present study found that building supportive ethnic and cultural networks was found to be an integral component in the mentoring of ethnic minority students.

Access to the Inside Story

The grand epiphany realized in the pilot study was that there is an inside story within academia that is not readily accessible to outsiders and that mentors play a critical role of providing access to the inside story. This inside story consists of conventions, norms, practices, unwritten rules, and power structures unique to academia (Cawyer et al., 2002; Sanchez, 2005). As Ingham (1993) describes it, the inside story involves "secret knowledges – information about how a particular family or institution really works, information to be left hidden, denied, or unsaid." Having access to this inside story is an important key to successful admission into the academic world. The mentors in the pilot study were indispensable figures in serving as sponsors and guides into the inside story. With their guidance, the protégés in the pilot study were able to gain the knowledge and resources needed for successful entry.
This theme of the inside story was likewise confirmed in this present study. The data from this study further elaborated, developed, and deepened the theme of access to the inside story.

The Inside Story

The notion of the inside story is aptly illustrated by the following quote from a Black executive in Thomas and Gabarro's (1999) study of successful minority executives:

I realized that some [White] students understood things I didn't. They learned from their fraternities about how the power structure worked. They learned how to maneuver around the institution. I learned it the hard way because I didn’t maneuver. I remember talking to one of my professors, I hadn’t done well in his course, and he told me, “If I had known you were getting into trouble, you could have come to me and talked about it.” I didn’t know that. I didn’t know that was part of the rules. . . . I realized that whatever explicit rules there are in the institution, there are also unspoken rules. Whatever objective criteria there are, there are also subjective criteria. So one of the tricks in an institution is to understand not only objective criteria, but also subjective criteria – not only the written rules, but also the unwritten rules (p. 19).

The words of this minority executive point to the existence of the inside story operating in corporations, academia, and in other institutions. Beyond the clearly spelled out “explicit rules” and “objective criteria” is another subtler, less explicit level of operations consisting of “unspoken rules” and “subjective criteria.” An example of an unspoken rule is given above – this Black student could have approached his professor about his
underperformance in the course (the unspoken rule), but did not realize that he could pursue this course of action.

It is important to note that the inside story is culturally based—what is constructed as useful knowledge is often arbitrary (Goldman et al., 1994) and is shaped by those in power. Those who are close to the power structure are familiar with these unwritten rules and can navigate more easily and smoothly around the system ("They learned from their fraternities about how the power structure worked. They learned how to maneuver around the institution"). Those who do not have access to this body of knowledge or to people in power quickly run into difficulties negotiating the system ("I learned it the hard way because I didn't maneuver"). In particular, ethnic minorities and women may face obstacles because they lack access to sponsors and people in power (Burden et al., 2005; Thomas, 2001; Valadez, 1998), and tend to be shut out entirely from the inside story ("I didn't know that. I didn't know that was part of the rules"). Indeed, one of the protégés in this present study recognized her lack of power as an ethnic minority woman and an immigrant. Reflecting on her mentor’s capabilities in comparison to her own, she said, “She [her mentor] has the ability to navigate through the politics and the system whereas I’m more at a disadvantage because I don’t really know if I could really go out there and compete with all of these White males in the field. I still don’t think I have that ability” (Ming, personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Inside Story in Academia

I credit Terrel, an African-American mentor in this study, for first alerting me to the concept of the inside story in academia:
Terrel (Mentor): The inside game is that where getting through graduate school is concerned, where getting a job is concerned, there is a public way of doing it and we all know what that is because we’ve been to graduate school and we know where the Chronicle of Higher Ed is and this and that but the inside game is there are certain key people who can open up doors for you and provide you with information that is very usable and guidance and help you simplify the hurdles if they think you have ability and they like you. That’s the inside game. And it has been very difficult for ethnic people and women to get in the inside game because the inside game is controlled by White boys and it’s based on vibes and relationships and we’re not in those types of relationships (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Terrel uses the terminology “inside game,” but I have chosen the phrase “inside story” instead as it is less connotative of sports and more encompassing of the elaborate, multiple layers of unwritten conventions, structures, and characters that constitute a complex story.

As described by Terrel, the essence of the inside story is that of a fairly exclusive world with insiders (“the inside game is controlled by White boys”) and outsiders (“we’re not in those types of relationships”). Knowing about the inside story can greatly facilitate one’s career (“open up doors . . . simplify the hurdles”). Indeed, Terrel states that “half of getting in the inside game is knowing it exists.” However, ethnic minorities tend to be excluded from the “old boys’ network” simply because they lack access and connections into this inside world (Burden et al., 2005; Thomas, 1990; Valadez, 1998).

Terrel identifies two key components of the inside story:
• the unwritten rules, language, conventions, standards and norms in academia (as opposed to the “public way of doing it”);
• the inside network of people with power (“there are certain key people who can open up doors”).

Unwritten rules, language, conventions, and norms in academia.

The protégés in this study cited many examples of feeling confused and stymied by the numerous unspoken rules and conventions prevalent in their doctoral programs and in academia (R. D. Hill et al., 1999; Jackson et al., 2003; Swap et al., 2001). Said Joan (Protégé): “In grad school there’s a lot of just unwritten rules and there are a lot of opportunities but not necessarily all the time explicit” (personal interview, May 21, 2005). Joan gave two examples of two such unwritten rules:

Anne Chan: You mentioned the unwritten rules, are there some that you can tell me about that you discovered through working with your mentor?

Joan (Protégé): Yeah, I would say like the rules of publication being one of them. Also, like in my department, at least, getting work because we’re not funded but you can get funding if you get work and but it’s not always apparent how you get that work (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Another protégé discussed another unwritten rule – the importance of having an area of specialization:

Nandita (Protégé): She [her mentor] told me this and I didn’t really get it right away but you need to really have an area of research as an academic because you have to have an area and that area can be a little broadish, broader or you can have two areas but you need to have an area. You can’t publish all over the place.
Nobody is going to respect that and nobody is going to value that. . . . That was really important advice (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

This particular piece of advice constitutes yet another unwritten rule that is not readily apparent, yet is important for young academics to know. Without this knowledge, one might “publish all over the place” thus failing to garner a specialty area and the corresponding respect of colleagues (“Nobody is going to respect that and nobody is going to value that”). Notably, this protégé might not have known about this unwritten rule if not for her mentor (“She told me this and I didn’t really get it right away”).

Other academic conventions contained unwritten rules that were not clearly and explicitly spelled out. These included potentially stressful procedures such as a dissertation defense or a conference presentation. For instance, Ginny (Protégé) had two questions about her dissertation defense for her mentor: “I’m working on my presentation for the final oral - how long should I aim for --25-30 minutes? Also, I’m not sure how much to get into the qualitative data (if at all) -- any thoughts on that would be appreciated!” (e-mail from Ginny to Dr. Lombardi, n.d.). Ginny’s questions indicate her unfamiliarity with regards to the format of the defense. Although most university handbooks include descriptions of such procedures, there are still many hidden intricacies to the process that can confuse and flummox students. I noted several instances in the data when mentors made the effort to educate and reassure their protégés about such formalities. For instance, Ginny’s mentor responded to her e-mail query:

Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): Ginny, I would plan for 20 minutes. You will be constantly interrupted, so it will take longer. As for the qual. data, I would
use it in the presentation similarly to how you did in the discussion section of the
ds. FYI, you will be asked to leave at the beginning of the oral to double check
that everyone agrees to the oral and then again at the end to discuss how the oral
went--that is the tradition, so not to worry! Be prepared to answer questions in
some depth in such areas as: next steps from this study and why, and whether and
how findings inform counseling and/or theory. let me know if you have
additional questions. look forward to the oral and to seeing you! (e-mail, March
28, 2005).

Ginny’s mentor gives her helpful advice that sheds light on the process as well as
prepares her for what to expect (“I would plan for 20 minutes. You will be constantly
interrupted, so it will take longer”). This mentor’s “FYI” is particularly noteworthy – she
proactively tells her protégé about the tradition regarding the oral and reassures her that
being dismissed is typical and is not cause for concern. Further, she gives her tips on how
to prepare for questions at the oral. This information qualifies as “inside information”
because it is not publicly spelled out and would not have been easily obtainable without
an insider’s help.

Another mentor provided remarkably similar reassurance and edification for her
protégé who was getting ready to defend:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): You’ll present, we’ll ask questions/make comments, and
then the family and you will be asked to leave the room while the committee
deliberates. We will invite everyone back into the room and congratulate you
officially. . . . you and I will meet the following day (alone) to go over these. . . .
Most people have revisions that they need to make to the dissertation after the
hearing (and before submitting the final copy to the Dean's office) so this is the usual procedure (e-mail to Isabella, May 18, 2005).

It is striking that both mentors took such pains to outline the procedure for the defense—these efforts suggest that the mentors recognized that parts of these proceedings are arcane and mystifying to students. By shedding light on these procedures, the mentors helped to illuminate and demystify these otherwise recondite processes.

The nuts and bolts of an academic’s life was yet another topic that the mentors revealed to their protégés. One of the taped mentoring sessions contained several instances in which the mentor gave privileged glimpses into some of the hidden rules operating within academia. While talking with her protégé about the demands of an academic job, the mentor tells her what NOT to do as a newly minted faculty:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): So I think there’s ways to work within the academic setting to also get teaching freed up for program implementation . . .

Latisha (Protégé): Right. But I wouldn’t want to leave out the clinical stuff. But you do clinical work too?

Dr. Johnson: Yeah, at the expense of my hide. That’s the problem (laughs) . . . every faculty member is allowed to have one day a week that they do something else, so that something else can either be more on the research, consultation or, in my case, it’s clinical practice. So the university expects its faculty not to be around for one day a week because the expectation is that you’re off on that one other day doing something that’s professionally related but it’s not part of your academic job. So people could do a practice, but to start a practice and to be an
In this excerpt, the mentor is remarkably candid about her private practice ("at the expense of my hide") and the demands facing untenured faculty ("to start a practice and to be an untenured faculty member is suicide"). She also provides important inside information about university expectations regarding faculty responsibilities ("the expectation is that you’re off on that one other day doing something that’s professionally related"). In another part of this same mentoring session, this mentor provides inside information on the demands of teaching and offers a strategy to offset a teaching load:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): I think that most faculty, even if you like teaching, you don’t want to teach all the time. It is too draining to teach a bunch of courses to students who are disgruntled even if you had some happy ones, so teaching, three quarters each semester is a drain, not just physically but emotionally. So most faculty need, want to be in research institutions. If you have any research aptitude, you want to be in a research institution so that you can teach less and be able to spend some time that the university pays for on your scholarship, on your research.

(Dr. Johnson and Latisha mentoring session, June 23, 2005).

Here again, Dr. Johnson is frank and open about her experiences of teaching ("It is too draining to teach a bunch of courses to students who are disgruntled"). This insight is privileged information that would be difficult to obtain from other sources. Such disclosure serves to give the rationale for the advice that she gives her protégé ("you want to be in a research institution so that you can teach less").
It is beyond the scope of this present study to detail all the unwritten rules and conventions within academia. However, the protégés cited many examples of being in the dark about various aspects of academic life. Much of the information they needed was "inside" information that was not publicly available in books, on the internet or even from their peers.

*Inside network of people with power.*

The inside network of people with power can be described as the key decision-makers and influential people in an organization, institution, or field. Notes one mentor:

Terrel (Mentor): Now we know that in the conference, there's an inside game. There's some people presenting papers but that's only the surface of the conference. There are people that you can connect to about jobs, about your research, there are people that you need to meet as part of building a network. There are people who have information. There are a number of things that go on that may not be advertised in the program (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Terrel points out the external, easily accessible layers of a conference ("There's some people presenting papers but that's only the surface of the conference") and the inside story ("things that go on that may not be advertised in the program"). For one protégé, the inside network was comprised of the "players" and accessing the inside network meant "knowing the players, knowing who to talk to, knowing what's going on" (Manjeet, personal interview, January 11, 2006). Gilbert and Rossman (1992) evocatively describe this inside network as a the "inner sanctum" of the organizational power structure enclosed by a "glass wall" that shuts out women (and ethnic minorities) (p. 234).
Without access to this inner circle, one is excluded from much of the inside story, as is seen in Terrel's experience when he was an intern at a hospital:

Terrel (Mentor): I noticed that certain residents and psych interns went hunting and fishing with the chief of service, the chief of cardiac, chief psychologist and I never got to go. I said, “Now something is going on around here.” Now no one was racist toward me. To my dying day, no one mistreated me in that hospital but I wasn’t in the inside game (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Terrel recognizes that he was not necessarily discriminated against (“no one was racist toward me”) but he observed that he was not part of the inner circle (“I noticed that certain residents went hunting . . . with the chief of service . . . and I never got to go”).

Protégés and the Inside Story

Getting access to the inside story first necessitates that one knows about its existence. As Terrel (Mentor) said, “Half of getting in the inside game is knowing it exists” (personal interview, April 28, 2005). Many of the protégés said they would not have known about important aspects of the field if not for their mentors. Said Wei (Protégé): “There are certain things that we just don’t know on our own and so to have a mentor who is available to answer your questions when you have them is really important to further you along in your graduate career” (personal interview, December 22, 2005).

Noted another protégé:

Latisha (Protégé): She’s given me information about things that I can ask for that I hadn’t known I could ask for . . . like she suggested to me that when I finish, she thought that I would be great for a faculty, a joint faculty clinician position and I
didn’t even know there was such things. I never heard of such a thing (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

This sense of not knowing is particularly poignant in the words of one protégé who described what it was like for her prior to being mentored:

Manjeet (Protégé): I felt very invisible in my program. . . . I didn’t know a lot about all of these different areas of psychology. Nobody had gone over them with me . . . I didn’t know that there was developmental or applied psychology. I didn’t know there was health psychology. I felt like, god, everybody knows what they’re doing but I don’t. And I don’t even know how to get the guidance to know (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

“I didn’t even know there was such things. I never heard of such a thing” – this theme of not knowing recurred frequently in protégé reports. Protégés frequently mentioned being unaware of a wide variety of topics ranging from the procedures and requirements in their degree programs, to the process of getting research published, to the expectations for getting an academic job. The famous phrase “ignorance is bliss” does not apply here – in fact, ignorance of how academia works is detrimental to one’s progress through graduate school and one’s career path. This is seen in the case of Manjeet (Protégé), who noted that her exclusion from the inside story prevented her from knowing about important career opportunities. Before she met her mentor, Manjeet said she noticed other people doing “wonderful things” but did not know how to access these opportunities:

Manjeet (Protégé): I think what I saw around me were all these people doing all these wonderful things and I had no way, I didn’t know how to get access to them. I didn’t know how people were doing it and I basically just was going to class and
going home and studying and doing what I had to do. I wasn't doing anything extra and I just felt that I was just a number in the program (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Other protégés described a sense of estrangement, marginalization, and/or alienation from the academic world (Burden et al., 2005; McMinn & Voytenko, 2004). One protégé (who is now a faculty member) was particularly articulate about the reasons behind her feeling like an “imposter” and that she did not belong:

Anne Chan: And what do you think makes you have that impostor syndrome?
Nandita (Protégé): I think it’s being a person of color. . . . universities are still predominately White so oftentimes you’re one of the very few faculty members who are of color in your department. Even I’m lucky, I have a few but in the university, when we go to college meetings and university meetings, I’m still one of the very few. And just a simple visual that nobody looks like you. It makes you feel like, well, I don’t belong (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Such feelings of estrangement and not belonging attest to the difficulty protégés experience in becoming part of the academic world and the inside story (Burden et al., 2005). In particular, ethnic minorities are most likely to feel the estrangement and isolation as described by Manjeet and Nandita because they lack role models who share and/or understand their race and culture (Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Zalaquett, 2006). Two protégés even went so far as to say that they might well have discontinued their studies if they had not been mentored.

Mentors and the Inside Story

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The major finding of the pilot study was that mentors are critical in providing access to the inside story. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown the value of mentoring in providing information about organizational culture, issues, and practices (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). Likewise, in this present study, mentors were found to be vital in terms of telling their protégés about the inside story and giving them access to it. The word “access,” with its attendant meanings of approachability, admittance, and ability to enter, is apt in describing the mentors’ important role in helping their protégés gain entry into the inside story of academia. I have used this word frequently in this section because of this vital and almost indispensable role played by the mentors. Indeed, one mentor described her role as helping her protégés access the academic world:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): I sort of see my role as their mentor as gradually bringing them into that world and letting them realize that there’s a part of them that could enjoy that world and that they’ll need to do certain things . . . that would ensure their availability of entering into that world, so trying to facilitate that for them and encourage them and talk to them and that kind of thing (personal interview March 26, 2005).

Joan (Protégé) likewise stated that her mentor’s knowledge of the inside story and connections to the inside network were helpful in her career development. In an e-mail to me, she wrote:

Joan (Protégé): From talking to friends at different schools, I’ve realized that the intricacies of the process vary from school to school, and so Dr. Lombardi can help me in new ways b/c of the simple fact that she’s here. And b/c of that she not
only knows "the system" here, but has the connections and can open more doors (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 24, 2005).

Interestingly, even though Joan’s father is a university administrator at a different school and conceivably had the skills and knowledge to mentor her, Joan found that “there are parts of mentoring he just can’t do” (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 24, 2005). Her father being in a position of power did not mean that he had power at Joan’s school or in her field of specialization. Hence, it was important for her to have a mentor who was part of the inside network at her school and who could help her navigate the system.

Another way in which mentors helped their protégés access the inside story was by serving as guides to the unique culture and customs of the academic world. Indeed, academic language can be so cryptic that it sometimes requires interpretation from an insider who is conversant with the specific conventions of academia. One protégé even used the word “translate” when she discussed how her mentor helped her decipher academic job advertisements:

Latisha (Protégé): There were some jobs that I was thinking of applying for that I had some questions about and she was able to read the [ad] ... how it says like there’s the job description and then it will have the tasks and she was able to translate those tasks for me in English (personal interview, May 26, 2005).

In giving protégés access to the inside story, mentors were found to be powerful sources for transformation and empowerment for several protégés:

Manjeet (Protégé): He’s helped me get access to people that are in my field and he’s helped me to learn from those people or connect with those people and he’s taught me how to network basically. I was such a shy person. I told you I was the
Having a mentor transformed Manjeet from someone sitting on the sidelines to someone with access to the inside story and the confidence to navigate it. A key reason behind this dramatic transformation was Terrel’s providing access to the inside story (“He’s helped me get access to people that are in my field”).

*Mentor Practices and Access to the Inside Story*

Mentors were found to provide access to the inside story in the seven following ways:

- being proactive
- giving information and advice on the unwritten rules of the profession
- providing and paving access to the inside network
- providing access to themselves
- furnishing career opportunities
- role-modeling
- providing financial assistance and support

Each of these practices will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

*Being proactive.*

There is a terrible powerlessness inherent in being unaware or ignorant – one cannot ask for help or take action when one does not know what to ask for. Worse still, one might even be in the helplessly disempowered position of being ignorant of one’s
own ignorance. As one of the protégés put it, a student without mentoring might not “even know how to get the guidance to know (Manjeet (Protégé), personal interview, January 11, 2006).” Hence, mentors not only are vital for providing access to the inside story but are critical for proactively guiding the protégés and providing insight into the inside story. Perez (1993) identifies the “proactive mentor” as someone who actively, rather than passively watches over the protégé’s career. One mentor’s reflections on her own lack of mentoring illuminate the difference between being actively mentored and being left alone:

Dr. Munoz (Mentor): I cannot say I was mentored into higher education. . . . I wasn’t really mentored into the profession. When I started teaching, I think people pretty much left me alone (laughs) and it’s not as though they didn’t ask how I was doing but there was not active mentoring. No one really sat down and said to me, “You ought to be publishing your dissertation or you ought to be doing some new research based on what you’re doing in school.” So I think it was more watching people’s examples that helped me . . . but there was no active mentoring (personal interview, April 26, 2005).

In this quote, Dr. Munoz gives an example of what active mentoring looks like – the mentor proactively tells the protégé vital information and advice (“No one really sat down and said to me, “You ought to be publishing your dissertation”), as opposed to leaving them to figure things out on their own (“people pretty much left me alone”). Proactive mentoring necessitates an extra level of thoughtfulness and action on the part of the mentor beyond merely checking in with a student: it is worth noting that Dr. Munoz was not completely ignored (“it’s not as though they didn’t ask how I was doing”) but it
is clear that no one was actively and proactively overseeing her career ("there was no active mentoring"). Proactive mentoring means that the mentor, without prompting, thinks of, acts on behalf of the protégé, and prompts the protégé to action, even if the protégé is unaware of his/her needs. An example of such proactive mentoring can be seen in the description of one mentor who thought of her protégés without having to be prompted or asked:

Ming (Protégé): And even just like with the scholarship, fellowship opportunities.
Whenever she sees something that she thinks is suitable, she would forward it to me and encourage me to apply or trying to make sure that I have enough money to survive and that just happens...like that just happens. I can tell that it’s on her mind. It wasn’t like I had to beg her or anything (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

This mentor’s proactive thinking on behalf of her protégés is evident in Ming’s words ("that just happens...like that just happens. I can tell that it’s on her mind"). Ming’s words -- "It wasn’t like I had to beg her or anything" -- are powerful in their evocation of her mentor’s depth of caring, thoughtfulness, and action.

I first identified and analyzed the importance of being proactive in the pilot study. In this present study, being proactive was likewise found to be a distinguishing and important mentor practice. Many of the protégés expressed gratitude for their mentors’ proactive mentoring. One protégé’s use of phrases such as "watch over me” and “looking out for me" (Ai Ling, personal interview, June 13, 2005) illustrate her mentor’s active role in her life. Another protégé even described being proactive as the essence of what defines a mentor:
Maria (Protégé): I think what makes it mentoring is that she gets the steps of what
needs to be done so I can stay on schedule. Because I don’t know a lot of what
needs to be done and I think that she keeps me on the ball and she would be kind
of like, “Okay, you need to do this and you need to do that. Make sure you get
this done. Make sure you get that done” . . . anything like that she will . . . make
sure that it’s done right and everything is done. I think, that, for me, is what
makes it a mentoring relationship is that she is able to keep me right on track as
my academic mentor (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Proactive mentoring was found to be critical to the professional development of
the protégés because they lacked full knowledge and access to the inside story (Connell,
1985). One protégé noted the difference in her portfolio in contrast to other students who
lacked solid mentorship:

Ai Ling (Protégé): Just like looking at my other cohorts and I realize how much
this meant to me and helped me because I’m much more developed, like in terms
of my research work and my clinical work and I think that it’s really a matter of
mentorship because other mentors were not there for them . . . they were not given
the opportunities. I think my mentor gave me the opportunity to grow and to
develop (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Ai Ling realizes that her mentor’s proactive care of her resulted in her being given many
opportunities for growth. In contrast, not having proactive mentoring can result in
frustration, lost opportunities, and making mistakes that are easily preventable, as is seen
in the personal experience of one mentor who was not proactively mentored in graduate
school:
Dr. Miller (Mentor): So I’ve had to figure out a lot and it’s been frustrating because I sort of don’t want my students to have to do that (laughs) because a lot of what I’ve learned, I’ve learned by screwing up the first time. It’s just like I wish somebody would have told me.... [in terms of] research methods .... just having somebody look at what you’re doing and say, “Well, did you consider this? Did you consider that?” Everybody assumed that I could figure it out myself and I even look back at some of the research that I’ve done and that either didn’t get published or got published in lesser journals than I wanted it to be and part of it was because there were just obvious mistakes that I made that I wished someone had caught (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

*Giving information and advice on the unwritten rules of the profession.*

The mentors provided advice and inside information that would not have been easily obtainable otherwise (Connell, 1985; Humble et al., 2006). One protégé used the terms “showing the ropes” and “tricks of the trade” to describe the special type of information given by her mentor (Maria, personal interview, June 12, 2005). An illustrative example of a mentor giving helpful inside information can be seen in the following words from a protégé who stated she was unaware of the different set of values and priorities for graduate, as opposed to undergraduate, education:

Camille (Protégé): I came to grad school right from undergrad and . . . I didn’t realize this before I came here but he [her mentor] talked about how grad classes are a lot different than undergrad classes and you don’t have to get straight A’s in everything. It’s more your research should be your priority and you need to learn how to get B’s and things because it’s okay (laughs). . . . And so just having them
tell me that that it was okay to not read every single word of every single article assigned in every single class. Because I didn’t know that. I didn’t. So when I first got here, I was killing myself trying to do everything and then finally, they were like, you don’t have to and I was like, oh! and that really made my life a lot easier (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

Since it is not obvious that grades do not matter as much in graduate school, Camille attempted to “read every single word of every single article assigned in every single class.” Unaware of the unwritten rules of graduate school, she was “killing” herself trying to do the impossible. Her mentor’s intervention – giving her inside information on the true priorities of graduate school – helped her adjust successfully to life as a graduate student (“that really made my life a lot easier”).

Mentors provided inside information pertaining to all stages of academic and career development pertinent to the protégés (Luna & Cullen, 1998). On the other end of the spectrum from Camille, another protégé applying for academic jobs received inside information on applying and making the transition to a faculty position. Like Camille, this protégé mentioned several things he would not have known if not for his mentor:

Jung (Protégé): I was talking about possible jobs and applying and I’d ask her what were some things to consider and she gave me a whole lot of feedback. She asked me questions like, “Do you plan on uprooting and going out to the Midwest? Is that a reality for you?” God, I hadn’t thought about it. But she helped me explore things that I didn’t think about. . . . And so that was one thing she helped and she talked about the politics. She even warned me. If this is something you want to do, the negative sides of it, the politics but she also talked about the
positive sides -- the flexibility, the time that you have to set your own schedule. A lot of good things. So she gave me pros and cons of her experiences. . . . So in a lot of ways she prepared me for what I might see and what expectations I have (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Jung’s mentor gave him access to the inside story by providing him with privileged information regarding life as a faculty (“she talked about the politics. . . . she gave me pros and cons of her experiences”). She also suggested important factors to consider when applying for jobs (“do you plan on uprooting and going out to the Midwest?”). These critical pieces of information might likely have escaped his notice if not for his mentor being proactive about telling him (“she helped me explore things that I didn’t think about”).

Another mentor in a taped mentoring session revealed the expectations regarding publications for untenured faculty:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): If you’re not doing something that they want, like I was running [a program] and they wanted that and so then one a year is fine but if you’re not doing that kind of service for the university stuff, then two a year.

Latisha (Protégé): Two research projects a year?

Dr. Johnson: No, two publications. It doesn’t matter what you write it on. Two publications a year. It’s gotten to be that bad. But nobody goes up for tenure without six or seven, preferably ten publications. Now publications are not all in critical research. Some of them are chapters. Some of them are book reviews (Dr. Johnson and Latisha mentoring session, June 23, 2005).
Dr. Johnson not only tells her protégé the expected standard of success for faculty ("nobody goes up for tenure without six or seven"), she also tells her the ideal number of publications to aim for ("preferably ten publications") as well as outlines the types of publications considered acceptable ("Some of them are chapters. Some of them are book reviews"). All of this is inside information critical to future professional success, yet this information would not have been divulged to Latisha if she did not have a mentor. Indeed, Latisha’s query ("Two research projects a year?") indicates that she was unaware of these standards in academia.

Yet another way in which mentors were critical in providing inside information was guiding them during the formation of their dissertation committees. The mentors’ knowledge of the inside story was indispensable for this task. Said one mentor: "I have a sense of how some people are that students might not have" (Dr. Lombardi, personal interview, March 25, 2005). One instance of this type of inside information provided was seen in an e-mail exchange between Mimi (Mentor) and Ai Ling (Protégé) regarding possible dissertation committee members. Mimi provided Ai Ling with an insider’s perspective of one potential committee member: [She’s] very thorough and dedicated and works with Spanish language learners in quantitative research but she can also be very focused on the little details at times (e-mail from Mimi to Ai Ling, June 14, 2005). This was clearly useful information for Ai Ling when she formed her dissertation committee, but she would not have been privy to this type of information if not for her mentor.

Based on both mentor and protégé reports, I compiled a list of the types of inside information given by the mentors in this study. The following is not an exhaustive list of
the information given, but gives a good picture of the kinds of inside information provided:

- networking strategies
- doing some (not too much) service work to open doors
- proper way to format a curriculum vitae
- strategies for submitting an article to a journal
- responding to feedback from a journal
- expectations and priorities in the doctoral program
- getting funding
- strategies when applying for jobs
- putting together a dissertation committee
- strategies for the dissertation defense
- strategies when attending conferences
- information on careers in psychology
- finding a research niche
- handling politics
- expectations for faculty
- demands of academic life
- getting tenure

Providing access to the inside network.

The inside network consists of people who are the decision-makers and who hold the power in an organization or institution (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992; Ibarra, 1993).
Terrel (Mentor) describes these insiders as "certain key people who can open up doors for you" (personal interview, April 28, 2005). The mentor practice of introducing the protégés to influential people in the field has already been discussed in detail in the section on "Building Community" -- however, another layer of meaning embedded in this mentor practice is worth highlighting here. By making personal introductions to the influential people in the field, mentors helped their protégés' gain access to the inside network. This is an important mentor function because such networks are not readily accessible to outsiders without a sponsor. As one participant succinctly stated, "Those circles don’t open" (Nandita (Protégé), personal interview, December 17, 2005). One mentor noted that these introductions to the "scholarly network" was a critical part of her own experience of being mentored:

Akiko (Mentor): [Her mentor] introduced me to all of their colleagues across the nation who were interested in similar things and so I think through networking and their introduction of me to that scholarly network . . . were very key parts of my career (personal interview, December 22, 2005).

Another mentor also pointed out the value of connections to this scholarly network:

Dr. Munoz (Mentor): I introduce my students to them [distinguished scholars] and even just that kind of connection makes them feel really good. And, sometimes it leads to something that they may end up having to work with. . . And that’s good. And sometimes it doesn’t amount to anything but it’s just helping them be part of a bigger picture (personal interview May 20, 2005).
Dr. Munoz notes that connections to these scholars might potentially lead to other prospects ("sometimes it leads to something"). Such access also enhances and solidifies the protégés' sense of belonging in the field ("be part of a bigger picture").

In addition to personal introductions, mentors also provided access to the inside network in other ways. For instance, one mentor wrote personal notes and sent separate e-mails when her protégés were applying for internships or jobs:

Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): If you're writing a letter of recommendation for someone in a particular area . . . put a little personal note on the bottom and sending a separate e-mail to someone that you know there saying that this is a really good student . . . if you know that the student is interested in a particular area, you're already beginning to get them known among people in that area because a lot of areas are really pretty small (personal interview, March 25, 2005).

By introducing and endorsing the protégé in a personalized way ("put a little personal note on the bottom and sending a separate e-mail to someone that you know there saying that this is a really good student"), Dr. Lombardi sponsored the protégé's into the network of insiders ("get them known among people in that area").

Other mentors provided access through e-mail introductions. The following e-mail from Terrel (Mentor) is a good example:

On the Afro-Caribbean population and expressed emotion, I don't have any great ideas at my finger tips. Dr. X is a clinical psychologist with an Afro-Caribbean background. She might be someone to contact. She's a former student of mine. She can be reached also at Y University; e-mail: x@y.edu You can also use my name. Another resource person is Dr. Z. Z knows a lot of psychologists and he
might well know someone with an Afro-Caribbean background (Terrel, e-mail, January 26, 2004).

This mentor facilitated his protégé’s access to the inside network by giving her access to his network (“She’s a former student of mine”). In addition, he allowed her to use his name as a point of entry for starting the connection (“You can also use my name”).

In these different ways, the mentors helped their protégés access the inside network. This was a common mentor practice across the board – without exception, all the mentors introduced their protégés to influential members of the field. This universality amongst the mentors in this study point to the significance and importance of this practice.

Providing access to themselves.

A key way in which the mentors provided access to the inside story was by being accessible themselves. By being available and open to their protégés, the mentors gave them access to a valuable resource – the time, knowledge, and attention of an insider. The importance of mentor accessibility was also found in a case study of a junior mentored faculty member (Cawyer et al., 2002). Twelve of the protégés in the present study made special note of the accessibility of their mentors. Said one protégé:

Nandita (Protégé): She’d give all of her doc students her home phone number.
And says that that’s the place they can reach her. Obviously, they can reach her in the office but she makes herself very available outside of the office... the other thing is you could drop by her office any time and if you needed to talk to her, if you can’t get her that moment, you could get her that day which also isn’t always true of faculty members. I know for myself even, I don’t always do that. I’ll make
an appointment with students but I won’t always be able to see them that day. So she was really physically available and emotionally available (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Another protégé noted that her mentor’s accessibility was a unique and important feature of her mentoring relationship:

Manjeet (Protégé): [He] always left the lines open. Anything I needed, I would get a call from him. If he was leaving for a couple of days, [he would say] I’m going to be gone. This is where I’m at. Here’s my number. He made himself accessible. And I had never had that with anybody and I think those are some of the really unique aspects of the relationship (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Manjeet in the quote above pinpoints her mentor’s accessibility as one of the “really unique” aspects of her mentoring relationship. Other protégés likewise reported that their mentors’ accessibility distinguished them from other advisors or professors. Said one protégé:

Ai Ling (Protégé): I felt distant from a lot of professors but with my mentors, I really feel close to them. I feel they’re someone I can turn to and that they stand by me and look out for me when I’m in trouble, when I encounter difficulties or challenges (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

One way in which mentors were accessible was by being physically available to their protégés. Five of the mentors had an “open door policy” or shared offices with their protégés, thus allowing them frequent and easy access to themselves. Said one protégé:
Jung (Protégé): So availability, I think, is a very important aspect . . . she was often in her room with the door open either working on a research project or talking to somebody. So that was something that was certainly a wonderful comfort and I think if she were not around as much it would have been difficult to develop that kind of rapport (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Another protégé put it concisely but aptly: “You can knock on her door and she would be there” (Maria, personal interview, June 12, 2005). This sense of accessibility on the part of the mentors had a number of positive effects. First, as Jung said, it helped create a sense of comfort and fostered closeness in the relationships. Second, the easy access also provided a sense of welcoming and warmth for the protégés, so that they felt invited into the world of the mentors. Said one of the mentors reminiscing about her own mentor:

Akiko (Mentor): He was somebody whose door was always open, like literally always open and he didn’t mind my dropping in just to say hello . . . I’m amazed how little irritation he showed at how often I dropped in just to chitchat and toss off a new research idea or just to talk about various aspects of graduate school . . . so I think just his openness to considering me as a student and colleague and to expose to me various aspects of an academic research career (personal interview, December 22, 2005).

Akiko’s words show how a mentor’s accessibility can create for the protégé a sense of belonging in the inside story. Through his accessibility (“door was always open, like literally always open”) and openness (“he didn’t mind my dropping in just to say hello”), he showed an acceptance of her as a colleague and a member of the inside story (“his openness to considering me as a student and colleague”). The mentor’s willingness to talk
about various aspects of graduate school or academic careers also gave her further insight into the inside story.

*Giving time.*

Another way in which mentors provided access to themselves and to the inside story was by giving and spending time with their protégés (Feist-Price, 2001; Larke, Patitu, Webb-Johnson, & Young-Hawkins, 1999). Giving time was found to be a significant mentor practice in the pilot study, yet it is only occasionally mentioned in the literature, perhaps because it is implicitly assumed to be part of a mentor’s job. However, in both the pilot study as well as in this present study, the mentors’ generosity and willingness in giving time to their protégés was found to be an important aspect of mentoring. Many of the protégés reported that their mentors spent many hours with them, talking about ideas, giving feedback on their work, or simply checking in about their lives:

Solomon (Protégé): I defended on a Wednesday and we met on a Thursday for almost two hours just at the end of the day in her office, just talking about all sorts of things including my dad and she was sharing some things with me about what it was like for her... when her mom was sick (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

The amount of time that some of the mentors in this study spent on their protégés was truly remarkable. Four protégés (each with a different mentor) said they spent upwards of two hours when they met with their mentors. Such generosity in giving time is even more remarkable considering that these mentors had multiple protégés on top of heavy teaching, research, and administrative loads. Most of the mentors spent time with
their protégés during one-on-one, regularly-scheduled meetings. However, it is critical to note that mentors also expended significant amounts of time on their protégés in other ways, as can be seen in the practices of one mentor:

Bob (Mentor): Well, at least weekly meetings and a lab meeting [for each protégé] . . . the weekly meetings maybe half an hour or so and lab meeting is an hour and often it's more than that in terms of reading their work, informal meetings outside our formal meeting times but the minimum would be about an hour and a half, time wise but that doesn’t count the time I spend on . . . giving them feedback and communicating via e-mail, informal meetings with them (personal interview April 21, 2005).

By giving time, the mentors made themselves accessible to their protégés and at the same time, helped to make the academic world more welcoming to them. Said one protégé:

Sovann (Protégé): There’s already time in his schedule for me to go see him. I don’t have to work around anything that he has to do . . . . there’s time allotted in there and I think professors can be very intimidating sometimes and so just by doing that, it makes it less intimidating for me (personal interview June 17, 2005).

Sovann’s use of the word “intimidating” indicates that professors can be (or appear to be) distant, aloof, and inaccessible to students. In contrast, her mentor’s willingness to spend time with her made him more approachable and accessible. Similarly, another protégé noted that her mentor’s willingness to be accessible and spend time with her created a “welcoming” feel:
Manjeet (Protégé): Just by being very open, by telling me where he’s going to be all the time, by having access to him at home and having access to him at work and when he’s away. I think that’s really been the welcoming aspect that I can call as much or as little as I want and he never rushes me off the phone (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

The time given to protégés also helped them become part of the inside story by giving them a space to talk about their ideas and their nascent professional identities. In reminiscing about the long periods of time she spent with her mentor, Mimi (Mentor) noted that:

It was such a big aspect of my creative and intellectual development. I felt like she really treated me as an equal even though it was clear she was so much smarter than I was, but would spend hours a week talking with me about my ideas which I really felt was necessary. . . . it meant the world because it was such a big aspect of my kind of creative and intellectual development and helping me really think about what I was interested in. . . . it was definitely long, long periods of time and I remember the sun would be setting and her office would be dark because we’d usually just let natural light come in and we’d have to turn on the light . . . I think it may be different with her now. I don’t know that I could just show up at her office and have that amount of (laughs) time. . . . But it still felt very special (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Mimi notes the importance of being given the time to process her ideas with her mentor ("it was definitely long, long periods of time"). This gesture also gave her access to the inside story by nurturing her sense of belonging in the academic world ("I felt like she
really treated me as an equal”) as well as providing guidance and support for her emerging identity as a researcher (“it was such a big aspect of my kind of creative and intellectual development and helping me really think about what I was interested in”).

As the above quotes show, the mentors’ willingness to give and spend time helped to establish accessibility and a sense of welcoming, as well as provide support for professional development. Given the significance of this mentor practice, it was striking that a number of protégés appeared to be incognizant that their mentors were both selfless and intentional in giving them time. For instance, when I asked one protégé about her mentor setting aside time for her, she replied:

I guess I had never thought about it because it just seemed like that’s just the way it is . . . it’s really important to be able to do that. I’m sure other people probably don’t have that experience. I’m probably taking it for granted (name of protégé withheld, personal interview).

Said another protégé: “We never even scheduled for less than an hour. We always scheduled an hour and she never usually had anything scheduled after me. . . . I actually never really thought about it” (name of protégé withheld, personal interview). These protégés’ responses show how easy it is to overlook this mentor practice. Yet, for the mentors, giving time was clearly not a trifling matter, as evidenced by their strikingly unequivocal remarks on this issue. When I asked about the downsides to mentoring, all the mentors, without exception, agreed that time was a major consideration:

Anne Chan: What do you feel are the costs and benefits of mentoring to you?

Mimi (Mentor): It’s super time intensive, it’s around the clock . . . I just carve out time for my family which is early in the morning when they wake up . . . and then
once I drop them off at school then the day is for my students but usually after the
kids go to bed, I do work another few hours and then that’s when I do more e-mail
and connecting back with people who I didn’t get to during the day. So it’s a huge
investment time-wise and emotionally (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Another mentor was even more explicit about the considerable professional costs of
spending time on protégés:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): Now the cost is the time involved in doing that and how it
takes away from some of the other things that I need to be doing in order to
advance my own career. There’s always this challenge of making sure I have
enough time when Latisha [her protégé] comes in because we’ve got two hours or
two and a half as opposed to an hour or 45 minute meeting that I have with
somebody else because we’re talking a lot and we are involved in each other’s
communication, so it’s not a short meeting with Latisha. . . . I have some
colleagues who are just very prolific in terms of writing and researching and they
have mentees that are very functional and they choose their mentees for their
assistance with putting together manuscripts and publications. This is not how I
choose my mentees, you know? (laughs) So I choose the mentees need all of this
nurturing and support and structure and I get a lot out of it but it also takes away
from my productivity . . . there’s the cost. The cost of taking on the kind of
mentees that I take on is that it does have an impact on my professional
productivity because at our level, a faculty person’s productivity is as good as his
or her research (personal interview, May 26, 2005).
Dr. Johnson’s candor points to the extremely high cost associated with giving time -- the
time that these mentors spend on their protégés could otherwise be spent furthering their
own career. The personal and professional sacrifices inherent in giving time show that
giving time is clearly of consequence to the mentors. As such, this mentor practice of
giving time, though easily overlooked, is not one to be taken lightly. The value of giving
time can also be seen in the negative case examples of two protégés who had
comparatively less face-to-face time with their mentors and who expressed a desire to be
able to spend more time with their mentors. These protégés stated that the one thing they
would change about their mentoring relationships was to be able to have more time with
their mentors.

One goal of this study is to explicate the obvious and to unearth levels of meaning
behind mentor practices that may seem unexceptional at first glance. The practice of
giving time is one that is particularly pertinent in this regard because spending time might
initially appear routine and mundane. However, the comments made by both mentors and
protégés in this study underline the significance of giving time as an important mentor
activity.

*Mentor self-disclosure.*

Mentor self-disclosure was discussed extensively in the “Sharing Personal
Information” section and was found to be critical in building trust in the mentoring
relationships. In addition to building trust, mentor self-disclosure was found to have
another important function -- providing access to the mentors themselves and to the
inside story.
Many of the protégés reported that having access to their mentors was extremely meaningful and important to them, partly because of previous experiences with professors who were distant and inaccessible to students. One protégé contrasted her mentors with other professors whom she perceived as being aloof: “They (her mentors) are being very genuine and open in sharing their experiences . . . I really don’t feel that they are being distant. I felt distant from a lot of professors but with my mentors, I really feel close to them” (Ai Ling (Protégé), personal interview, June 13, 2005).

A key way in which many of the mentors allowed access to themselves was by sharing personal information (Boyle & Boice, 1998b; Trubowitz, 2004). In doing so, they became less aloof and more approachable to their protégés. Boyle and Boice (1998) found that mentors who shared personal experiences moved beyond giving advice and were more personal and compassionate in their interactions. One mentor noted that his stories about a well-known psychologist helped create access for his students:

Bob (Mentor): John Smith [name changed] is a very good friend of mine and I have all of these stories about John that I’ve told . . . I’ve probably told them too many because they all wanted to meet John . . . They saw him as a human who was a really well respected psychologist but still was a human being and did things that they considered funny so, actually, some of them have met him and felt empowered to talk to him because they saw him as a human being rather than this authority figure that was so distant. So I think that’s happened even with me too. They see that that I have a sense of humor and that I’m a human being and that I make mistakes sometimes and so I think that makes me more accessible to them (personal interview April 21, 2005).
Without the benefit of these stories, the protégés might well have deemed senior psychologists such as John Smith and Bob to be unapproachable and inaccessible ("authority figure that was so distant"). However, the stories revealed John’s and Bob’s human qualities, thus creating access to two insiders for his protégés ("some of them have met him and felt empowered to talk to him because they saw him as a human being").

Another important way in which the mentors’ self-disclosure provided and supported access to the inside story was by giving them privileged insight into the mentors’ own experiences. Such insight helped protégés see that their own struggles did not signify that they did not belong in the academic world. Two protégés said that learning about their mentor’s experiences empowered them:

Maria (Protégé): She talked about her own experience in school and how she had trouble herself with . . . things like that but she was able to get through it . . . I remember when I took Stats as an undergraduate and it was very hard but I think it was the professor because he was just not available . . . with Dr. Miller [her mentor], she talks about how she had people like that in her past and . . . how those types of experiences can definitely make you stop because you’re afraid you’re not going to be able to do it and that she is able to share that experience with you and encourage you that you can do it and go the extra mile to get it . . . I think that’s how she helps. Because I definitely had a lot of doubts of whether or not I’d be able to get through the program and not expecting to actually get in the program and actually be as far as I am now. I think that she helped me with that (personal interview, June 12, 2005).
Notably, Maria contrasts a professor who was “just not available” with her mentor, who self-disclosed about her own struggles. Having this access and insight into her mentor’s experiences encouraged Maria to persevere and to believe that she belonged in the inside story. Likewise, Jung (Protégé) noted that his mentor’s self-disclosure about her initial struggles with teaching was encouraging for him: “When she shared some of her experiences and how she really felt nervous at times and just was really vulnerable and transparent, it empowered me” (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

It should be noted that this mentor practice of self-disclosure was not uniform across the board – some mentors divulged a great deal of themselves whereas two reported that they shared little about themselves. However, the protégés of mentors who were comfortable with self-disclosure reported that they appreciated the closeness and access such disclosure created.

Providing career opportunities.

Kram (1985) identifies two separate career functions: exposure-and-visibility, and challenging assignments. She defines exposure-and-visibility as “assigning responsibilities that allow a lower-level manager to develop relationships with key figures in the organization” (p. 27) and challenging assignments as “the assignment of challenging work” (p. 31). She sees challenging assignments as pertaining to the individual’s job-related function, while exposure-and-visibility is a “socializing” force (p. 31). These two mentor functions were observed in this study – in fact, all of the mentors were found to perform both functions. However, the findings in this study diverged from Kram’s model in that exposure-and-visibility was not found to be a completely separate and distinct function from challenging assignments. Instead, mentors were found to
provide many opportunities that not only challenged and developed their protégés’
competencies and skills, but also gave them exposure to the field and to important people
in the field. In sum, mentors gave protégés new opportunities to help them gain access to
the inside story.

The e-mails forwarded to me from protégés provided many examples of mentors
giving a variety of career-enhancing opportunities to protégés, such as offers to publish,
present, and do research. The following is one example of such an e-mail from one
mentor to his protégé:

Dr. X. is a friend who is putting together a symposium for the WPA convention . .
. I told him about your first-year project, and he is interested in including it in the
proposal. I think this would be a good opportunity for you. Assuming that you
want to participate, I'll let him know (E-mail from Bob (Mentor) to Sovann
(Protégé), October 25, 2004).

Bob’s offer helped his protégé, Sovann, access to the inside story by giving her the
opportunity to collaborate and present with a senior colleague in the field. This
opportunity was beneficial both in enhancing Sovann’s portfolio as well as in giving her
exposure to Dr. X, a senior psychologist. It is important to note that Bob was proactive in
providing this opportunity. On his own initiative, he mentioned Sovann’s work to his
friend (“I told him about your first-year project”) and this led to an opportunity for
Sovann to present her research findings. When I asked Sovann about Bob providing her
with opportunities, she said:

Putting me as co-author on the paper that he’s written on that grant and putting
me as co-author on a chapter that he’s writing for an Asian American Psychology
Handbook are things that he doesn’t necessarily have to do but he’s doing it because it helps my CV and it gives me good experience and finding opportunities for me to present every year. I presented at a WPA, at a symposium. So these are all things that I’m actually doing for the first time or starting to do and so he can very well not do all of those things but he’s chosen to do all of those things so I think professionally it really helps that I’m getting these types of experiences (Sovann (Protégé), personal interview June 17, 2005).

Sovann notes not just once (“things that he doesn’t necessarily have to do”), but twice (“he can very well not do all of those things”) that her mentor does not necessarily have to provide these opportunities. These statements point to how proactive and thoughtful her mentor is in providing these opportunities to enhance her career. Such proactive gestures were critical in developing the careers of the protégés. Two protégés explicitly stated that they would not have had the opportunities they enjoyed, if not for their mentors. Said Manjeet (Protégé): “I don’t think that I would have had a quarter of the opportunities or a quarter of the successes that I’ve had if it weren’t for Terrel [her mentor]” (personal interview, January 11, 2006). Said another protégé:

I know I wouldn’t have had any publications because all of mine are with [her mentor], and I think I wouldn’t have had as many opportunities because I think [her mentors] have just introduced me to a lot of people and have given me so many opportunities... I know lots of people who went through graduate school and never had one presentation because no one ever asked them (Shanti (Protégé), personal interview, January 10, 2006).
These opportunities allowed the protégés access to the inside story by giving them a wide variety of professional experiences which oftentimes increased their visibility in the field:

Ming (Protégé): She's given me a lot of opportunities to be involved in different projects and also publication and writing. She’s been very good with, in terms of involving her students . . . to co-write, like writing a research article with her and also . . . participating in professional conferences, meeting people who are in the field, getting to know their work, attending different symposiums and us presenting. . . . not every professor would stress that but she’s very good to make sure that her students are involved with that so we get the exposure of what the professional field is like (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

As Ming’s words show, her mentor’s provision of career opportunities not only helped her develop different competencies, they also exposed her to people in the field. Thus, unlike Kram’s (1985) depiction of the two separate functions of challenging assignments and exposure-and-visibility, this study of mentors and protégés in academia finds that these are intertwining functions that ultimately provide access to the inside story

Role-modeling.

Role modeling “involves the senior person setting a desirable example, and the junior person identifying with it” (Kram, 1985, p. 33). Kram found role modeling to be the most frequent psychosocial function reported in her study. Research on role modeling has been extensive and has shown that direct and observational learning are useful in the acquisition of new behaviors as well as the strengthening of one’s belief about being able to accomplish a task (Bandura, 1977; Lent et al., 1994). In this study, five protégés and
three mentors cited role-modeling as an essential component of their definition of a mentor:

Joan (Protégé): [A mentor is] someone who I can look to and see how they’ve developed their career and reflect on what parts of that I like and what parts of it don’t appeal to me and what kinds of decisions that they made and how I might make similar decisions to end up at the place that they’re at now or make different decisions (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

For ethnic minority protégés who often lack role models in academia (Feist-Price, 2001; Sanchez, 2005; Sanchez & Reyes, 1999), role models are especially critical because they serve as tangible examples of ethnic minorities who have successfully achieved their career goals (Feist-Price, 2001). As one ethnic minority protégé said:

So, actually, I think that’s why having people like Bob [her mentor] is such a great thing because I think a lot of people that are ethnic minorities or come from low socio economic backgrounds, their parents can’t be the role model for them. I mean, they can be the role model for them, but not in areas of achievement maybe or they can’t guide them step by step through this process (Sovann (Protégé), personal interview June 17, 2005).

Echoing Sovann’s sentiments, another protégé highlighted the impact of seeing her mentor’s success in academia as well as in her personal life:

Anne Chan: What were the steps that you saw her go through that were encouraging for you?

Ming (Protégé): The fact that her being the only Asian female faculty in the department. Having to fight through the power struggle not just within the
department but also the university. And also just being able to be a really good professor, being really good researcher but also a great person and really nice and friendly, very warm, very supportive person and also being able to balance family and professional career (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

The mentors’ role modeling and transparency about their professional roles and lives gave their protégés privileged glimpses into the many different aspects of an academic’s life. Many of these aspects of academic life are often hidden from students, hence, these glimpses gave the protégés access to the inside story by giving them concrete examples and ideas of career possibilities they might not have otherwise envisioned for themselves:

Maria (Protégé): Even though we’ve never talked about it, she showed me, for example, what it would be like if I decided that I wanted to do academia because I see it every day. That’s like showing me the ropes because it’s almost as though she kind of shadows me inadvertently without actually saying so because I see it every day what she does (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

The mentors’ role-modeling also helped the protégés envision a variety of career possibilities and empowered them to believe in these possibilities for their own careers. This is seen in one protégé whose mentor’s multiple roles inspired ideas for her own career development:

Paula (Protégé): She’s really modeled for me the different roles that I could engage in my professional life because she does a lot of consultations which I didn’t know what that was when I entered the program, of course, so she’s really served as a model, as a business person and as a consultant. That’s been very big
in terms of me conceptualizing my own professional path and that’s something I
too could engage in. And she’s modeled how to be a really good professor and
how to do pro bono clinical work, sometimes she’ll go down during the summer
to Guatemala [name of country changed] and just do counseling with women in
Guatemala which is really inspiring to me to recognize the social justice piece of
things and that as part of my own professional identity, I too, want to contribute to
things in that way and doing free work or going that extra mile to engage in the
social justice things (personal interview May 20, 2005).

As Paula’s words show, her mentor’s role modeling provides access to the inside story by
introducing her to different career possibilities (“She’s really modeled for me the
different roles that I could engage in my professional life”). Without her mentor’s role
modeling, she would not otherwise have known about these professional roles (“I didn’t
know what that was when I entered the program”).

Role-modeling as a means of envisioning possibilities was also observed in other
respects. For some of the female protégés with mentors who were also mothers, role
modeling was especially helpful in demonstrating how to balance a professional life with
motherhood (Gilbert & Rossman, 1992). Said one protégé:

Ming (Protégé): The inspiring part definitely is that a woman can really have a
career, a very successful career and a very loving family . . . before I have doubts
that a woman can really have both. But I found out that it is possible (personal
interview, June 12, 2005).

The above quotes from protégés in this study are consistent with Kram’s
definition of role-modeling as setting an inspiring and positive example. However, the
role-modeling in this study was observed to have an additional level of complexity.

Although the mentors were deeply respected and admired as positive role models, I was struck that several of them remarked about not hiding or shielding their protégés from less desirable or positive aspects of themselves or the job. One mentor said that she attempts to be a “realistic” role model for her students:

Akiko (Mentor): For female students but male students as well, is to show . . . it is possible to maintain a demanding academic career and have a family but I try not to hide the difficulty as well. So I think trying to serve as a realistic role model (personal interview, May 13, 2005).

Indeed, one mentor was observed not hiding her frustration and emotions at times. Noted one protégé about her mentor’s reactions to comments about her work:

Ming (Protégé): I’ve seen her like getting very discouraged and very disappointed and also sometimes angry about some of those comments. So I’ve seen that and then I’ve also seen her kind of like taking her time, sometimes bounce back in a few weeks and then getting back to it again and resubmit it and work really hard on it and spend countless hours revising.

Anne Chan: So you’ve seen the human side of her?

Ming: That definitely does. It definitely helps me kind of realize that . . . all of the successful researchers, they have to go through at that level (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Another protégé was surprised to learn about his mentor’s rough start to teaching:

Jung (Protégé): Even when I said, “I suck at teaching” . . . she would share with me how she sucked at the beginning and made me feel like, oh, you can’t suck.
You're great when you teach. And to hear her talk about a time when she wasn’t so good made me feel, wow, maybe I can also develop in that same way (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

These examples stand out because they showcase these mentors’ willingness to reveal themselves as real human beings with human emotions, failings, and limitations. Indeed, it appears that this human aspect of the mentors’ role modeling actually helped them to be more accessible to their protégés. As one mentor observed: “They see that I have a sense of humor and that I’m a human being and that I make mistakes sometimes and so I think that makes me more accessible to them” (Bob, personal interview, April 21, 2005). Another way in which such realistic role-modeling provided access to the inside story was by giving protégés the sense that they too, with their limitations, could succeed in academia. As Jung said in the above quote, “To hear her talk about a time when she wasn’t so good made me feel, wow, maybe I can also develop in that same way” (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Providing financial assistance and practical support.

Attending a doctoral program is definitely not a cheap endeavor. The costs generally associated with a doctoral education are tuition and living expenses. These costs alone are quite exorbitant – for instance, at Stanford University, the tuition for the academic year of 2006-2007 is $43,992 for graduate students who have not advanced to candidacy. In addition, the university calculates the annual living expenses for 2006-2007 to be $26,493 (Stanford University, 2006). This calculation includes books, supplies, rent, food, personal expenses, health insurance, and local transportation. However, these estimates do not factor in other costs that are important for the development of one’s
professional career. These expenses include the cost of doing research, belonging to professional organizations, and attending professional conferences. Hence, students without the personal resources to finance their education and pay for these professional costs are at a significant disadvantage. Consequently, it is perhaps not surprising that financial aid has been found to be a key strategy for recruiting graduate students of color (Munoz-Dunbar & Stanton, 1999; Rogers & Molina, 2006).

Many of the mentors provided financial assistance and support to their protégés in a variety of ways:

- funding students through research and teaching assistanships
- providing seed money to do research
- paying for conference fees
- providing work to help offset tuition and living expenses
- paying for membership fees to professional organizations
- paying for printing costs for poster sessions
- paying for a plane ticket to attend a conference
- sharing a room with protégé at conferences
- paying for meals and snacks
- buying books for protégés

At times, the mentors directly paid for some of these professional expenses:

Mimi (Mentor): If my students really need stuff and they can’t afford it, I might buy them…like I bought all my doctoral students that book [a book about writing the dissertation]… I did it through my research account. … I think that’s a good thing to do because I always had professors who gave me books or helped me out
in that way. I feel like buying a $60 book is a really big deal for students and if I think it will change how they do their dissertation, I think it’s a good investment (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Another example of direct financial help was two mentors offering work or funding for their protégés during summer (when students generally are not funded). Said one protégé:

Ai Ling (Protégé): She knows my greatest concern is my funding so she tries to help me whatever that she can do, she would try to help me out.

Anne Chan: Can you give me an example of her helping you out financially?

Ai Ling: I’m her research assistant and so this summer I was trying to take up a TA [Teaching Assistant] job and then she said, “No, you have to focus on your dissertation,” and I said, “No, I really need the money” and then she said, “Well, how about I increase your salary” and so she did (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Another mentor’s thoughtfulness can be seen in her concern about her protégé’s need for benefits during the summer: “Ginny, do you need benefits for the summer?? If so, I can see if we can make your appt 20 hours. Of course you may not want to work that many hours” (Dr. Lombardi (Mentor), e-mail, May 13, 2003).

At other times, mentors provided financial assistance and support in less direct ways:

Dr. Munoz (Mentor): I can find the money sometimes for someone to go a conference or I know who they can contact to go. We just had the XYZ conference and two of my students connected with someone I know, who then through their organization, paid for their registration fees. So it really is
sometimes helping them by paying for it, but more often than not, I don’t do that. But I think also helping them find the ins and outs for getting the money they need to go (personal interview, April 26, 2005).

The meaning and significance of gift giving was explicated in the section on “Gift Giving.” The different means of financial support as outlined above certainly qualify as gifts. At one level, these gestures served as instrumental help in supporting the careers of the protégés. At another level, these gestures also had the added significant dimension and meaning of helping the protégés access the inside story. Through their direct and indirect financial support, mentors smoothed the way for protégés to do the activities necessary for getting access to the inside story. One protégé acknowledged that the resources offered by her mentors helped her to “make it financially:” “She’s really opened up a lot of doors just in terms of funding for me and getting me positions including in different departments that have really enabled me to make it financially” (Joan (Protégé), personal interview, May 21, 2005). Another protégé reported that funding was her “greatest concern” and was grateful to her mentor for helping her out in this respect (Ai Ling (Protégé), personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Concluding Thoughts about Mentors and the Inside Story

All of the protégés (regardless of cultural and racial background) talked about benefiting from the expertise of their mentors in accessing the inside story. However, for ethnic minorities, this theme of the inside story was particularly cogent. As one protégé (a biracial student) put it:

Manjeet (Protégé): He brings the expertise of things, a person of color in psychology and he’s seen so much and experienced so much as a Black
psychologist that he knows the system and he can bring that in relating to what going through . . . He can even predict what the reactions are and he can help me navigate the system if I'm having issues with the system academically, professors, whatever, he knows how it works. He knows what to do. Nobody can understand that (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

As Manjeet's words show, mentors are critical in helping and guiding students through the academic world. Mentors are particularly indispensable for their expertise in providing access to the inside story ("he knows the system. . . . He knows what to do").

The inside story was a major theme in this study – mentors not only told their protégés about the inside story, they also helped them to negotiate the oftentimes murky, confusing, and unclear waters that confronted them. Moreover, they provided emotional and even financial support so that the protégés were equipped intellectually, materially, and psychologically to enter this inner world. The mentor's provision of access to the inside story was found to be critical to the protégés progress and persistence through school and beyond. Without such guidance and support, it is likely that the protégés would struggle or even drop out. Said Jung (Protégé): "Without her mentoring? I think there's a strong sense that I would have dropped out of the program, a very strong chance" (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Protection

Henry Kissenger once opined that "University politics are vicious precisely because the stakes are so small." It seems banal to state that politics exists in academia and that doctoral students are not immune from political or power struggles in the academic world (Sumprer & Walfish, 2001). Indeed, grappling with politics can be one
of the most challenging aspects of getting through a doctoral program (Feist-Price, 2001; Pierce, 1998). As one protégé said:

Jung (Protégé): To me, I didn’t find the academic work that difficult. I found navigating the politics probably the most challenging thing because a lot of faculty have these egos . . . they’re just so proud and if you say the wrong thing, they’ll try to make your life very difficult in the program. They’ll try to give you a B+ instead of an A. They will avoid you and just make things uncomfortable and people can be very petty. I might have an annual review or portfolio review . . . and I’ve been yelled at. This one professor yelled at me in front of all the faculty members and he made comments that were very, just attacking, just personal attacks which I just didn’t appreciate (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

As experienced by Jung (who himself is now faculty at another college), academic politics can take the form of interpersonal conflict with faculty who wield power over the lives of doctoral students. Political challenges for students also come in a variety of other stripes, such as bureaucratic hassles or friction between faculty members that trickle down and impact student life. For instance, both mentors and protégés mentioned several challenges during the dissertation phase, such as dealing with committee members who did not read their work or who pressured them toward undesired directions. Such challenges can be extremely stressful for doctoral students and can impede or derail successful progress through graduate school. The degree of stress, trepidation, and uncertainty students feel when dealing with politics is indicated in one mentor’s words:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): A lot of times, I’ll find that students are terrified. Actually, changing your major or changing your advisors is something that terrifies them . .
I've had students come trembling, "What's going to happen? I'm working with Dr. So and So but I've realized that I'm really interested in something else and what should I do?" (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

When I asked about protection, none of the protégés denied the need for protection nor did they shy away from the term. On the contrary, the protégés made numerous allusions to protection using phrases such as "looking out for me," (Ai-Ling), "stand by you" (Ai-Ling), "my advocate" (Camille, Paula, and Solomon), "went to bat for me" (Joan and Latisha), "on my side" (Camille, Solomon), "covered for me" (Jung Park), "an ally" (Jung Park and Manjeet), "had my back" (Nandita and Solomon), "my defender" (Solomon) and "fight on my behalf" (Latisha). Originating from the protégés themselves, these descriptors are especially striking because they evoke a sense of how active ("went to bat for me") and proactive ("looking out for me") these mentors were in providing protection. These diverse phrases for protection speak to the significance of this mentor practice for the protégés as well as their perceptions regarding the need for protection. Furthermore, two protégés believed their mentors protected them in ways that were not always visible to them: "I think she's protected me in ways that I probably don't even know about. I'm quite sure about that" (Jung (Protege), personal interview, June 20, 2005).

Most of the mentors confirmed their roles as protectors. As Dr. Johnson (Mentor) said point-blank:

I feel like that's a part of the role of being a mentor in an academic setting that you are in a hierarchical system so when you've got some power in that system,
you use it to help the people that you’re trying to help and I don’t have any qualms about that (personal interview, March 26, 2005).

Or as Terrel (Mentor) put it simply, “part of my job is looking out for them” (personal interview, April 28, 2005). Interestingly, three mentors seemed to downplay or minimize their protective function, even though each of these three cited clear instances of protecting their protégés.

**Definition of Protection**

The following is Kram’s (1988) definition of protection:

This function shields the junior person from untimely or potentially damaging contact with other senior officials. . . . Protection involves taking credit and blame in controversial situations, as well as intervening in situations where the junior colleague is ill-equipped to achieve satisfactory resolution (p. 29).

Kram’s research was situated within the context of a corporate environment. Hence, the specifics of her definition do not pertain perfectly to this study of mentors in academia (for instance, none of the participants in this study reported that the mentors took the blame in problematic situations). However, the general sense of protection as safeguarding the protégé’s interests and welfare is indeed pertinent to this study. A literature review on this subject revealed limited empirical research on this topic of mentoring and protection in the academy, although this function has been referenced by different writers (Anderson & Shannon, 1988). The available research and writing on this subject tend to focus on the protection of children.

Kram’s definition includes both direct and indirect forms of protection. Both forms were observed in this study.
Direct protection.

Mentors and protégés cited several instances where the mentors provided protection in a direct manner, i.e. when their protégés were involved in a problematic or sticky situation (usually involving another faculty member), they directly intervened in the situation, rather than staying out of the situation or advising the protégé to face the situation themselves. One clear example of direct protection was observed when one protégé ran into difficulties with a co-author who had berated her unfairly:

Manjeet (Protégé): I was actually devastated over the way they were addressing me . . . how if they were a student and they had this opportunity, they would be grateful and work hard. . . . I actually called [his secretary] and I said, “I need to talk to Terrel” and she got him on the phone within 15 minutes. . . . I told him what was going on and he said, “Don’t worry. I’m going to handle it,” . . . and he provided me with a lot of reinforcement: “It wasn’t about me so don’t worry. You’ve worked very hard and we’re aware of that and this is the holiday, you don’t need this . . . it’s out of your hands. I’ll let you know when you need to get back to doing it, okay?” And he took care of it. He was really supportive and then he followed up later, about a couple of days later and said, “How are you doing?” and it just meant the world to me that I was supported (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

The person with whom Manjeet had this conflict used his/her power disparity to browbeat her (“if they were a student and they had this opportunity, they would be grateful and work hard”). Manjeet’s description of this incident shows how vulnerable students can be and how this type of political power play can be extremely hurtful and
even damaging to a student (“I was actually devastated”). In this instance, her mentor, Terrel, directly intervened in the situation (“I’m going to handle it. . . . it’s out of your hands”), protecting her from further damage. It is important to note that mentors do not always intervene in such a direct manner, but in this instance, Terrel chose to protect Manjeet, and his gesture was deeply appreciated (“it just meant the world to me that I was supported”).

Another commonly cited instance of protection was when mentors personally stepped in to help settle problems with committee members:

Paula (Protégé): She protects me from my committee members (laughs). She’s always advocating for me.

Anne Chan: How does she do that?

Paula: If . . . one of my committee members is trying to encourage me to do something I really don’t want to do in my dissertation, I have always been able to tell her that I don’t think it’s a good idea and then she’ll come back and try to encourage the other committee member to allow me to do what I want to do . . . that’s very important to me. She’s very protective in that regard (personal interview May 20, 2005).

Protection also at times included an element of advocacy – some of the mentors in the study were observed to intercede on behalf of their protégés. For instance, Dr. Johnson (Mentor) went “to bat” (personal interview March 26, 2005) for Latisha (Protégé) and Isabella (Protégé) when they did not graduate in a timely fashion – she did this by petitioning the Dean on their behalf. Latisha confirmed the importance of Dr. Johnson’s advocacy and mentoring in her life, stating that she would not have graduated
without her. Another instance of a mentor acting as an advocate was seen when Terrel (Mentor) acted as a "go between" when his protégé lost touch with her dissertation chair during her internship year:

Terrel (Mentor): The dissertation got lost in the shuffle and then she got lost from her dissertation chair in the shuffle so then I played the go between the two. I sat her down and said, "Okay, now, we've got to look at finishing up chapter one and two and three. We've got to look at now a strategy for data collection. We've got to get you back in touch with your chair and explain what's happened in the four months since you all haven't been in touch." And then I called the chair and talked to her (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

In addition, there were other less obvious or visible ways in which mentors directly protected their protégés. Shanti (Protégé) described how one of her mentors (who was not interviewed in this study) defended her against aspersion:

I remember when I was a first year, they were telling us about how they have meetings and they talk about all of us and I remember my mentor was like, "Faculty don't always tell students what is said about them but, I've got your back . . . I won't let anybody talk anything that's not true about you but I will give you whatever positive and negative feedback I hear" (Shanti (Protégé), personal interview, January 10, 2006).

Likewise, Dr. Munoz (Mentor) stated she provides this type of protection for her students:

Protect them? I think that there's several ways to talk about that. One is, just within our program here when we do annual evaluations or we do evaluations
twice a year of all of our advisees/mentees. That’s one place where because of my quite regular contact, I can speak on their behalf if there’s something critical . . . I might just give my perspective on something and not necessarily challenge one of my colleagues but . . . usually it turns out that whatever they’re having to say about X student is not proven accurate or is just not a fair thing to say. So I protect my students in that way from any kind of character slant (Dr. Munoz (Mentor), personal interview, April 26, 2005).

These quotes from both mentors and protégés show the importance and value of having direct protection from a mentor. Without such advocacy, protégés would be vulnerable and defenseless against misrepresentation and even slander.

*Indirect protection.*

Mentors also furnished protection in less direct ways, such as helping them create a supportive dissertation committee:

Dr. Lombardi (Mentor): When people are putting together dissertation committees, I take a pretty strong role of who gets invited to the committee and I have a sense of how some people are that students might not have, so I . . . might suggest, “Why don’t you talk to so and so, they had this person on their committee, see what they thought,” because students sometimes experience faculty in different ways but if you see a faculty in a certain way with a student, sometimes it indicates they’re different with students than they are with faculty (personal interview, March 25, 2005).

Creating a good working committee can be a tricky endeavor, especially when students are not privy to insights about how faculty behave in committees (“I have a sense of how
some people are that students might not have”). Using her experience and expertise, Dr. Lombardi indirectly protected her protégés by helping them put together well-functioning committees.

Another instance of indirect protection was seen when Mimi (Mentor) helped her protégé get out of a sticky situation with another faculty:

Mimi (Mentor): I have a student who felt pressure to TA for a professor this summer and really didn’t want to but she felt she had to and I told her to tell the professor that I said that she absolutely could not and I offered her funding from another source because she didn’t want to do it. It would have taken up way too much time. She wouldn’t have been able to work on anything else and she would only do it because she felt pressured not because she wanted to or thought it would help her. So she went to the professor and said, “Sorry, Professor Wang who is my advisor thinks it’s a bad idea,” . . . and so I felt like I protected her from doing something that she didn’t want to do because she was being pressured to do it (personal interview, May 12, 2005).

As this anecdote shows, students can feel powerless in their dealings with faculty (“really didn’t want to but she felt she had to”) and that they have no choice but to accede to faculty demands (“she would only do it because she felt pressured not because she wanted to or thought it would help her”). In this example, Mimi’s offering to fund her protégé and coaching her on what to say to the professor were indirect forms of protection that saved her from having to do something she clearly did not want to do.

Interestingly, when first queried about protection, Mimi (Mentor) replied:
I don’t necessarily protect them because I feel that protecting them doesn’t protect them (laughs). I feel that the best thing to do is to help socialize them into understanding the politics of the system without totally exposing them to things they don’t need to be part of . . . if they have a problem with a faculty member, they have to learn how to address it (Mimi (Mentor), personal interview, May 12, 2005).

Mimi’s words imply that she generally does not directly intervene to protect her students. However, she does offer protection in the form of coaching her protégés on understanding and navigating through the politics of the system. She also offers protection in the form of options that can empower her protégés and protect their interests, as seen in the anecdote above.

Another indirect form of protection was noted when mentors helped protégés avoid trouble in the first place. Two mentors (Terrel and Bob) spoke explicitly about advising students not to get caught unnecessarily in political battles. Said Shanti, a protégé of Terrel:

His one thing that he always says is you keep your head down . . . you do what you’re supposed to be doing and keep your head down and I think that was his way because I think he was trying to protect me from what could happen . . . like telling me, “Do what you’re supposed to be doing, mind your own business, don’t get involved in all of that” (Shanti (Protégé), personal interview, January 10, 2006).

This is not to say that Terrel and Bob counseled their protégés to ignore political battles completely, rather their advice was to “choose their battles wisely.”
Bob (Mentor): For junior people, I usually tell them to stay out of politics and to avoid . . . direct confrontations . . . certainly, it's not completely avoiding politics. I guess choosing battles wisely . . . sometimes there are issues, somebody's rights are being violated or something like that. You certainly want to stand up for that . . . just get yourself into issues that really are going to make a difference rather than just getting involved in every issue that might come along (personal interview, April 21, 2005).

Protection for Minority Students and Women

On top of the usual stressors of graduate school, minority students and women face additional challenges of discrimination, racism, and sexism (Burden et al., 2005; Enomoto et al., 2000; Gilbert & Rossman, 1992). For instance, many of the ethnic minority protégés alluded to challenges they faced because of their racial backgrounds. These challenges ranged from incidental discriminatory comments to racist or sexist remarks made directly to the individual. These comments, even mild ones, can be pernicious to the well-being of minority students - not only do they have to deal with the psychological hurt of such comments, they are also faced with the twin dilemmas of wondering what to do about these remarks and worrying about the ramifications of taking action:

Manjeet (Protégé): I've had these different issues where inappropriate comments have been made in a class about minorities and . . . I've thought about: "Do I bring it up with administration? What kind of pathways do I take? And do I fight this battle? Do I not?" . . . as a graduate student, we walk this thin line and people
There were several instances when mentors in this study were reported to provide protection against discrimination. One dramatic example of mentor protection was given by a protégé who spoke in detail about how her mentor helped her through a painful and tricky conflict with a professor who made racist and sexist comments in class:

(Protégé's name withheld): I think he had a problem with me basically because I didn’t share a lot of his viewpoints and when I was vocal about them in a respectful way, he just didn’t like being challenged and so we just butted heads and so it got to the point where he called me a bitch a couple of times in class (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

The repercussions of this incident for this protégé were clearly damaging:

Protégé: It was really hard and at the time I just thought that my reputation was completely ruined. . . . I think that if I hadn’t had the support of my mentors or even felt that I could talk to them about this and that they would believe me and be on my side, I don’t know what I would have done because it was so bad that I wanted to leave (personal interview, May 23, 2005).

If not for the direct intervention and protection of her mentor, she might well have left the doctoral program ("it was so bad that I wanted to leave"). In this instance, this protégé’s mentor took an active role in defending her: “So he responded to this professor immediately by saying that he thought this professor misinterpreted my actions and had the wrong idea about me and that I was a very strong student” (personal interview, May
Another way in which her mentor protected her was by helping her figure out her options so that she did not have further damaging contact with this professor.

Another protégé, when faced with discriminatory comments, credited her mentor for helping her through this dilemma:

Manjeet (Protégé): I think talking to him about it helped me to put it in perspective and see the ignorances that are involved, and then be able to communicate that to a professor . . . and he helped me to see when maybe something is just not worth fighting, when to just let it go and try to process it with him or, one of the other suggestions he made is about educating people. Provide a workshop. Invite those people to come to your workshop or things like that (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

Figuring out different options may not seem to be an overtly protective strategy, but it was clear that her mentor was protecting her career and interests by helping her see beyond her anger and hurt (“he helped me to see when maybe something is just not worth fighting”). Instead, by coaching her on how to approach professors (“be able to kind of communicate that to a professor”) and suggesting that she educate people (“provide a workshop”), he protected and even enhanced her career.

Concluding Thoughts on Protection

Mentors and protégés in this study confirmed the importance and significance of protection as a mentor practice. Since politics is so commonplace in academia, it is clear that protection is critical to the well-being of all students, regardless of race, gender, and cultural backgrounds. At the same time, because minority students are faced with
additional challenges connected with their minority status, the protection offered by mentors becomes an even more critical factor in their progress through graduate school.

Conclusion

This chapter explicated in detail the mentor practices that enhanced and supported the protégés’ socialization into the academic community. The implications of these mentor practices were analyzed in terms of the special concerns and challenges faced by ethnic minority and culturally different protégés.

Although research on mentoring has tended to focus on the topic of individual career development, it was observed in this study that attention to all three dimensions of the individual, relational, and institutional were key components of these relationships. The next chapter provides an overarching theory that unifies the ideas presented in this chapter.
CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS

Model of Cross-Cultural Mentoring

My interest in this topic was initially sparked by the question, "What actually goes on between mentors and protégés?" This question prompted inquiry directed at a more micro-level examination of the kinds of practices that take place in mentoring relationships. These mentor practices were found to impact development along three dimensions that (1) facilitated the career development of the protégés; (2) established trust and caring within the mentoring relationship; and (3) enhanced and supported the protégés' socialization into the academic community. These practices were described and analyzed in detail in Chapters Four, Five, and Six. This level of analysis, however, provided only a partial answer to the research question driving this study. The second half of the answer to this question lies in the overarching grounded theory that emerged from these themes. The full theory and the evolution of the theory is presented and discussed in this chapter.

The movement from identifying core mentor practices to generating theory can be described as a "bottom up" process (Urquhart, 2003). This process demanded that I remain constantly open to theoretical possibility. Hence, in the course of identifying, analyzing, and describing the mentor practices with their attendant meanings, I subjected the data to ongoing and intensive analysis to see what emergent properties connected them together and provided a more powerful theoretical rendering. During this process, I discerned four macro-level themes that emerged as larger theoretical concepts connecting the mentor practices. These larger themes were instrumental in illuminating and
deepening the meaning of these practices, thus giving me insight into the “thick description” (Geertz, 1973) for these practices. The four overarching themes noted in this study were:

1. The significance of the contexts in the lives of the protégés;
2. The significance of the contexts of the mentoring relationships;
3. The overlap and intertwining of contexts;
4. The multi-directionality of interactions between contexts.

These four major themes were central in the evolution and development of the theory and model of cross-cultural mentoring that emerged from the data. In this chapter, I present a description and analysis of each theme, followed by a presentation and discussion of the grounded theory of mentoring model derived from the data.

Four Major Themes

First Theme: Significance of Contexts in the Protégés’ Lives

The first major theme that emerged from the data was the significance of context in the protégés’ lives (Bradley, 2005). The following two quotes, one from a mentor and one from a protégé, illustrate the centrality of context in the lives of the protégés:

Anne Chan: Are there some specific things you do as an ethnic minority mentor that maybe a non ethnic minority mentor might not do?

Bob (Mentor): Yeah, I guess part of it is what I perceive as a cultural sensitivity. . . just realizing that some of my students of color or first generation students . . . that they’re part of a community and that you just don’t come to a new place and kind of set up shop and go on as if the context [italics added] doesn’t matter and
so I’m very aware of social support and community issues. . . . I try to be sensitive to issues that are going on, like family issues and things like that (personal interview April 21, 2005).

Nandita (Protégé): How would I define a mentor? I guess I would define a mentor as somebody who will help you both personally and professionally and the reason I put the personally in there is because oftentimes people try to help you out professionally but they forget that you are a person and that you are within context [italics added] and you are within a family and you are within all of those things [middle portion of conversation deleted].

Anne Chan: This may seem like an obvious question but I’d like to hear from you what it means to have the cultural piece addressed.

Nandita: It means everything . . . the idea that you need to take somebody in context [italics added] and family and as a culture and as an individual . . . So if you take one of those levels out, you don’t get the person. They won’t make sense or you may simplify them. If you get the cultural piece, you get the layer. You get that middle contextual layer about a person that shapes how they think, how they dream, how they work, how they prioritize things in their life. So to understand what it means for me to work in my community . . . For a mentor not to understand that, then it’s meaningless (personal interview, December 17, 2005).

It is striking that both Bob, a mentor, and Nandita, a protégé, emphasize the importance of context in the protégé’s life and in the mentor’s understanding of the protégé (“you need to take somebody in context and family and as a culture and as an individual . . . if you take one of those levels out, you don’t get the person”). As Bob and Nandita state
emphatically, a contextual understanding of the protégé is vital to their mentoring practice. Their assertions are consistent with previous research and writings on the salience of context in the lives of ethnic minorities (Cook, Heppner, & O'Brien, 2005; Falicov, 1995; Neville & Mobley, 2001; Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992). Indeed, context is integral to Nandita’s definition of a mentor and she even goes so far as to state that a mentoring relationship would be “meaningless” if the mentor lacks such an understanding.

Types of Contexts

The most frequently mentioned contexts relevant to the protégés’ lives were that of their partners, families, and communities. Although it was an implicit assumption that my interviews would focus on the participants’ academic lives and identities, all of the protégés (and most of the mentors) made extensive reference to additional life contexts that were deeply meaningful and relevant to them. For instance, two Latina protégés were especially eloquent about the importance of their family and community ties:

Maria (Protégé): My mom is like, “Your family is more important than your education and ... especially Sunday, you need to be with your family because we never see you,” and Sunday is always family dinner and it’s always a chance for us to get together and talk as a family and my mom holds that very important to her. So it goes back to the whole deal of personal relationships in my culture and the importance of that (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Isabella (Protégé): That’s been the key piece where we’re not just talking about work when we meet – it’s personal, you know, family is important to me and her
family is in her life and we have different approaches to our family but they’re both very present in our lives and so we can share that and I think when I feel that somebody knows what I’m dealing with in my life, both academic and clinical work, I feel understood because what’s been hard for me is that keeping up with my family responsibilities has, in a lot of ways, slowed me down and I needed somebody to know that that was a big piece and I couldn’t avoid that. So I felt like she got it and she would try to encourage me to not get weighed down by things but she got it and I’m not sure other people would have wanted to hear all of that. For me, that was really important (personal interview, June 16, 2005).

Another protégé, an Asian-American woman, powerfully attested to the relevance of another type of context, that of being part of a visible Asian American community, when she spoke about the impact of moving from a diverse, urban part of the United States to attend school in a small Midwestern town:

Wei (Protégé): It’s definitely very different especially coming from New York [details changed] to go to the Midwest and to really experience what it’s like to be a minority. Living in New York my entire life, you thought of you being a minority isn’t salient because there are so many other Asian Americans and other ethnic groups. But, there’s definitely a culture shock and it still is (personal interview, December 22, 2005).

A consistent finding in the data was that the mentors in this study recognized, acknowledged, and were attentive to the different contexts of the protégés’ lives. As one mentor put it:
Mary (Mentor): Even though the overall goal is basically to mentor them in terms of a profession, I think that in order to really do that effectively, that it’s critical to know the whole person, what their strengths and limitations are . . . when we talk, it’s not just about the work but it’s also about their lives and the goals they have, where they want to be, and for them to be genuine with me about really what they want to do . . . like the student who is pregnant now -- that was really something that she talked about a lot in terms of the thing that she wanted to have happen. She really wants to be a mother and even though she’s not finished with her program, she felt that this was something that she really wanted to do then and so I support that . . . I joke about it that I carry my students through the other parts of their lives as well (personal interview, March 8, 2005).

The protégés confirmed the importance of their mentors’ attentiveness and sensitivity to the different contexts in their lives. Said Manjeet (Protégé):

He took time to know who I was as a person, all aspects of me . . . . he really knew my personal life, and my family life, what goals I have in my personal life and took an interest in integrating that into my academic career (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Another protégé remarked that his mentor’s “holistic” understanding of the various contexts of his life made him feel completely supported:

Solomon (Protégé): I really feel 100% supported in my professional life and recognizing that that extends over to . . . . like in my career and when I say career, like in a very holistic sense, including my marriage and including my relationship with my family and all of those things. I feel as a mentor, she’s not looking
narrowly at you have to do this and this and that and the hell with everything else (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

One concrete example of a mentor intervention that bridged the different contexts of a protégé’s life was memorably seen when one mentor helped her protégé’s boyfriend find a job:

Joan (Protégé): My then boyfriend moved to [university town] after getting his master’s and couldn’t find a job here and it was really stressful and he came to that dinner [hosted by her mentor] and we talked about that a little bit and without batting an eye, she said, “Well, send me your resume,” and he sent her his resume and sure enough three months later when a position that really matched him well opened up at my school, he got a call from the director of the office and got hired for the position and it’s been an incredible job for him. . . . I have no doubt that she got his resume looked at by the right person and that was an instrumental step in getting him employed and if he hadn’t been employed . . . at that point, it was really bad . . . he probably would have moved back to where he’s from. I would have been a mess. I might have moved with him. I mean, I don’t even know, you know? But, I mean, that was a really significant thing that she did, you know? (personal interview, May 21, 2005)

Rather than overlooking or avoiding the issue of Joan’s boyfriend’s unemployment, Joan’s mentor chose to provide some assistance. Joan recognized that her mentor’s kindness amounted to an indirect but significant support of her professional development (“I would have been a mess. I might have moved with him. I mean, I don’t even know, you know? But, I mean, that was a really significant thing that she did”).
The significance of contexts has been explored by vocational psychologists and researchers who have advocated career interventions that are inclusive of clients’ cultural and personal contexts (Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2006; Cook et al., 2005; Fouad, 2001; Krumboltz, 1993; Pope, 2003). However, this idea of attending to the different contexts of the protégé’s life goes against the grain of traditional definitions of mentoring, which tend to situate and conceptualize the protégé narrowly within the realm of the workplace. For instance, Mullen defines mentoring as “a one-to-one relationship between a more experienced member (mentor) and a less experienced member (protégé) of the organization or profession [italics added]” (Mullen, 1994, p. 259). Although this definition is technically correct in situating the protégé within the workplace, it fails to capture a comprehensive picture of the protégé as a complex, multi-faceted being with inextricable ties and obligations to a variety of contexts beyond the workplace. Instead of subscribing to this narrow view of their protégés, the mentors in this study had a more holistic and less circumscribed conceptualization of the protégé. As Mary (Mentor) points out: “There’s lots of other aspects to that relationship aside from the work” (personal interview, March 8, 2005). Rather than focusing narrowly on the professional/academic aspects of the protégés’ lives, they instead recognized and paid attention to the multiple, oftentimes overlapping contexts within the lives of the protégés. The mentors seemed to act intuitively in accordance with Bronfrenbrenner’s (1979) belief that “the capacity of a dyad to serve as an effective context for human development is crucially dependent on the presence and participation of third parties, such as spouses, relatives, friends” (p. 5).
Context was found to be an important consideration not only in the lives of the protégés, but also in the mentoring relationships as well (Enerson, 2001; Hamilton et al., 2006; Kochan & Pascarelli, 2003; Lucas, 2001; Spencer et al., 2004; Thomas, 1990). Kochan and Pascarelli (2003) define context as “structure, framework, environment, situation, circumstances, and ambiance” (p. xi). Although writers often allude to the significance of organizational context in mentoring (Allen et al., 1997; Crosby, 1999; Hamilton et al., 2006), the research on this topic of context is extremely limited – Lucas’s (2001) study of mentoring dyads between female undergraduates and six-graders is one of the very few to address context. She found that place and setting were important determinants in the development of the relationships. In this present study, the mentoring relationships did not exist in a vacuum – instead they were found to be situated within a constellation of contexts that directly and indirectly impacted the protégés, mentors, mentoring relationships, and mentoring practices. Three layers of contexts surrounding and impacting the relationships were identified in this study: 1) the school or university, 2) the profession or field, and 3) the socio-cultural.

School/University Context

Within the school/university context, there were three identified sub-levels or areas relevant to the participants: the academic program, department, and school/university as a whole. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

Academic program.
Each academic program posed unique and distinct challenges for the protégés. Some of the protégés alluded to struggles they faced as they progressed through their academic programs, such as navigating the complex maze of written and unwritten rules, expectations, and standards, and coping with the political atmosphere of their programs. An example of an unwritten rule/standard was the type of extracurricular activity deemed acceptable by one particular program. A protégé in this program became involved in working with a nonprofit organization and was criticized by some faculty for “being so actively involved in something outside of the traditional program” (Solomon (Protégé), personal interview, May 21, 2005).

Another example of the challenges inherent within a program can be seen in one protégé’s difficulties adjusting to the negativity of her cohort:

Ai Ling (Protégé): The first three years, doctoral students have to get together and then they complain so much and then they’re cursing the program and then I was really shocked . . . when I come out from college and then in a very protective environment and then now I’ve gotten into this program, I was so overwhelmed by those negative comments so I actually went and talked to Mimi [her mentor] and said I was really concerned about what was going on (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Some of the ethnic minority protégés reported contending with additional challenges stemming from being a visible minority in academic programs dominated by European Americans:

Jung (Protégé): I think for being an Asian American also in a program that’s predominately White and a faculty that’s predominately White and was quite
daunting as well because in many ways, I didn’t feel they understood what it means to be Asian American and they didn’t understand the cultural values . . . and it didn’t seem to me that they were interested in learning about it and so it was a very, very tough experience (personal interview, June 20, 2005).

The mentors in this study were especially vital in supporting, guiding, teaching, and even protecting the protégés with regards to the demands and challenges of their academic programs. Both Solomon (Protégé) and Ai Ling (Protégé) credited their mentors for guiding them through the hazards of their program. From another vantage point, another protégé who had a relatively smooth course through her program attributed her success to her mentor:

Paula (Protégé): [Her mentor said] “Here are the things that are important in the program that you really should strive to do well in” and by virtue of completing those tasks well, I was able to get through the program in a fairly unscathed manner (personal interview, May 20, 2005).

Paula’s use of the word “unscathed” speaks volumes about the potentially destructive obstacles that can stymie academic progress. At the same time, her words confirm the value of mentoring in the negotiation of these challenges.

Department.

Another contextual level that was clearly relevant to these mentoring relationships was that of the department (Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006). As with the academic program, the departments sometimes had written and unwritten rules that became obstacles for some of the protégés. The following quotes from two protégés provide an illustration of some of the challenges confronting them:
Ai Ling (Protégé): In our department, it’s always weird because I don’t have a master’s degree so sometimes I’m behind. I have to petition a lot of things to speed up my process and then I think she [her mentor] really stands up for me in the committee. Well, I don’t know what really happens in the meeting but at least I always get approved (laughs). I think she really does speak up for me (personal interview, June 13, 2005).

Tamika (Protégé of Mary): Immediately pre-defense, there was a bit of political infighting RE: our department and the type of qualitative research, it was not at all about me/my work, but happened at a time when I was about to defend, which was upsetting to myself and my committee. Mary [her mentor], as well as my other committee members consistently supported me, my study, all of which helped me to have a successful defense (e-mail to Anne Chan, July 15, 2005).

As the above quotes illustrate, departmental issues can be confusing (“it’s kind of always weird”) and stressful for students (“upsetting to myself”). Indeed, departmental politics can adversely affect students even if they are not, or do not wish to be, directly involved in the battles, as was the case with Tamika.

Clearly, the departmental environment exerts influence over the protégés (as well as their mentors) in both direct and indirect ways. The mentors played critical roles in providing guidance and advice on surviving and even thriving in this environment. One mentor said he helped his protégés to focus on the positive rather than getting trapped in the negative aspects of politics:
Terrel (Mentor): At the department level, not getting stuck on what I perceive as minor interpersonal issues with faculty and other graduate students. In any department where you mix up 60 graduate students and 20 faculty, there’s some negative energy floating around there and I try to help my students be aware of the negative energy but not get drowned in it so that becomes their day and their life because then that will drown them and then try to get them to look beyond the negative energy in the department and find some positive energy (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

In some cases, the mentors offered more direct forms of support when advocacy and protection was called for. For instance, Ai Ling (Protégé) said, “I think she really does speak up for me” (personal interview, June 13, 2005) and Tamika (Protégé) expressed appreciation for her mentor’s defense of her: “Mary [her mentor] had to get really mobilized around this . . . . Mary had to defend me really strenuously . . . . She took it up for me on my behalf” (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

These statements from the participants show the different ways and degrees in which mentors and protégés engaged with the departmental context. Clearly, this context was of profound consequence for the mentors, protégés, and the mentoring relationships.

School.

Another contextual level affecting the lives of the protégés was that of the school or university (Koro-Ljungberg & Hayes, 2006). Gonzalez Rodriguez (1995) notes that institutional climate and its commitment (or lack thereof) to diversity influences multicultural mentoring. Likewise, Bouquillon et al. (2005) found that organizational context had an effect on trust in mentoring relationships.
As with the program and school levels, written and unwritten rules at the level of the school were occasionally found to affect protégés adversely, resulting in confusion, stress, and anxiety. For example, one protégé said that prior to having a mentor, he was unwittingly placed on remediation. Another protégé had to write a second master’s thesis simply because of differing school requirements.

Mentors were invaluable in helping protégés negotiate obstacles presented by the university system. For instance, one mentor described helping his protégés navigate “road blocks” posed by the institution or the people in the institution:

Terrel (Mentor): [With] the graduate students, or the ones out in the career, doing a lot of conflict resolution because they run into road blocks with people type of road blocks and institutional road blocks and sitting down and figuring out, “Okay, now what’s in the way?” (personal interview, April 28, 2005).

Several protégés confirmed that their mentors were critical in helping them resolve institutional issues that confronted them. One protégé experienced serious complications with her financial aid at her school and was indebted to her mentor for “fixing” the problem (Latisha, personal interview, May 26, 2005). Another protégé acknowledged the expertise of her mentor in navigating the university system:

Joan (Protégé): From talking to friends at different schools, I’ve realized that the intricacies of the process vary from school to school, and so Vittoria [her mentor] can help me in new ways b/c of the simple fact that she’s here. And b/c of that she not only knows "the system" here, but has the connections and can open more doors (e-mail to Anne Chan, May 24, 2005).

Field
The field of psychology forms the broad backdrop and professional context for the mentoring relationships in this study. The vast field of psychology is multi-faceted and complex -- the American Psychological Association lists 128 sub-specialties in psychology, each with its own distinct philosophy, history, and emphasis (American Psychological Association, 1998). The dizzying array of choices within the field can be immensely confusing and overwhelming, as seen in the following quote from a protégé prior to being mentored:

Manjeet (Protégé): I didn’t know a lot about all of these different areas of psychology. Nobody had gone over them with me . . . I didn’t know that there was developmental or applied psychology. I didn’t know there was health psychology. I felt like, god, everybody knows what they’re doing but I don’t. And I don’t even know how to get the guidance to know (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Since psychology is so vast and complex, the mentors were especially critical in helping the protégés understand, navigate, and socialize into the field. One mentor noted that part of his job as mentor was to help "demystify" the field:

Terrel (Mentor): Some 20 year old junior college transfer came to see me the other day. She wanted only child clinical. Now that was a word to her. Now we’re in the process of demystifying that. I’ve got her talking to child clinical people. I’ve got her just about getting a job in an adolescent agency as a psych tech and so forth. We’re demystifying that process of getting a picture of what will you be doing when you become this child clinical (personal interview, April 28, 2005).
Terrel’s protégé, Manjeet, confirmed that he was instrumental in providing access to people in the field: “He’s helped me get access to people that are in my field and he’s helped me to learn from those people or connect with those people and he’s taught me how to network basically” (Manjeet (Protégé), personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Professional organizations.

An important aspect of the field and profession is that of professional organizations. Professional organizations constituted an important subcontextual level relevant to several dyads. Allen and Finkelstein’s (2003) study of alternative forms of developmental support found that professional organizations provided a substantial source of career development support for their participants. In this study, particular reference was made to ethnic minority professional organizations such as the Latino Psychological Association, or the Asian American Psychological Association. These professional organizations were a meaningful and important source of professional development and support for the ethnic minority protégés (Harley, 2001). One mentor likened these organizations to a “family:”

Bob (Mentor): AAPA, the Asian American Psychology Association and APA Division 45, I think are unique in the sense that it’s more like a family context where you have people that really care about younger people of color getting into the field so there’s this kind of common bond that we have, that really isn’t there in some of these other non ethnic organizations that I’m involved in . . . so, many of my students have joined the AAPA or Division 45 and have gotten some mentoring opportunities (personal interview, April 21, 2005).
Manjeet, a protégé, confirmed that this contextual level was an important source of emotional support for her:

I liked the people. They were talking about their struggles in their programs and I thought, “Oh, my god, there are a whole bunch of people that are like [me]. I’m not unusual. I’m not alone.” People were really open about sharing and made me more comfortable. . . . Just going to APA and meeting people and finding other people that were more like me, really helped. And getting involved in like smaller organizations (Manjeet (Protégé), personal interview, January 11, 2006).

Being involved at this professional level was not only important in terms of emotional support, but was also important for exposing the protégés to the field and to different opportunities beyond the school context:

Akiko (Mentor): And so I try to show to my students that some of the work that I’ve done, service work for organizations like the Asian American Psychological Association and Division 45, a lot of times they’re time consuming . . . A mainstream academic scholar may say, “Don’t do those kinds of service as a graduate student or a junior faculty because they’re time consuming. It’s taking time away from being productive in your research,” and of course, I would caution students to not over commit themselves . . . but I think at the same time, those kinds of service work when done within reasonable limits can open doors and I think are helpful (personal interview, May 13, 2005).

Mentors played an important role in informing and educating protégés about these professional organizations and the merits of active participation in them. Furthermore, as seen in Bob’s and Akiko’s words, mentors were critical in giving advice specifically
talored for ethnic minorities ("like a mainstream academic scholar may say ... "Don't
do those kinds of service. . . . It's taking time away from being productive in your
research. . . . but . . . those kinds of service work when done within reasonable limits can
open doors"). One mentor, a European American, was especially striking in
acknowledging her limitations as a non-minority person, and in encouraging her protégé
to seek additional mentorship through ethnic professional organizations:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): I had encouraged her to connect with . . . the head of LPA,
Latino Psychological Association . . . I said, "You ought to connect with Dr.
Fuentes [name changed] because there were things about being a Latino mental
health professional that I just won't know and in terms of learning the ropes and
things . . . that I have not personally experienced so I think it's probably a good
idea for you to connect with people, get involved in LPA and the National Latino
Psychological Association just so you have professional role models because I
can't teach you everything" (personal interview April 4, 2005).

Sociocultural

Individuals and interpersonal relationships do not exist in a vacuum, but are
embedded in, and impacted by larger surrounding structures and forces of society,
culture, history, and politics (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2006;
Cook et al., 2005; Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004;
McDermott, Goldman, & Varenne, 2006; Ragins, 1997). Although this contextual level
was not a primary area of investigation in this study, it was still apparent that larger
sociocultural forces affected the personal and professional lives of the mentors and
protégés. One of the mentors noted the impingement of issues of ethnicity, racism,
culture, and gender on the lives of her protégés. She reported that discussions about these sociocultural forces were an integral part of her mentoring conversations:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): I think the role of ethnicity, culture, gender have been very significant. . . . we usually don’t talk about the difference between us but we talk about the impact of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation on their lives in the institutional system that we happen to be in. . . . So this is always a conversation topic whenever [name of one protégé] dropped by . . . the racist institution and the homophobic institutions and the sexism against women in the academia and all that stuff. She talked about that stuff all the time (personal interview, March 26, 2005).

In a follow-up e-mail, Dr. Johnson discussed the importance of:

understanding the culture issues being faced by my mentee as a graduate student of color who would be entering a professional world as a clinician/academic of color. There are certain issues that she will have to face given her gender/ethnicity/culture, and my discussions with her about this are situated within this cultural context (Dr. Johnson (Mentor), e-mail, July 28, 2005).

Protégés likewise noted the salience of race, culture, and gender in their identities, aspirations, experiences, and goals as graduate students. One protégé stated that her cultural experience as an immigrant prompted her interest in psychology and in pursuing a doctoral degree:

Ming (Protégé): And to the question why I decided to pursue a doctoral degree in counseling psychology . . . it definitely had to do certainly with my own cross cultural background where having gone through the adjustment process and also
realizing that there isn't really a lot of resource out there for ethnic minorities or immigrants, especially the Asian immigrant population, so that really sparked my interest in pursuing the degree (personal interview, June 12, 2005).

Other protégés talked at length with their mentors about the impact of race, racism, gender, and socioeconomic status on their personal and professional lives (see Chapter Five for an in-depth description of this topic).

The participants cited a variety of strategies for tackling this larger context in their mentoring relationships. Most notably, both mentors and protégés noted that addressing, rather than ignoring, societal issues was critical:

Dr. Miller (Mentor): I think part of what would make me trustworthy would be . . . my students tell me a lot of very painful things that have happened to them -- racial bias -- and I think that those sometimes are very painful for White people to hear and I don't blow them off or try to, despite my own discomfort and guilt and all that, don't try to change the subject or anything. I will listen to them and be very honest about my feelings about that and clearly agree that it sucks, rather than becoming defensive about that (personal interview, April 4, 2005).

One mentor even went so far as to say that she had to do "race socialization" when her protégés were confronted with race-based challenges:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): With some of the other mentees, I've had to sort of share, especially when they have disappointments that I feel are racially based, then I do what I consider to be racial socialization with a number who didn't get that kind of socialization at home because of their family orientation toward it (personal interview March 26, 2005).
These conversations about larger societal contexts had at least two noticeable benefits for these relationships. First, as discussed in Chapter Five, they fostered and enhanced a deeper understanding, trust, and closeness between mentor and protégé, particularly in dyads with marked racial and/or cultural differences:

Tamika (Protégé): She's [Asian] and [Japanese] and so it was interesting to know her and know that she's from there and also to see that she's also though very aware of what it means for her to be who she is here and also what it means for me to be an African American woman and how aware she is of that in terms of professional issues and also personal issues. So it was a difference but there were many similarities but even in the differences, to me, it was more just a learning experience and learning what it was like for her and talking about what it's like for me and things like that (personal interview, May 25, 2005).

Second, these conversations about sociocultural conditions also supported and enhanced research efforts. At least seven protégés explicitly stated that their discussions of race and culture complemented and even inspired research endeavors:

Maria (Protégé): A lot of the things that we talked a lot about was racism within the Latino community. It was fascinating because it came up as an issue in our last presentation last year and we were very surprised on the amount of racism that Latinos have amongst each other ... It's a huge thing and so she was very surprised. She decided to turn it into another research project -- it was very interesting and that's what we discussed about (personal interview, June 12, 2005).
The above quotes from both mentors and protégés attest to the prevalence of subtle, yet pervasive sociocultural forces in the protégés' lives and in their mentoring relationships. This finding supports Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) theory that individuals are situated within, and impacted by their immediate as well as larger environments. Likewise Dreher and Cox’s (1996) study of MBA’s found that protégé race and gender were related to the formation of mentoring relationships with White men. Many of the participants in this study concurred that mentors’ understanding, acknowledgement, and (in some cases) addressing of this sociocultural context was a vital part of the mentoring relationships.

Third Theme: Overlap and Intertwining of Contexts

The different contextual levels identified and discussed above are not always mutually exclusive and neatly delineated (Pierce, 1998). Consistent with Krumboltz’s (1993) idea that career and personal concerns are intertwined, the data from this study show meaningful overlap between the identified contexts. The most compelling and notable instances of this intertwining of contexts were seen in the interconnections between the personal and professional concerns of the protégés (Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Humble et al., 2006). For instance, one protégé passionately described her religious faith and community as central to her choice of a dissertation topic:

Maria (Protégé): I do feel I’ve been called for this study. Part of that is because my religion and spirituality in the beginning wasn’t very important to me but when I became a Junior in college, I went through a conversion experience and I decided to get really back to the faith, and it really did influence a lot of what I do. . . . This pull. That’s what I feel about when it comes to this study. It’s this pull. I
want to be able to give back to my community, my religious community... One of the things that pulls for me is I would like to be able to contribute back to my community and say, “Okay, this is how we are.”... I want to give homage to my own religion (mentoring session between Maria (Protégé) and Dr. Miller (Mentor), April 10, 2006).

Maria’s religious convictions cannot be separated from her academic interests – both are inextricably connected in a deeply meaningful way (“I do feel I’ve been called for this study”). Indeed, her personal and professional aspirations appear to be remarkably complementary – her religion “calls” her to her research, and she hopes that her research will, in turn, “give homage” to her religion. Clearly for Maria, personal and spiritual beliefs cannot be divorced from academic interests and goals. Supporting this idea of the intertwining of personal and professional contexts, one study found that mentoring had significant effects on individuals’ perceptions and reports of work-life-family conflicts (Nielson, Carlson, & Lankau, 2001).

Another illustration of the intertwining of contexts can be seen in one instance when larger societal issues of discrimination foiled the internship hopes of two protégés. Said their mentor about them being rejected for an internship:

Dr. Johnson (Mentor): There was nothing on her record that would have interfered with her being placed and matched, and she didn’t get matched. So it was the first experience that she personally ever had to deal with the kind of racial bias that exist in the [city name deleted] mental health world. And I don’t normally, as a routine thing, talk to students about that in the application process that there are about four institutions here that have never had a Black or a Latino
or an Asian intern for the last 50 years (laughs) so it's unlikely that you're going
to be the first (laughs) because I don’t want to discourage them . . . or have them
feel a little hostile when they go in there for their interviews and they talk about it.
But when these students didn’t get placed, then I had to talk about it . . . she was
just devastated. Intellectually she understood the issues but it had never really
tested life in this real way (personal interview March 26, 2005).

As discussed in the sections above, the participants noted that discussing
contextual concerns was an important feature of their conversations. Mentors were
sensitive to the impact of different contextual influences on the academic lives of their
protégés, even though these contexts might be considered external or even unrelated to
their work identities.

Fourth Theme: Multi-Directionality Between Contexts

The previous section discussed the intertwining and overlap between contexts.
Another significant theme that emerged was the multi-directionality of interactions
between contexts. In this study, I was struck that the contexts impacted each other in
multi-directional ways. A neat illustration of this is the reciprocal mutuality within the
mentor-protégé relationship. Although it is sometimes assumed that protégés are the only
beneficiaries of a mentoring relationship, it has been well documented that mentors also
benefit from their mentoring relationships and their protégés (see Allen, Lentz, & Day,
2006; Atkinson et al., 1994; Bozionelos, 2004; R. Burke et al., 2006; Clinard & Ariav,
1998; Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2006; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Ragins &
Scandura, 1999). Likewise in this study, mentors acknowledged that mentoring benefited
them in various ways, as seen in the following sampling of responses from mentors:
Akiko (Mentor): It's not like I don't get anything out of mentoring, especially in terms of career productivity because if you have good mentees who are productive, they help your career as well (personal interview, May 13, 2005).

Bob (Mentor): One of the rewards is that I get to work with some great students that help me think about my own ideas more clearly and it's just fun in the sense that ... at some point they become like peers to me and sort of a collaboration more than one person mentoring the other (personal interview, April 21, 2005).

Terrel (Mentor): The benefits are that if you're in a relationship where both parts are growing, it's very fulfilling and in a good mentee-mentor relationship, as with parent-child, therapist-client, both sides should grow if the relationship is successful. Only the mentee grows first but both sides should be growing because you can't have one person stagnating and the other one growing. It won't work over time. So I've had tremendous growth. The second benefit is that since I've started my career 40 years ago, people that I have mentored have achieved positions of prominence and then they look out for me. In fact, I'm a consultant now and about 30% of my work comes from people who knew me at one time as a mentor and they're vice chancellors or department chairs or they know the people who are in those roles and a conference comes up or something like that or they can get my people into graduate school and so forth so it's come back to me ten fold (personal interview, April 28, 2005).
Dr. Munoz (Mentor): And then as far as the benefits, I think that the benefits are enormous... it's seeing your students, other people be successful. It's seeing other people take the work that you believe in and making it even more significant. It's helping to develop new leaders and new academics in an area of multicultural psychology and counseling that continues to need to be nurtured and flourished and I think the benefits are bringing to the profession new minds and new thinking and that's all a big deal (personal interview, April 26, 2005).

These quotes show quite clearly that the benefits of mentoring do not flow unidirectionally from mentor to protégé – the protégés were not alone in benefiting from the mentoring relationships -- all the mentors in the study reported receiving benefits as well.

Although this was not a specific point of focus for my study, there was a recurring finding that the meaning and implications of mentoring extended far beyond the boundaries of the mentoring dyads – the impact of mentoring was clearly multidirectional. Mentors like Dr. Munoz spoke about mentoring to advance the field: “the benefits are bringing to the profession new minds and new thinking” (personal interview, April 26, 2005). Similarly, Mary (Mentor) used the metaphor of the river to express her belief about the larger purpose of mentoring:

Mary (Mentor): We’re like the rocks that support the river in a lot of ways... the students are the water that stream around us. The expectation should always be that our students will surpass us in terms of what they accomplish and so my sense has always been that, my hope is that they’ll exceed whatever work that I do, that they’ll bring it to a new level (personal interview, March 8, 2005).
Likewise, some protégés expressed a fervent desire to contribute to multicultural psychology:

Manjeet (Protégé): Seeing the field and ethnic minorities kind of progress in the field and make an impact. I think we [she and her mentor] both have that shared dream that we want to see that happen and that we’re going to do that and what we do emulates that. Regardless if we’re going to get paid for it, we’re always going to be doing stuff, that we’re making sure that we’re doing that (personal interview, January 11, 2006).

This dynamic interplay between individuals and the larger contexts of family, community, field, and society showcase the multidirectional effects of mentoring. The different contexts identified in this study are not independent of each other, but instead operate as an interconnected system comprising of a web of relationships that mutually affect and engage each other in different directions. As Pierce (1998) writes: “Individual and organizational benefits are inextricably intertwined in a systemic dynamic in which one part affects every other part, whether this is evident immediately or not” (p. 20).

*Generating Grounded Theory: Evolution of the Model of Cross-Cultural Mentoring*

The major four themes outlined above were central in building the foundation for the model of mentoring that emerged from the data. Adhering to the guidelines recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967), I continually gathered, combined, and refined my hypotheses about the relationships between the categories in the data until an overarching theory was generated. The infrastructure for the theory was discerned through an intense grappling with the data. The struggles that I experienced in attempting to organize and make sense of the data were, in hindsight, essential in leading me to a
generation of a theory that fit the data. My biggest stumbling block occurred when I attempted to organize the mentor practices described in Chapters Four, Five, and Six. In wrestling with the data, I found myself wanting to emulate Kram's foundational work (1985) and her neat delineation of the career and psychosocial functions of a mentor (see Table 8):

Table 8

*Kram's (1985) Mentoring Functions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Functions</th>
<th>Psychosocial Functions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td>Role Modeling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure-and-Visibility</td>
<td>Acceptance-and-Confirmation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Friendship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Assignments</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

However, hard as I tried, I was hopelessly stymied at this task – no matter how much I tried to force each mentor practice into neat categories or to conceive categories that tidily contained each practice, the practices seemed to elude and even defy easy categorization. For example, the mentors' assistance with networking might, at first glance, belong to the "career" category of mentor functions, as Kram (1985) proposed in her model. However, interviews with the participants in this present study gave me insight into other significant dimensions and meaning inherent in this gesture – in addition to enhancing the protégé's careers, it was also instrumental in boosting the protégé's
confidence and self-esteem, thus serving a psychosocial function. At the same time, the mentor gesture of introducing the protégé to esteemed colleagues also helped the protégé establish and develop a sense of belonging in the scholarly community. At a meta-level, the introduction and socialization of the protégé into the scholarly community also benefited the field of psychology by bringing, in one mentor’s words, “to the profession new minds” (Dr. Munoz, personal interview, April 26, 2005). Thus, this one mentor practice not only had significance for the individual’s career and psychosocial development, it was also meaningful in terms of socializing the individual into the community, and building the field and profession. Hence, this seemingly uncomplicated “career” function targeted at individual development was found to have implications for the protégé’s psychological development and socialization, and even for the advancement of the field.

I experienced the same difficulty in attempting to organize the other analytic categories. It was from this crisis of organization that a deeper insight emerged – I realized that my inability to organize these categories was not a conceptual failure on my part. Rather, my mistake was attempting to force complex data into simplistic categorizations. Recognizing that I had not fully immersed myself in the complexity of the data, I was thus challenged to re-engage and comprehend the deeper layers and inter-relationships in the data. This process led me to reflect on the four themes previously outlined in this chapter and I thus came to an awareness of the importance of context and the inter-connectedness of contexts in these relationships. Led by the data and the themes that emerged from the data, I finally generated a grounded theory that fit the data and provided a model for cross-cultural mentoring. I produced three major revisions and
reiterations of this theory until a final product emerged that satisfied the criterion of being a “rich, tightly woven, explanatory theory that closely approximates the reality it represents” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 57).

Each of the three major revisions I made entailed and represented paradigmatic shifts in the ways I perceived, understood, and structured the data. Each revision was also instrumental and indispensable in leading me to the final version of the grounded theory—a version that I feel best captures and portrays the story of mentoring as told to me by the mentors and protégés. During the process of discerning and refining the grounded theory of this present study, I strove to actualize the following ideals in my work:

Theories flash illuminating insights and make sense of murky musings and knotty problems. The ideas fit. Phenomena and relationships between them you only sensed beforehand become visible. Still, theories can do more. A theory can alter your viewpoint and change your consciousness. Through it, you can see the world from a different vantage point and create new meanings of it (Charmaz, 2006, p. 128).

First Version of Model

The first step toward generating theory involved discovering the deeper layers of significance underlying individual mentor practices (Denzin, 1989; Geertz, 1973). By reflecting on the commonalities shared by groups of practices, I was able to discern six major mentor functions that emerged from this analysis (see Table 9).
Table 9

*First Version of Model: Six Mentor Functions and Related Practices*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/Mentor Function</th>
<th>Mentor Practices</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Trust, Creating Rapport</td>
<td>Talking about cultural differences</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listening</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Having a holistic understanding of protégés that includes their racial/ethnic/cultural identities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication practices: Responsiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing personal stories</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Humor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Acknowledging limitations and mistakes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Giving gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Supportive Networks</td>
<td>Introducing protégé to influential people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Access to the Inside Story</td>
<td>Giving advice about negotiating unwritten rules</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humor</td>
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<td>Availability</td>
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<td>Giving Time</td>
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<td>Being proactive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving protégé new opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Role-modeling &amp; coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expanding vision of protégé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing financial assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

331
A major discovery at this junction of my theory-building was the theme of establishing trust and credibility in the mentoring relationships, particularly across cross-racial and cross-cultural lines. This topic has been scarcely researched, yet the ethnic minority protégés in my sample were particularly eloquent on this point. It was clear from their reports that trust-building was essential in their relationships. The identification of this theme alerted me to the significance of relationship-building as a mentor practice and the significance of relationality as a dimension of mentoring.

Second Version of Model

Building on the insights derived from the first model, I further organized the mentor practices based on the dimensions toward which they were targeted. I identified three major dimensions of mentor practice (see Table 10): the individual (i.e. practices that supported the protégé’s individual development), the relationship (i.e. practices that
supported the mentoring relationship), and the institutional/organizational (i.e. practices that supported the entry and socialization of the protégé into the profession).

This iteration of the model inspired another breakthrough in my thinking about mentoring. I came to the revelation that there was a dimensionality in these mentor practices, i.e. the mentor practices could be further grouped in terms of where they were targeted. Hence, I included dimensionality in this version of my model of mentoring. Second, I noted the three major targets of mentoring practice – the individual, relationship, and institutional. This dimensional view of mentoring sensitized me to the multi-faceted, complex layers inherent within mentoring.
Table 10

Second Version of Model: Dimensions, Functions, and Practices of Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Mentor Function</th>
<th>Mentor Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Providing support, coaching, &amp; resources for individual professional &amp; career development</td>
<td>Practical help – e.g. to go to conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Building protégé’s portfolio of skills – research, teaching, clinical, writing, publishing, presenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Writing letters of recommendation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Talking about possible careers, goals, and dreams of protégé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Affirming and building protégé’s confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>Building trust and rapport within the relationship</td>
<td>Talking about cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Having a holistic understanding of protégés that includes their racial/ethnic/cultural identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maintaining good communication practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sharing personal stories, being open about personal selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Using appropriate humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledging limitations and mistakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Culturally appropriate gestures such as giving gifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrating sensitivity and understanding of cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and Providing Protection</td>
<td>Providing Validation</td>
<td>Providing Access to the Inside Story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting when issues of race,</td>
<td>Making positive</td>
<td>Giving advice on negotiating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discrimination, and racism occur</td>
<td>remarks, expressing</td>
<td>unwritten rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>confidence in protégé</td>
<td>Humor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building confidence;</td>
<td>Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>empowering protégé and</td>
<td>Giving time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>changing their beliefs</td>
<td>Being proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing letters of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recommendation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nominating protégés</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for awards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Providing emotional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Supportive</td>
<td>Introducing protégé</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>to influential people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to build community/family</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Third Version of Model*

The third version of the model transpired when I experienced the impossibility of putting each mentor practice neatly into the three dimensions I identified in the previous...
version. As I wrestled with this problem of organization, I came to the important realization that the dimensions overlapped, so too did the mentor practices. A practice such as “providing financial resources” had implications not only for supporting the individual’s career, but for supporting the individual’s socialization into the institution and even for supporting the individual’s trust in the mentor. When I finally came to terms with the impossibility of forcing these practices into discrete categories, I developed a

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Figure 2. Dimensional Model of Cross-Cultural Mentoring
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dimensional model to delineate the overlapping nature of mentor practices (see figure 2):

*Final Model*

The previous model depicts a monumental leap in my thinking about the overlapping dimensions of mentoring. However, I was dissatisfied with the pictorial representation of the model – in particular, the overlapping circles suggested that some practices could still be conceived of as targeted toward one dimension only. Another
critical factor in developing the next and final version of my model was member checking -- the input and feedback from one mentor, in particular, was vital in helping me discern and describe an accurate representation of the mentoring relationships studied. This mentor also recommended Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) as a point of reference for my work.

Bronfenbrenner's Theory was extremely influential in the formation of my grounded theory, most notably his concepts of:

- Nested systems spanning the individual, the individual's immediate environment, and larger sociocultural contexts;
- Reciprocal interaction between the individual and systems;
- Interconnections between systems;
- Development and shaping of the individual through the interaction of systems.

*Final Version: A Model for Cross-Racial Mentoring*

The final model that emerged provided a theoretical framework of the mentoring relationship and the key mentor practices necessary for mentoring ethnic minority protégés. The theory of cross-cultural mentoring that emerged from the data is diagrammed as follows (see Figure 3):
Core Concepts of the Model and Theory of Cross-Cultural Mentoring

The key concepts of the model are as follows:

- The protégé, as well as the mentor, are conceptualized as contextual and cultural beings, meaning that they possess professional as well as personal identities, and they are situated in diverse settings including that of the immediate family, extended family, and community;
- The mentoring relationship is situated within a series of relevant contexts, ranging from the more proximal school environment to the more distal forces of society, culture, and history;
- The contexts are inter-related and interconnected;
- The contexts powerfully shape the protégé, the mentor, the mentoring relationship, and mentoring practices directly and indirectly;
• Meaningful interaction occurs between the mentor and protégé, as well as between the mentoring dyad and different contexts;
• The interaction between contexts is bi-directional and even multi-directional;
• Mentor practices simultaneously target one particular context while impacting other contexts as well;
• Relationality is an important aspect of the interaction between mentor and protégés.

The themes identified and discussed in detail earlier in this chapter were instrumental in shaping these key concepts. The grounded theory that emerged and evolved from these themes can be described as contextual, multidimensional, interconnected, ecological, dynamic, relational, and multicultural. Each of these features of the theory is discussed in the following subsections.

*Contextual and multidimensional.*

Context is a central tenet of this theory. First, the protégé is conceptualized in contextual terms, meaning that the protégé is not narrowly or solely defined in terms of his/her work identity. Rather, the protégé is depicted as a complex, multi-faceted being with professional as well as personal concerns, and with ties to partners/spouses, families, and communities. Likewise, the mentor is conceptualized in similarly complex, contextual terms. Context is key to a proper understanding of the protégé and mentor — mentoring without this perspective would be, in the words of one protégé, “meaningless” (Nandita (Protégé), personal interview, December 17, 2005). This contextual view of the
protégé and mentor is aligned with recent models of multicultural career counseling models, which emphasize the need for career counselors to have an awareness of their own contexts as well as the client's contexts and context-related values, assumptions, and beliefs (Bingham & Ward, 1997; Byars-Winston & Fouad, 2006). In particular, Byars-Winston and Fouad (2006) call for counselors to bring to the forefront an active "metacognition" of counselor-related cultural characteristics, values, and thoughts during the counseling process.

Context is similarly critical in the conceptualization of the mentoring relationship in this model. Instead of depicting the mentoring relationship as existing in a vacuum, this model is multidimensional in its presentation of the mentoring dyad as embedded in a series of interlocking, related contexts— the family, community, school, field, and society. These identified contexts and dimensions are integral to the mentoring relationships and the practices of the mentors (Bouquillon et al., 2005). Hence, these notions of context are graphically represented in the diagram as a series of concentric circles. The protégé, mentor, and the mentoring relationship are each depicted as being situated within these contexts.

Inter-connecting.

The contexts described above are not seen as separate and mutually exclusive, but are instead conceptualized as overlapping, inter-relating, and inter-connecting. A major overlap observed in the data was the blending of personal and professional identities and concerns in many of the protégés (Krumboltz, 1993). Rather than claiming or adhering to just one identity per context, many protégés indicated clearly that the intertwining and co-
mingling of these identities were deeply meaningful for them. To visually represent the permeability of boundaries between systems, dotted lines have been used in the model.

This overlap of contexts had implications for mentor practices as well. Even when a particular mentor practice had a primary contextual focus and impact, the effects of the practice often rippled out on other contexts/dimensions. For instance, teaching and building protégé’s portfolio of skills was clearly a mentor practice that focused and supported the individual professional and career development of the protégé, but this support of the protégé also facilitated their access to the field and to professional organizations. Conversely, sponsorship can be seen as primarily serving to aid the socialization and entry of the protégés into the field, but it was also meaningful in its impact on the protégés’ personal confidence and empowerment.

*Ecological and dynamic.*

This model is “ecological” and “dynamic” in its conceptualization of the individual as a dynamic being that shapes and is shaped by its surrounding environs. Conversely, the different environments exert influence on the individual and on each other, resulting in mutual influence, change, and even accommodation (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

The term “ecological” is also fitting in describing the intricate and interactional web of relationships between the different contexts. The ecological nature of these interactions can be seen in the impact of these different contexts upon each other. For instance, the school environment impacted the protégés and thus had consequence for some of the interactions in the mentoring dyads and the mentoring practices. Even the
most distal context -- the sociocultural -- was found to affect the most proximal context -- that of the individual.

One important aspect of an ecological model is the dynamic interaction between contexts. In this model, the contexts are conceptualized as interacting systems that mutually impact each other in a multitude of directions. Instead of solely focusing on the direction of mentoring from mentor to protégé, this model showcases the multidirectional impact of mentoring beyond the confines of the dyad.

The mentors’ acknowledgement of the benefits they enjoyed from mentoring is a clear illustration that mentoring is not uni-directional, but is instead a reciprocal, multidirectional force that simultaneously affects both parties. Likewise, some of the mentors and protégés talked about the impact of mentoring, not only on their personal lives, but on their communities and on the field. “Giving back to the community” was a theme that was echoed by several of the ethnic minority protégés.

Another instance of the systemic impact of mentoring can be seen in several mentors’ hopes that their efforts on behalf of their protégés would help advance knowledge and the field of psychology. One mentor stated that the reason why she mentors is “to build the next generation” (Mimi (Mentor), personal interview, October 2, 2006). Along the same lines, Feist-Price (2001) asserts that African American faculty often view mentorship as a “form of reciprocity to the African American community” (p. 50).

Relational

This model is relational in that it highlights mentor practices and activities that promote, foster, and support the relationship between mentor and protégé. The vast
majority of mentoring research thus far has focused on mentor functions that promote the career and psychosocial development of the protégé, but comparatively little attention has been paid to relationship-building and the fostering of trust and engagement within the mentoring relationship. Relational processes in mentoring relationships have been studied in select populations, namely disadvantaged youth (Spencer, 2006), at-risk youth (Dallos & Comley-Ross, 2005), college students (Bernier, Larose, & Soucy, 2005; Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002; Liang et al., 2002), faculty (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004), and women (Eldridge, 1990; Keyton & Kalbfleisch, 1993; Liang et al., 2002). Regardless of the type of population studied, the findings from these studies are consistent in showing the importance of relationship-building for positive mentoring outcomes. In a similar vein, feminist and relational theories, most notably Jordan’s (2001) relational-cultural model, suggest that mature functioning involves interdependence, connection, and relationship, rather than autonomy and independence, as reflected in traditional psychodynamic and humanistic theories of human development (see for instance Maslow, 1999; Winnicott, 1971). Cultural theorists have also pointed out the Eurocentric bias in Western conceptualizations of healthy relationships – Markus and Kitayama’s (1991) foundational article make the important point that non-Western cultures regard “self-actualization” in relational, rather than individualistic terms.

The present model is in accord with the above relational studies in its conceptualization of mentoring in relational terms, i.e. the relationship aspects of mentoring are seen as an essential condition for effective, healthy, and successful mentoring. Further, the mentor practice of building trust and rapport in the relationship is
highlighted as a key practice in this model. In this model, the mentor practice of building
trust is represented as a relationship enhancing function.

*Multicultural*

Only within the last decade or so have researchers paid serious attention to
multicultural concerns in mentoring. Theoretical models and research on mentoring have
tended to ignore cultural variables – there is a common assumption that there is a one-
size-fits-all model to mentoring (Benishek et al., 2004). For instance, Kram’s (1985)
model, though groundbreaking in its depiction of mentoring, contained a major omission
of ignoring cultural or racial demographics (excepting gender). Many, if not most, of our
ideas about mentoring are derived primarily from European American viewpoints and
beliefs. Hence, the relevance of these ideas to other cultures and worldviews is unknown
(Feldman et al., 1999).

Recently, two models of mentoring have been proposed with multicultural
concerns as a centerpiece (Benishek et al., 2004; Fassinger, 1997). Benishek’s et al.
model is an expansion on Fassinger’s feminist model of mentoring and it infuses
multiculturalism in its approach to mentoring. Both these models are valuable
contributions to our base of knowledge on mentoring; however both have not been
derived or tested through empirical study.

The present model addresses this gap in the literature by proposing a model of
cross-cultural mentoring that is derived from interviews with a sample of mostly ethnic
minority mentors and protégés. The participants’ disclosure of how race and other
cultural variables impacted their experiences of graduate education and mentoring
provided the foundation for a theory of cross-cultural mentoring. This model of mentoring is multicultural in the following ways:

First, the model emphasizes a holistic view of both the protégé and mentor that encompasses not only their racial and ethnic identities, but other salient cultural identities as well, such as familial, religious, sexual orientation, immigration history, and other community affiliations. These cultural identities are represented in the concentric circle closest to that of the mentor and protégé, i.e. the “Community.” Thus, the mentor and protégé are both conceptualized as multi-faceted, multicultural beings in this model.

Second, consistent with previous work on the significance of context in the lives of ethnic minorities (Cook et al., 2005; Falicov, 1995; Neville & Mobley, 2001; Steinberg et al., 1992), this model provides a contextual view of the protégé and the mentor, and even the mentoring relationship. This model not only addresses proximal contexts such as the family and community, it also highlights the relevance of socio-cultural forces that impact the mentoring dyad. Recent research has shown the importance of engaging this level of context in mentoring relationships – for instance, talking about the impact of race and racism has been advocated as a means of creating trust across differences (Calkins & Kelley, 2005; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Thomas, 2001). This model specifically pinpoints the importance and relevance of talking about racial issues and difference as part of cross-cultural mentoring practice.

Third, this model is a relational model that highlights the centrality of relationship and relationship-building in mentoring. The valuing of interdependence and the interpersonal has been shown to be of significance to ethnic minority groups (Bova, 2000; S. R. Bowman et al., 1999; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). In particular, the model
highlights the mentor practice of building trust within a cross-cultural relationship. Creating trust across racial/cultural divides is a key feature of this multicultural model.

Mentor Practices

The major mentor functions identified in this model are:

- Building trust in the mentoring relationship
- Building community and supportive networks
- Providing access to the inside story
- Providing validation
- Providing support for career development
- Providing protection

These functions and attendant practices were discussed in detail in Chapter Four, Five, and Six. Each of these functions and practices can be conceptualized as targeting a particular context. However, they impact other contexts as well. Hence, it is important to note that the practices are not exclusive to any one particular domain. For instance, the mentors’ validation not only eases the protégés’ entry into the academic community, validation also boosts the protégés’ self-confidence in their abilities, thus supporting individual development as well as organizational socialization.

Key Differences in the Present Model and Kram’s Model

The theory generated from this study stands on the foundation of work and thinking accomplished by preceding researchers. In particular, I credit previous mentoring researchers for being the basis and inspiration for my own work, particularly Kram (1985). At the same time, the grounded theory derived from the data in this study
radically departs from previous models in several key ways. Table 11 illustrates the major differences between my model and Kram’s (1985) model:

Table 11

**Key Differences between the Kram and Chan models of mentoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kram (1985)</th>
<th>Chan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinguishes between career and psychosocial functions of a mentor.</td>
<td>Integrates career and psychosocial functions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derived from a sample of unknown race and ethnicity.</td>
<td>Derived from sample of mostly ethnic minority mentors and protégés.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excludes racial and cultural identities of mentors and protégés.</td>
<td>Incorporates racial, ethnic, and cultural identities of mentors and protégés.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-emphasizes the multiple identities of the protégé.</td>
<td>Highlights the individual as a complex, multi-faceted being embedded within multiple contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focuses on the organizational context of the mentoring relationship.</td>
<td>Identifies and incorporates multiple contexts of the mentoring relationship, the mentor, and the protégé.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discusses some bi-directionality between mentor and protégé.</td>
<td>Incorporates multidirectionality between mentor, protégé, and attendant systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De-emphasizes the issue of trust between mentor and protégé.</td>
<td>Includes trust as an important mentor practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views the mentor and protégé primarily within the context of the workplace.</td>
<td>Views the protégé/mentor as an active and interactive participant of an ecological system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignores cross-cultural dynamics between mentor and protégé.</td>
<td>Incorporates cross-cultural dynamics between mentor and protégé.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reactions from Participants

As described in Chapter Three, a key component of my research design included member checking to see if my model of mentoring matched with the participants’ experiences. I solicited feedback from six mentors and six protégés by e-mailing them a poster presentation of my research findings (Appendix O) and posing the following questions:

Does this model fit with your experience of mentoring?
If yes, please explain how it fits.
If no, please explain how you would modify the model.
Any other suggestions or comments about the model?

In general, the feedback that I received was positive and confirmatory that I had rendered an accurate account of my participants’ experiences of mentoring. For instance, one mentor stated the following in his feedback: “I do all those things” (Terrel (Mentor), personal interview, March 8, 2007). The following is another more lengthy response:

I do think the model fits my experiences quite well (and in some cases, the aspirations I don't think I've quite reached!). The categories all make sense, and the specific practices generally match with what I try to do. I particularly think that being proactive is important - the "I'm here if you have any questions" approach isn't going to be helpful for students who don't know what to ask. I think the statement under conclusions that mentoring is an intentional activity sums this up well. I wasn't quite sure about the practice of "giving gifts." I know that there is a psychotherapeutic concept of gift giving that doesn't involve physical gifts, but it seems like this means actual things. I have occasionally bought meals or
snacks for my students, including a year-end happy hour at a local restaurant, and I contribute auction items and money to our annual multicultural fund raiser - but direct presents, not so much. The only other question I had was why "community" was more central to the mentoring relationship than "school." Obviously the mentor's role is to help the student move into the larger community and field, but the relationship seems centered in the doctoral program. You probably explain that in your manuscript. Overall, though, this seems to be a very accurate model (e-mail from Dr. Miller (Mentor) to Anne Chan, March 4, 2007).

I received additional feedback when I presented a poster of this study at the 2007 National Multicultural Summit (Appendix O). One of the participants wrote that the model fits with his experience of being mentored and added: “It is important to communicate how the mentoring process needs to adapt to individuals based on their cultural identities . . . I like how it puts together psychological, sociological, and cultural components to explain the model. Great contribution!” (name of conference participant withheld).

Conclusion

The grounded theory and model of cross-cultural mentoring discussed in this chapter was derived from the significant themes and analytic categories that emerged from the data. In particular, four major themes were essential to the development of the model: the significance of context in the lives of the protégés, the significance of contexts of the mentoring relationships, the overlap between contexts, and the multi-directional interactions between contexts.
The final model that emerged from these themes is a theoretical framework of the mentoring relationship and the key mentor practices critical for effective cross-cultural mentoring. This model embodies the important characteristics of being ecological, relational, and multicultural.

The interviews with the ethnic minority participants in this study were instrumental in shaping and developing the model of cross-cultural mentoring described in this study. A key component of this study is that it stems from the personal and professional experiences of minorities in a field dominated by the majority group. The reports of the ethnic minority protégés and mentors were essential in leading me toward the discovery of a comprehensive grounded theory that captured and honored the rich complexity and dynamics of race and culture inherent in these relationships.
CHAPTER EIGHT  
CONCLUSION  

The findings of this study in concert with past research contain significant implications for the conceptualization and praxis of mentoring. This chapter discusses the overall implications of this study’s findings presented in Chapters Four, Five, Six, and Seven. In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of the theoretical and methodological implications as generated by this study, followed by an examination of the implications for individual mentor practice as well as for mentoring programs. I then discuss the limitations of this study and present recommendations for future research.  

Implications  

Theoretical and Methodological Implications  

This study has several methodological implications that can strengthen future research in mentoring. Mentoring research has typically focused on the dyadic relationship between mentor and protégé, and has paid little to no attention to the larger contextual, societal, and other macroenvironmental forces that can impact the individual (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). An important contribution of this study that extends previous literature is the finding of the impact of institutional, sociocultural, and other contextual factors on the protégés, mentors, and mentoring relationships. This study provides support for the methodological imperative for mentoring to be understood and conceptualized as a contextualized process (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2003). Research methods need to be carefully chosen and well thought out in terms of this complexity.
Further, this study shows that mentoring is not a race-free or culture-free activity. The mentors in this study actively addressed and grappled with issues of race, culture, discrimination, racism, sexism and a multitude of other “isms.” Their competence in dealing with such issues contributed to the protégés’ satisfaction in their mentoring relationships and doctoral programs. Simply put, race and culture matter in mentoring. Hence, it is vital that researchers be attentive to variables of race and culture in mentoring and to be cognizant of their own cultural biases in interpreting data. For instance, the whole notion of what constitutes a successful mentoring relationship might be culture-bound. One example of this can be seen in one study comparing American and Chinese protégés. The study found that the Chinese dyads assumed a more didactic tone in their conversations, with the Chinese mentors tending to be more dominant, particularly in initiating topics (Wang, Strong, & Odell, 2004). Although this more authoritative approach to mentoring goes against commonly held Western assumptions about the value of collegiality in mentoring relationships, it was not observed to impede protégé learning in the Chinese dyads. Hence, researchers need to evaluate and adjust preconceived notions and definitions of mentoring to account for cultural considerations.

Additionally, this study reinforces previous calls to study mentoring from the dual perspectives of mentor and protégé. The multiple data points used in this study were invaluable in painting a fuller, richer, and more detailed picture of the phenomenon studied. There were a few instances when mentor and protégé reports differed: these divergences proved to be critical in helping me understand and appreciate more fully the subtleties of these relationships. Most research on mentoring has been based on protégé reports (Allen & Eby, 2004; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Russell & Adams, 1997). This
study, in conjunction with previous research, underline the methodological importance of taking both mentor and protégé perspectives into account since they can diverge dramatically (Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005; Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Valentine & Mosley, 2000). This recommendation holds true for both qualitative and quantitative research on mentoring.

Implications for Individual Mentor Practice

The interviews with the mentors and protégés in this study show that mentoring across racial and cultural divides can be successful and can be mutually enriching, enjoyable, and rewarding. This overall finding supports research showing that diversified mentoring relationships can be effective and successful (Bordes & Arredondo, 2005; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Tillman, 2001). At the same time, the specific practices of the outstanding mentors interviewed in this study indicate that mentors need to be comfortable and competent in handling cross-cultural differences. This study points in particular to the importance of mentors being multiculturally aware and competent (Gonzalez Rodriguez, 1995). The findings from this study highlight key aspects of multicultural competence: possessing knowledge of how culture affects the individual, having a sensitivity to cultural differences, valuing cultural difference, being comfortable talking about race and culture, and being comfortable interacting with the culturally different. For mentors in cross-cultural relationships, this often requires a dramatic transformation of personal perspectives, beliefs, preconceived notions, assumptions, and worldviews (Gonzalez Rodriguez, 1995). For instance, it is critical that mentors be aware of the pervasiveness and perniciousness of stereotyping effects (Bova, 2000; Thomas, 2001), whether the stereotype is a negative one (G. L. Cohen & Steele, 2002; Spencer et
Mentors also need to be aware of how cultural values shape the behaviors, thoughts, beliefs, and expectations of minority group members. Goto (1999) gives the example of an Asian student not wanting to be a burden on her mentors, thus shying away from spending time with them. Hence, the findings from this study support Davidson and Foster-Johnson’s (2001) recommendation that mentors introspect and become aware of their own prejudices, attitudes, and biases.

This study also demonstrates the importance of mentors demonstrating sensitivity to cultural traditions that might be close to the heart of a protégé. As was shown in this study, mentors of Mexican-American women might also have to be particularly sensitive to their protégés’ struggle with balancing professional roles and family obligations (Valentine & Mosley, 2000).

Further, mentors need to be conversant with the unique personal, professional, and societal challenges confronting minorities in the workplace, such as discrimination (Thomas, 2001), exclusion from formal and informal networks (Ibarra, 1993), lack of role models (Zalaquett, 2006), and isolation (Kanter, 1977; Tillman, 2001). For these reasons, Ragins (1997) notes that career strategies that are helpful for majority protégés might not be appropriate for minority protégés. Writes Thomas (2001):

The mentor of a professional of color must also be aware of the challenges race can present to his protégé’s career development and advancement. Only then can the mentor help his protégé built a network of relationships with people who can pave the way to the executive level (p. 100).
Multicultural competence on the part of the mentor also necessitates that one recognizes the limits of one’s knowledge and at the same time take the initiative to expand one’s knowledge of ethnic minority issues, needs, and resources. For instance, a key finding in this study was the importance of ethnic minority professional organizations and the importance of mentor referrals to these resources (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001). The findings from this study indicate that effective cross-cultural mentors be well-versed in available resources and other concerns pertinent to minorities. Although the focus of this study was not on the training of mentors, the findings of effective mentor practices strongly suggest that mentors be educated and trained in working effectively and sensitively with culturally different protégés (Thomas, 2001).

Implications for Programs and Institutions

The data from this study show that mentoring is a time-intensive practice requiring considerable effort, thoughtfulness, commitment, and intention (Johnson, 2002). As Garvey and Alred (2000a) aptly describe it, mentoring is a “legitimate work activity” and is “serious business” (p. 124). Unfortunately, mentoring is seldom taken seriously as a viable and significant part of a faculty’s job description. As Jacob (1997) points out, mentoring is the “forgotten fourth leg of the academic stool” (p. 486). Indeed, the lack of attention and respect paid to mentoring can be seen in one study’s findings that faculty job advertisements seldom mention advising and mentoring as part of the job requirement (Johnson & Zlotnik, 2005). Johnson and Zlotnik’s study of three decades of academic job advertisements in “Monitor on Psychology” found that only 3.9% of the ads identified mentoring as a salient job component.
The findings of this study clearly show that good mentoring is an intentional and considered activity that deserves more institutional recognition. A "laissez-faire" approach to mentoring (Boyle & Boice, 1998b, p. 159) is not ideal because it is likely that many graduate students, particularly ethnic minorities and women, will go unmentored. Boyle and Boice recommend a systematic approach to mentoring that includes campus and programmatic involvement. This specific recommendation for a systematic approach is supported by research showing graduate students' difficulties in initiating mentoring relationships (Waldeck, Orrego, Plax, & Kearney, 1997).

At the organizational and institutional levels, one major implication of this study is the importance of institutions recognizing mentoring as a worthy and important professional activity and providing active and concrete support at the programmatic, departmental, institutional, and organizational levels (R. D. Hill et al., 1999). Luna and Cullen (1995) assert that central to the difficulties in the recruitment and retention of ethnic minority faculty is the lack of commitment in university systems to truly embrace and honor diversity. Additionally, Price et al. (2005) found that institutional culture and diversity climate hindered the satisfaction and success of ethnic minority academic medicine faculty. Boyle and Boice (1998b) recommend that universities implement "institution-wide programs that coach departments in ways to systematically immerse their newcomers in support programs and provide them with a sense of connectedness" (p. 177).

At the departmental level, mentoring support can be demonstrated in concrete ways such as including mentoring as a criterion in faculty hiring (Johnson, Koch, Fallow, & Huwe, 2000; Johnson & Zlotnik, 2005), preparing and training faculty to be effective
mentors (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006; Johnson, 2002; Johnson et al., 2000), assessing mentoring competence (Johnson & Zlotnik, 2005), and rewarding faculty for mentoring (Girves et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2000). Girves et al. (2005) go even further to make the strong recommendation that mentors should be compensated for their time.

It has been quite well documented (albeit mostly through correlational studies) that mentoring benefits organizations by facilitating and easing the socialization of newcomers (Allen et al., 1999; Cawyer et al., 2002; Chao et al., 1992; Feldman et al., 1999; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993), encouraging greater productivity (Paglis et al., 2006), and promoting higher commitment to the organization (Allen et al., 2004; Koberg et al., 1998; Payne & Huffman, 2005). An additional incentive for organizations to promote and support mentoring lies in the generative impact of mentoring. Studies have shown that those who are protégés are more likely to become mentors themselves (Hardcastle, 2001; Ragins & Scandura, 1999; Schuepbach, 2001). Ragins and Scandura note that organizations that “actively develop protégés may also be developing future mentors” (p. 506).

Limitations of Study

Although I took great measures to design and conduct a sound study, there are still a number of limitations, as is true of any other research study (Krumboltz, 1991). These limitations will be listed and discussed in this section. One limitation of this study is inherent in the type of qualitative methodology chosen and utilized. Although the use of grounded theory resulted in rich and complex data, the interpretation of the data was inevitably subject to my personal beliefs, biases, and assumptions. Hence, the findings
from this study may have been unduly influenced by my personal worldview, even though I took pains to be as aware of my biases as much as possible.

Relative to the large samples used in quantitative study, this study was limited by the small numbers of mentors and protégés interviewed in this study. Hence, the findings from this study may not be generalizable to all mentoring relationships and the results from this study should be considered preliminary and exploratory.

Another limitation of this present study is that it provides only a snapshot of cross-cultural mentoring. This was not designed as a longitudinal study and hence does not offer a sense of the developmental changes that happen over time. Future research in this area would certainly be a valuable addition to the literature.

This study focused on the dyadic relationship between mentor and protégé. Due to financial as well as time constraints, it was not possible to examine the entire constellation of supportive relationships available to the protégés. An examination of the multiple mentoring networks of the protégés would be a worthwhile endeavor (Higgins & Kram, 2001), particularly because ethnic minorities have been shown to draw on multiple sources for support and mentoring (Bova, 2000; Thomas, 1990; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999; Tillman, 2001; Walker, Wright, & Hanley, 2001).

The specific goal of this study was to study the actual practices and behaviors of mentors – it was beyond the scope of this study to examine mentors' personality characteristics and how such qualities relate to behaviors and practices. Research, for instance, has shown that mentor relational qualities, such as being empathic and authentic, are critical in creating trust in mentoring relationships (Spencer, 2006).
Lastly, this research study did not delimit or control for specific developmental stages and needs (e.g. the specific needs of doctoral students at the beginning stages of their careers as opposed to those at the dissertation stages). Although there are calls for research to uncover mentor practices at specific developmental phases of the mentoring relationship (Russell & Adams, 1997; Zorich, 1999), this present study followed grounded theory procedures and included cases of protégés at different developmental stages (Cresswell, 1998; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). However, at the same time, the inclusion of protégés at different stages of their academic careers can be considered a strength because it made it possible for me to compare and analyze, to some extent, how mentor practices changed or adapted in accordance with the developmental needs of the protégés.

Recommendations for Future Research

The research on cultural concerns in mentoring is still in its early stages – clearly, this is an area in great need of much more extensive research, writing, and reflection. There are many directions that deserve attention for future research. This present study focused on the cross-cultural practices of outstanding mentors of doctoral students in clinical and counseling psychology. Further research needs to be conducted in this area of best mentor practices across a spectrum of occupations, fields, and organizations. The specific context of the participants of this study was American institutions of higher learning. Since power relations between groups are context- and country-dependent (Ragins, 1997; Thomas, 1990), future research could explore diversity issues in mentoring relationships located in other settings, such as academia, community-based organizations, nonprofits, and different types of for-profit corporations. It would also be
extremely insightful to replicate this study for individuals at different stages of professional development, e.g. newcomers as opposed to those with a longer organizational tenure.

The current study painted broad strokes of the racial/cultural backgrounds of the protégés and the mentors. Future research could be devoted to more fine-grained analysis of the effects of specific gender, ethnic, class and other cultural variables, such as particular ethnic group needs or intergroup differences (Ibarra, 1993). One area that would be especially valuable for further research is the type of mentoring best suited for different ethnic groups. For instance, some groups might favor the more traditional hierarchical model of mentoring, while other groups might prefer a more egalitarian, peer-focused arrangement (Girves et al., 2005; Haring, 1997). Goto (1999) notes that Asian mentoring relationships are distinctive for being more formally hierarchical and for blending family and social contexts. It would be valuable to have these potentially important cross-cultural differences examined in future research.

Although this study focuses on mentor practices, it is important to note there are two parts to the mentoring equation and that protégé actions, responsiveness, and attitudes are also key in the success of a mentoring relationship (Blanchett & Clarke-Yapi, 1999; Walker et al., 2001). Barkham (2005) advises that protégés have a spirit of openness, be prepared to listen and reflect, respect advice, ask questions, ask for help, and work hard. In terms of cross-cultural dialogue, protégés also have to be willing to dialogue about their cultural heritage (Brinson & Kottler, 1993). Further research on protégé practice would be illuminative.
Another related area that would be worthy of more research attention would be an investigation of how mentor-protégé dyads can be optimally encouraged and formed. Previous research has shown that graduate students experience difficulty initiating mentoring relationships (Waldeck et al., 1997). Moreover, minorities have been found to encounter more difficulties finding mentors (Ragins, 1997; Sanchez & Reyes, 1999), in part due to their preference for mentors who share their race and ethnicity (González-Figueroa & Young, 2005; Ortiz-Walters & Gilson, 2005). Since correlational studies have shown that mentoring is associated with a range of career benefits for protégés, it would be worthwhile for researchers to examine how successful mentoring relationships are initiated. At the same time, it is worth noting that some studies have shown that protégés who are formally assigned mentors report less career and/or psychosocial support than those who find mentors through their own accord (Chao et al., 1992; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Other worthwhile research directions would be to examine how formal pairings can be optimized and/or how conditions can be arranged such that informal pairings can be encouraged to occur.

The majority of research on mentoring tend to provide one-time snap shots of the phenomenon studied. A valuable addition to the literature would be longitudinal studies that track changes in mentor practices over time.

Lastly, this study has shown the importance of key mentor practices in cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Research has shown that high quality training can positively impact mentoring behaviors and the quality of the relationship (Allen, Lentz et al., 2006). Hence, other worthwhile directions for future research would be to illuminate how to train mentors and protégés in cross-cultural interactions, how to create effective
training processes for mentors and protégés, and how to create and implement evaluation strategies for mentoring (Fetterman, 2000).

Personal Reflections

It has been three years since I commenced my first pilot interview on mentoring and more than six years since I met my main mentor with whom I continue to enjoy a close, supportive relationship. This somewhat lengthy personal and professional engagement in mentoring, combined with the considerable effort I expended on this present study, form the foundation for this section -- my post-analysis, personal reflections on mentoring. Though I am not professing to be an expert on mentoring, I have invested a significant amount of time and energy to this topic, both at the academic and personal levels. Hence, I would like to offer in this section my deeply personal and possibly idiosyncratic beliefs, reactions, and ideas on the subject of cross-cultural mentoring.

First, I see true mentoring as relationship-based. What struck me as I listened to my participants was the effort they made to enrich and sustain their relationships. I was particularly struck at the amount of time invested in these relationships. In an age of fast-paced technology where so much seems disposable and easily disregarded, where speed dating and instant messaging have become some of our norms for communicating and relating, it was truly refreshing to hear the participants talking about relationships in which they hoped to stay in touch “forever” (in the words of many participants). These were human relationships that clearly mattered and were likely to endure. Although it is certainly possible to have a mentoring “moment” wherein one stranger makes a real difference in the life of another, these moments are not tantamount to the relationships
studied here. It is my belief that quality mentoring involves real relationships with real people, involving a commitment of time and effort.

In the course of this study, I have also come to believe that differences can be traversed and negotiated in mentoring relationships and that they can help enrich and support the understanding and learning of each party. Although this study focused on the more obvious cultural differences such as race, gender, and generation, there are a lot more differences that operate within any one mentoring dyad. Yet, the mentors and protégés in this study saw difference as a source for enrichment, rather than an impediment to be disregarded or ignored. I posit that the majority of mentoring relationships, even homogeneous ones, contain differences that can potentially hinder understanding. I believe that it is vital to address cultural differences in a mentoring relationship – I believe that ignoring, downplaying, or dismissing such differences lead to a cutting of the lifeblood and richness from these relationships. When I reflect on the important relationships in my life, I realize that the people I am closest to are the ones who have a good grasp of the vital components of my identity, culture, and history. Those who do not see me in those terms or, for some reason or another, lack an understanding of these parts of me tend to be people with whom I have superficial relationships with superficial levels of trust and intimacy.

I have long been aware of my cultural orientation toward interdependence rather than individualism. However, while doing this research, I became even more aware of the interdependent and collective nature of scholarly work. As one mentor put it bluntly to me:
I never really viewed academia as an individualistic enterprise and I really do think that’s a bunch of bologna. I think that most people work with other people or use other people even though maybe only their own names are on the paper and when you’re teaching graduate courses, you’re getting just as much from your students as you’re sharing with them . . . so I’ve never viewed academia as not collaborative and all of my work has been collaborative, even though, actually, I have single-authored books . . . I still view them as collaborative (Dr. Lombardi, personal interview, March 25, 2005).

I think there is the understandable objection that mentoring might take time away from research productivity and other responsibilities of an academic. However, it seems to me that it is misleading and unhealthy to perpetuate the myth of the lone scholar producing brilliant insights independent of others. Much academic work is collaborative, even when we choose not to acknowledge this. Even single-authored works, as Dr. Lombardi points out, are not produced in isolation. It seems to me that the honest thing for faculty and institutions to do is to openly acknowledge the collaborative nature of scholarly enterprises and to make allowances and rewards as such. As one protégé stated:

Solomon (Protégé): If your academic legacy extends to one person, yourself, it’s not really much of a legacy. If you’re evaluated not on your own stuff but on how well your mentees do, then it’s not just a nice type concept, I think it really is important to the advancement of the field (personal interview, May 21, 2005).

I believe that not being honest about the collaborative nature of academia and academic relationships sets the stage for abuse and injustice in the system. On the other side of the coin, it is also worth noting that mentoring, though time-consuming, does not leave the
mentor without benefit. Mentor after mentor in this study were able to cite the rewards (tangible as well as the less tangible) they experienced as a result of their efforts. Hence, I would like to call attention to this issue so as to help crack open, challenge, and revitalize the process of becoming an academic and to make academia a more welcoming place where minorities and others can truly feel a sense of belonging and contribution.

The last piece I want to add in this section is my sense of how absolutely amazing these mentoring relationships are. During the many, many hours I devoted to interviewing, listening, re-listening, and reading the participants and their words, I repeatedly felt humbled and privileged to witness, to a limited extent, their mentoring relationships. I was touched by the levels of warmth, caring, and concern that I experienced secondhand in these relationships. Living in a world where violence, unkindness, and self-interest seem to dominate the media and our collective consciousness, it was at times a refuge and comfort to see that people genuinely and actively cared about each other. These relationships give me hope that individuals can transform each other, and that the process of transformation can ripple out to institutions, organizations, and perhaps even society.

Summary and Conclusion

Many research studies have shown that mentoring correlates with extensive benefits for protégés. However, we know very little about cross-cultural mentoring and how mentors successfully negotiate racial and cultural divides in their relationships. One contribution of this study is its illumination of the actual practices of mentors in successful cross-cultural mentoring relationships. For research purposes, these insights
can be used to clarify and to operationalize the definition and meaning of cross-cultural mentoring.

Findings from this study suggest that the mentors were successful in negotiating potential barriers by engaging in practices that established trust and created cultural credibility. These practices included talking directly about cultural differences, race, and racism, sharing personal information, giving gifts, being personally invested, and having a holistic understanding of the protégé. Protégés reported that their mentors’ cultural competencies helped them feel supported, affirmed, and empowered. These findings are important at two levels: first, they challenge previous models of mentoring that do not take cultural variables into consideration. Second, the lessons learned from these mentors give concrete tools on how to negotiate multiple cross-cultural differences in an effective and sensitive manner.

The grounded theory generated from the data in this study provides a theoretical framework and roadmap for apprehending the rich complexity of mentor practices and mentoring relationships. This theory emphasizes the ecological nature of the mentoring relationships as well as the dynamic interplay of contexts and mentor practices.

It is my hope that this study will illuminate the mystery and magic of mentoring so that mentors and potential mentors will be inspired to reach across cultural divides in their professional relationships. Certainly, this was part of my motivation to conduct this study. At the same time, I recognize that not everyone can have a one-to-one mentoring relationship akin to the quality of the ones examined in this study. However, the findings of this study can still be applied (in part or in full) to different constellations of supervisor-supervisee relationships. After conducting this study, it is my belief that
Anyone who adopts some of the mentor practices identified in this study can make a critical and positive difference in the lives of the people they encounter.
Hello! Do you know of an outstanding mentor to graduate students... someone who has a passion and commitment for supporting the careers of others? I would love to interview such mentors for my dissertation research.

Please e-mail me their names (and contact information, if you have it).

I would really appreciate your help! Many thanks!

-Anne Chan
Doctoral Candidate
Stanford University
Dear Prof. Smith:

I am writing to you because you were nominated as an outstanding mentor by your students and colleagues. I was wondering if you would be kind enough to be a participant in my dissertation research on the practices of exemplary ethnic minority mentors?

I understand that your time is precious and will try my best to impose on you as little as possible. What I would need from you are:

1) An interview with you regarding your mentoring practices (this should take approximately an hour);

2) A chance to observe/audiotape/videotape one or two of your meetings or phone conversations with your protégés;

A little about myself: I am a 4th-year doctoral student in counseling psychology at Stanford. I have benefited greatly from having the support of a caring mentor and know that I would not have made it thus far without his guidance. I am both personally and professionally invested in this topic of mentoring and hence have chosen to devote my dissertation to it. I hope that my research will encourage the development of more outstanding mentors such as yourself.

There is a paucity of research in this area -- we know very little about what mentors actually do with their protégés. By being a part of my study, you would be contributing a great deal to helping us understand what mentors do. This knowledge would be invaluable in the training of future mentors and advisors and would also contribute to the advancement of ethnic minority students in psychology.
If you have further questions about my study, please feel free to e-mail me at annechan@stanford.edu or call me at (510)744-1781. Please e-mail me whether you would or would not like to be a part of my study.

Looking forward to hearing from you!

Best Wishes,

Anne Chan
APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM FOR MENTORS

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

485 Lasuen Mall
STANFORD, CA 94305-3096

Consent form for Mentors

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT: (Anne Chan, Cubberley 64, School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305; Phone: 510-744-1781; E-mail: annechan@stanford.edu).

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a research study on mentors and their mentoring practices. You will be asked to participate in audiotaped interviews with me and to fill out a simple survey. You will be asked questions about your relationship with your mentee, and you mentor him/her. I will also interview your mentee regarding his/her mentoring with you. In addition, with your permission, I will videotape or audiotape your interview and/or mentoring sessions. All tapes and data pertaining to this study will be kept in a safe and secure place. When no more knowledge can be gleaned from this data, the tapes will be erased.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS STUDY ARE MINIMAL. To protect your confidentiality, you will be identified by a code name rather than your actual name in any report, presentation, or publication that may result from this study. In addition, any identifiable markers that may be linked to you will be changed in all written reports.

The benefit which may reasonably be expected to result from this study is that you will be contributing to a body of knowledge on mentoring. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the published results from this research study, feel free to contact Anne Chan via the e-mail provided above.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in the interviews will take approximately four hours of your time.

PAYMENTS: You will receive a $20 Amazon gift certificate for your participation. LEGALLY, YOU CAN BE PAID ONLY IF YOU ARE A US CITIZEN, A LEGAL RESIDENT ALIEN (I.E., POSSESS A “GREEN” CARD), OR HAVE A WORK ELIGIBLE VISA SPONSORED BY THE PAYING INSTITUTION.

SUBJECT’S RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have
the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. You may refuse to have your videotapes or audiotapes shown at public presentations.

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact - anonymously, if you wish - the Administrative Panels Office, Stanford University, Stanford, CA (USA) 94305-5401 (or by phone (650) 723-2480 - you may call collect).

I give consent to be interviewed during this study: Please initial:  __ Yes  __ No

I give consent for my interview with Anne Chan to be audiotaped: please initial:  __ Yes  __ No

I give consent for my mentoring sessions to be audiotaped or videotaped: Please initial:  __ Yes  __ No

I give consent for my responses in the interviews, surveys, mentoring sessions, and any materials related to my mentoring relationship to be analyzed and published: Please initial:  __ Yes  __ No

I give consent for the audio/videotape of my interview/mentoring session to be shown at professional conferences: Please initial:  __ Yes  __ No

The extra copy of this consent form is for you to keep.

SIGNATURE _________________________ DATE _______________________

Protocol Approval Date: 11/17/06
Protocol Expiration Date: 11/16/07
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR MENTORS

1. Tell me a little about your background, e.g. your ethnic/cultural background, where you grew up, how did you decide to pursue an academic career.

2. How did you learn to be a mentor? Can you tell me the story about you and the influential people in your life?

3. How many ongoing mentoring relationships do you have right now? What stage of their careers are they at? How many people would you say you have mentored so far?

4. How would you define the term “mentor?” What are some activities and practices you associate with mentoring?

5. How do your mentoring relationships begin? How do you select mentees?

6. What are your goals when mentoring someone at the dissertation and job search stage? How do you achieve these goals?

7. Please give me a picture of all the specific things you do when you are mentoring someone from the beginning of their dissertation to their job search.

8. What are the ways in which you keep in touch with your protégés? E-mail? Phone? Face to face? How often do you communicate with them? Who initiates contact usually?

9. How do you help your protégés in their academic and professional development?

10. How do you address personal issues (like self-esteem and family issues)?

11. What is the role of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in your mentoring? Are there some specific things you do as an ethnic minority mentor that a non-ethnic minority mentor might not do? Can you describe a time when your
race/culture/gender/sexual orientation was different from your protégé – how did you
deal with it?

12. What are the most effective or important mentoring techniques or activities you use
and why? Tell about a time these techniques worked well? A time when they did
not?

13. What types of issues are harder to deal with than others in mentoring? Can you
describe a time when it was particularly difficult to mentor somebody?

14. What are things that you do that might seem obvious, but are actually supportive of
your protégés’ growth?

15. Tell me about humor in your mentoring relationships.

16. What are things you are careful not to do in mentoring?

17. What are some costs of mentoring to you?

18. What motivates you to mentor? What do you get out of mentoring?

19. Is there anything we didn’t discuss that you think is important to talk about?

Supplemental Questions and Prompts

Question 4

- What are things you do in your role as a mentor that are similar or different from
the other roles that you perform (say as a parent, teacher, or psychologist)?

Question 5

- How do you get to know your protégé?
- How do you establish trust with your protégé?
Question 7

- What do you provide that you wish you yourself had at the dissertation/job search stage?
- Imagine you are mentoring one of your protégés. What might I see in a typical mentoring session of yours?
- In what ways do you protect your protégé?
- What are the most important things you find your mentees need to become aware of and deal with in the department and in the field?
- In what ways do you coach your protégé? How do you teach them about desirable professional behaviors?
- In what ways might you provide support (financial & emotional) to your protégé?
- In what ways do you help your protégés careers? Do you help them get published? Attend conferences? Present at conferences? Get scholarships? Get jobs? Can you tell me about a few people/ways you have helped?
- How do you create opportunities for your protégé?
- In what ways do you help your protégé attain desirable positions?
- Do you bring your protégé’s accomplishments to the attention of important people in the field? Can you tell me a few examples?
- How do you facilitate the career goals of your protégé? (or even help them design goals)

Question 10

- How do you help develop your protégé’s confidence, self-esteem, and resiliency?
- How do you provide encouragement to your protégé?
- How do you help your protégé understand himself or herself?
- How do you show trust and confidence in your protégé?

Question 13

- Tell me about a time you had to confront a protégé.
- How do you deal with resistance from your protégés?
- Have you ever worked with a protégé who was underperforming? How did you deal with that situation?

Question 14

- What kinds of social interactions do you have with your protégé?
- What types of personal information do you share with your protégé?
- Problem with boundaries?
**Question 17**

- Damaged reputation? Use of time and resources? Being upstaged or exploited by protégés? (embarrassed? Disappointed?) Accused of playing favorites?

**Question 18**

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PROTAGÉS

1. Tell me briefly about your cultural/racial background and how you decided to pursue a doctorate in psychology. What stage of your career are you at?

2. How would you define a mentor? What are some activities and practices you associate with mentoring? Difference between an advisor and a mentor?

3. Who are your mentors, whether past or present? Tell me about them.

4. Tell me about how he/she became your mentor?

5. Can you tell me the special aspects of your relationship that characterize it as a MENTORING relationship? What does he/she give you that other people in your life cannot give you?

6. What are qualities about your mentor or things he/she does that makes the relationship a success? What in your opinion makes a good mentor?

7. What sorts of things did you discuss as ground rules for the relationship? What were the goals for your relationship?

8. How often do you communicate with him/her? In what ways do you communicate (phone, email, face to face)? Who initiates contact usually? How responsive is he/she?

9. How much time does your mentor spend with you? How does he/she convey that it is okay for you to approach her?

10. How much do you trust your mentor? How did she create that trust in you?

11. How has he/she helped in your academic and professional development?

12. How does he/she demonstrate that he/she cares about you?

13. How does he/she demonstrate confidence in you?
14. What specific things does your mentor do to encourage or support you?

15. How does your mentor act as a role model for you?

16. Can you give me one example of something your mentor did that really made a difference in your life?

17. How does your mentor influence your beliefs about yourself?

18. Tell me about collaboration in your relationship.

19. In what ways are you different from your mentor (culture, gender, class, background, sexual orientation)? How do these differences affect your relationship? How were these differences addressed in your relationship? In what ways were you able to identify or not identify with her?

20. How has she supported you as an ethnic minority person? [personally & professionally]

21. What personal information have you both shared with each other?

22. How does she/he handle the power differential in your relationship?

23. Tell me about humor in the relationship?

24. Tell me about gift-giving in your relationship.

25. In what ways might you impact your mentor?

26. What drawbacks are there to being in a mentoring relationship?

27. How would you sum up the benefits you get from mentoring?

28. What qualities do you possess or things you do that make the relationship a success?

29. What would you change about your relationship? What else could he/she do that could improve the relationship even further?

30. How long will you stay in touch with her?
31. Is there anything we didn’t discuss that you think is important to talk about?

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1. What information has he/she given you about the department, about completing the degree, and about the field of counseling psychology?
2. In what ways has he/she mentor opened your eyes to new ideas? New opportunities? New people?
3. What things did you not know that your mentor taught you? Any advice he/she gave you?
4. How does he/she protect you?
5. In what ways does he/she coach you?
7. Teaching classes?
8. Significance of letters of recommendation?

SOCIAL AND PERSONAL AREAS
1. What kinds of social interactions do you have with her?
APPENDIX F: SAMPLE ENTRY FROM MY REFLEXIVE JOURNAL

September 1, 2005

(Protegé) mentioned that his mentor operates with a high level of integrity. That she is always on time, never misses a meeting with him. Is this part of the role modeling piece? “Integrity” is an important word for me to think about. I tend not to think of being on time as part of having “integrity.” Not sure if it’s part of my own cultural bias or my religious upbringing – I guess I always saw integrity as a moral thing, something intangible. But maybe beneath the moral value is an attendant behavior. So if “integrity” means being trustworthy and being true to your word, then being on time is the action that proves one is true to one’s word to be on time. One does what one said one was going to do. This idea of integrity being behaviorally observable is something that I have never really fully thought about.
APPENDIX G: SAMPLE FIELD NOTE

Field Notes from Interview with a Mentor

My impressions of her: very nice, very approachable, easy to talk to. Made me feel comfortable right away – I can see why she is a good mentor. Projects caring – softness, gentleness about her?

Talked about humor as being critical in the relationship – humor makes the mentor seem human, gets down to protégé’s level?

Interesting that she really socially interacts with her protégés – takes them out for meals and goes to concerts with them. NEAT!

Sense of her culture coming up in mentoring: as a Japanese-American woman, she acknowledges being more diffident, less assertive than maybe she likes to be. She acknowledges that this might be an issue in her mentoring. Need to look at interview again to see how this plays out in her own words.
APPENDIX H: SAMPLE OBSERVATIONAL NOTE

WHO: Ginny (Protégé)
WHAT: Interview
WHEN: December 23, 2005, 10 am
HOW: Over the phone at her workplace
APPENDIX I: SAMPLE THEORETICAL NOTE

I was particularly struck by her continual reference to closeness and sharing in the relationship. I think she shares a lot of personal information with her protégés and gets to know them by being an open book herself. It seems to me that this may be THE critical key to her mentoring and her mentoring style. Working hypothesis: the personal sharing and closeness in a mentoring relationship is vital for it to work? Because it creates trust and safety? Need to ask more about this.
APPENDIX J: SAMPLE METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Need to get APA book on “Getting a Mentor”

I hope I didn’t veer too much off when I talked about my experiences with racism in therapy. Where is the line drawn between letting the participant feel comfortable with who you are? Also where is the line drawn with reciprocating?

I’ve never asked the mentors why they volunteered to be in this study. I feel like I should have asked this question, but it’s hard to add one more question to an already heavy interview protocol. I wonder how important this question is?

Note to self: Make sure I look at the theme of collaboration
Validation Analytic Memo, July 6, 2005

I’m trying to figure out the distinctions, if any, between validation, giving feedback, showing confidence, and believing in mentee. In the pilot study, I’d talked about how the mentors had made positive and encouraging statements both to, and about their mentees. I put this under the heading of “Validation.” The dictionary definition of “validation” is: “an act, process, or instance of validating.” Interestingly enough, the definition of “validate” is: “1. To make legally valid; 2. To grant official sanction to by marking; 3. To declare the validity of an election; 4. To support or corroborate on a sound or authoritative basis.”

I’d always thought of validation in terms of an emotional validation: in my mind, I thought of it as a means of making someone feel understood, heard and accepted. But I rather like the dictionary definition of validation because it gives the sense of conferring an official sanction and of support from a powerful position. The dictionary definition also gives a sense of some sort of official hand-stamp or approval.

I think that mentors do this actually and perhaps one of the ways they do this is by providing emotional support and by voicing their affirmation/confirmation of the mentee? I know that I’ve had the feeling of not feeling like I belonged in graduate school, a doctoral program, and in the academic world. Also a sense of imposter phenomenon – like I didn’t really belong there and that it was luck that got me into the doctoral program. And someone is going to find out about me someday!! So these were my feelings – possibly the feelings of many students, reinforced if you are a minority because so few
people look like you and there are so few role models. So one might have feelings of being a fake, of being unworthy, of not belonging.

So how does one cope with feelings like this? I suppose, without a mentor, one might drop out, or one might trudge along, pretending everything is okay and suppressing these feelings as much as possible.

If one had a mentor, one could conceivably turn to him or her and express those feelings and receive validation in return. A hand-stamp of sorts, a seal of approval. And what would the validation look like?

- Reassurance that the mentee belongs
- Feedback that the mentee is doing a good job; making positive remarks about the mentee’s skills and performance (but this would be positive feedback mainly? If this is in this category – maybe I should have two categories: positive feedback and constructive/negative feedback)
- Expressing confidence in the mentee’s abilities; showing that the mentor believes in the mentee
- Writing letters of recommendation
- Nominating the mentee for awards
- Giving the mentee opportunities to present, publish is also validating; but I want to talk about this indepth in a different category probably.
- Emotional support
- Encouraging? (I think this belongs here – I’ll put this temporarily here)

Funny enough, I’m not sure how emotional support plays into this. I think it belongs in this category – no matter what feelings the mentee has, the mentor is willing to
deal with those feelings? So the mentee's feelings are acceptable no matter what? This helps the mentee feel like he or she belongs in this world, regardless of troubling feelings?

I'm going to merge all the above mentor activities under the heading of "Validation" and then re-analyze the quotes to see if anything new emerges.

I think this category of validation is a useful one because it could encompass a number of mentor activities that are validating, i.e. that make the mentee feel supported, affirmed, and confirmed as a member of the academy.
**APPENDIX L: EXAMPLE OF OPEN CODING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Excerpt from Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>not task oriented</em></td>
<td>Mentor: Well, I would say the students that I connect with during the first year . . . Yeah, I think that the students that I form a connection with earlier on in the program, it tends to be, what would I say? The relationship is different because it's not as task oriented. Like for students that I don't know as well, the task is to finish, if it's done in a timely manner versus the student who when we start off, is on my research team, there tends to be a lot of a lot of sharing of personal experiences and so there's sort of a social aspect to our relationship as well as the research aspect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>sharing of personal</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>experiences</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>social aspect</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>know on different level</em></td>
<td>It seems like I know them on a very different level. I know about their lives. I know about what's going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>know about their lives</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>know what's going on</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX M: EXAMPLE OF AXIAL CODING

In this example, I was just starting to discern the dimensions of the category "Validation." I used axial coding to help me figure out how different practices related to each other within this category:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Axial Coding for “Validation”</th>
<th>Excerpt from Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentor affirms protégé in the following ways:</td>
<td>Protégé: Her <strong>level of support</strong> for me as her mentee and all of her other mentees is very, very high so I really value that support in terms of <strong>writing letters of rec</strong> on short notice, <strong>nominating me for various awards</strong> that otherwise I wouldn’t have even known about or wouldn’t have been able to have been nominated for if she wasn’t the person doing the nominating. So it’s that level of support is very important. . . . I also think that her level of support in terms of <strong>her opinion of me</strong> really means a lot to me. She always speaks highly of protégé to others; <strong>speaks very highly of me</strong>. So it’s kind of a nice thing to hear someone from another university say to me, “Oh, you’re Serena’s student. Yes, I’ve heard her talk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>writing letters &amp; nominating for awards</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reveals mentor’s high opinion of protégé</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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about you," and that's a really nice thing
to hear from other people, that she's
proud of me and proud of my
accomplishments and talks up my
talks up protégé's research
research for me and all of these great
things.
Appendix N: Example of Selective Coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective Coding</th>
<th>Excerpt from Transcript</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The importance of context in the lives of the protégés had been identified as a key component of the emerging grounded theory. Hence, I started coding for this theme as I re-read the transcripts. In this excerpt, the theme of context is prominent and was thus selectively coded as part of the category of “Context.”</td>
<td>Nandita: I would define a mentor as somebody who will help you both personally and professionally and the reason I put the personally in there is because oftentimes people try to help you out professionally but they forget that you are a person and that you are within context and that are within a family and you are within all of those things. And a real mentor guides you professionally and personally and I think does so for a period of time. Maybe not for your entire life but for some phase or some period of time. Anne Chan: Can you give me an example of someone who has worked with you and not addressed the personal issues? Nandita Yeah, I mean, I think there’s been bosses that have done that and some faculty members when I was doing my dissertation. Not many, actually. I ended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
up (pause) seeking out people that really
did validate that but, you know, for
example, one of my faculty members who
was on my dissertation as well, didn’t
really get the cultural piece. Didn’t
understand it. Didn’t respect it. Well, let
me put it this way. Didn’t understand it.
She tried to get it but she didn’t get it and
that’s an important piece to who I am. . . .
Anne Chan: This may seem like an
obvious question but I’d like to hear from
you what it means to have the cultural
piece addressed.
Protégé: It means everything. It means
that somebody really, you know, when we
learn, for example, multi cultural
counseling, the idea that you need to take
somebody in context and family and as
an, you know, culture and as an
individual so you need to take all of those
levels out. So if you take one of those
levels out, you don’t get the person. They
won’t make sense or you may simplify
them. If you get the cultural piece, you get the layer. You get that middle contextual layer about a person that shapes how they think, how they dream, how they work, how they prioritize things in their life. So to understand what it means for me to work in my community, with my community, now, I do that. For a mentor not to understand that, then it’s meaningless.
Best Practices in Cross-Cultural Mentoring: Negotiating Multiple Identities
Anne Chan, School of Education, Stanford University

I. ABSTRACT
Graduation rates of ethnic minority doctoral students are leveling off even declining (Stevens, 2006). Part of the problem may be partly due to lack of appropriate mentoring for ethnic minority students; mentoring has been found to be an important tool for retaining students of color (Rogers and Molina, 2006). Lack of research on actual practices that occur in a mentoring relationship, and how mentors function in their mentoring practices, has led to the current investigation.

II. DEFINITION
A mentoring relationship is a one-to-one relationship between an experienced mentor (the mentor) and the professional development of the protégé (the protege) in the context of the mentor: (a) scaffolding the growth of the protégé in a self-defined role, (b) providing resources to the protégé, (c) assisting and guiding the protégé, and (d) being proactive and engaging in self-representational activities.

III. METHOD
Sample: Nine outstanding minority and one outstanding protégé from two interdisciplinary doctoral programs in the School of Education at Stanford University. The nine mentors and nine protégés were recruited via nominations from department faculty and colleagues. Each dyad was diversified in one or more of the following dimensions: race, ethnicity, gender, age, general tone, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual orientation, and mentor-mentee relationship. Data collection included semi-structured interviews with mentors and protégés, email exchanges, archival materials, and observation.

IV. RESULTS
Cross-Cultural Mentor Functions & Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentor Functions</th>
<th>Practices</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing access to networks</td>
<td>Being proactive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building supportive networks</td>
<td>Availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering relationship development</td>
<td>Giving time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual career development</td>
<td>Self-disclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring and guiding</td>
<td>Connecting to multicultural communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting</td>
<td>Protecting when issues arise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing confidence in protégé</td>
<td>Providing emotional support and reassurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominating protégés for awards</td>
<td>Talking about cultural differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing professional support</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having a holistic understanding of protégé</td>
<td>Maintaining good communication practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using exposure experiences</td>
<td>Understanding protégé's cultural identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledging cultural limitations</td>
<td>Assuming cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berating integrity</td>
<td>Discussing possible careers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showing commitment to cultural values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. RESULTS CONTINUED

Cross-Cultural, Ecological and Relational Model of Mentoring

V. CONCLUSION
The findings highlight the importance of providing mentorship to ethnic minority doctoral students. The study means that mentors and protégés should align to cross-cultural mentoring expectations, and that mentorship should be a collaborative and reciprocal relationship, where the mentor and protégé work together to achieve mutual goals.
REFERENCES


(Eds.), *Mentoring dilemmas: Developmental relationships within multicultural organizations* (pp. 21-46). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.


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