Episode 281—Dr. Kelly Jackson and Dr. Gina Miranda Samuels: Multiracial Attunement: Shifting Social Work Towards a Culture of Inclusivity

[00:00:08] Welcome to inSocialWork, the podcast series of the University at Buffalo School of Social Work at www.inSocialWork.org. We're glad you could join us today. The purpose of inSocialWork is to engage practitioners and researchers in lifelong learning and to promote research to practice and practice to research. We educate. We connect. We care. We're inSocialWork.

[00:00:37] Hello and welcome to inSocialWork. I'm Louanne Bakk, your host for this episode. Research suggests that multiracial individuals and families experience similar or higher rates of racism, bullying, separation, suicide and divorce than their single race identified peers. Yet there is a disproportionate lack of attention to the issues of multiraciality. In this podcast, Dr. Kelly Jackson and Dr. Gina Miranda Samuels discuss the topic of multiracial Cultural Attunement and deliberate why the issue of multiraciality lacks prominence in social work literature and research. They describe how their own social work practice and research experiences have shaped their work, and they define, compare and contrast terms such as Cultural Attunement, Cultural Competence, mono-centricity and mono-racism. Given the growing multiracial population, the importance of going beyond the black/white dichotomy is emphasized in order to address the disproportionate challenges and risks multiracial individuals and families face. The episode concludes with a discussion on how our guests book, Multiracial Cultural Attunement, can help social workers apply skills and tools designed to leverage the strength and resilience of multiracial individuals and families. Kellie Jackson PhD is an associate professor in the School of Social Work at Arizona State University. As a social worker and multiracial person, Dr Jackson is committed to expanding the current knowledge base of multiracial identity through the dissemination of empirical research to help social workers and other professionals work more inclusively and responsibly with individuals and families living multiracially. Gina Miranda Samuels PhD is an associate professor at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration. Her research explores processes of identity, belonging, ambiguous loss and the effects of chronic displacements from home among those who have experienced foster care, homelessness and/or transracial adoption. They were interviewed in November, 2019 by Josie Diebold, PhD candidate here at the UB School of Social Work.

[00:03:14] Hello, my name is Josie Diebold. I'm a PhD student here at the UB School of Social Work, and I am here today talking with Gina and Kelly. So to kick us off, I just really want to ask the two of you what are one or two important things that you hope listeners will take away after listening to this podcast episode?

[00:03:37] So only one or two is hard, but I think narrowing it down to one or two, I would say first and foremost, I really hope that in listening today, folks hear that our focus, our choice to focus on multiraciality, our call for critical multiracial attunement, isn't really some kind of ploy to evade or transcend race or racism. I think sometimes people misunderstand the emphasis on calling out mixed race and multiraciality as its own distinct experience sometimes align that with a term to be colorblind or to try to state that somehow race is no longer important, or that multiracial persons and claiming mixed race identities are the proof that racism doesn't exist. And I think both Kelly and I have been really intentional about producing a book that's quite the contrary. And so that either multiraciality and mixed race is often the hotbed site for racism, for racism specifically towards mixed race people, which we call mono-racism and racial discord. And while there's incredible strength to

multiraciality as well, it certainly is not a racial experience devoid of any of the same experiences of racism than any other racialized population experiences. So I really hope that people hear that from how we are going to be talking about the book and about some of the concepts and principles of the practice model that we put forth and that there is nothing about being multiracial that buys you a ticket out of racialized experience. I would say the other thing I would really hope that listeners hear from us, that socially just practice requires collaborative relationships and working with people are, I hope we have a chance to talk later on about our intentional desire to move past the language of Cultural Competence. And a part of that, intentionality is really emphasizing how deeply transformative the relationship itself is and how intentional we can be as social workers in building relationships that are bases where people can re-imagine themselves in life and offer healing and growth experiences. That is a critical philosophy throughout pretty much all of the chapters that we write and I think a value orientation that Kelly and I deeply share.

[00:05:41] That's wonderful. Thank you so much. So I'm wondering from the two of you, why do you think that issues of multiraciality are not more prominent in social work literature and research?

[00:05:54] This is Gina, I'll take the start on this one, but Kelly just finished a piece that specifically looks at this, so she should also weigh in on that. I think this is simultaneously unbelievable to me and deeply believable to me. So I vacillate between I can't believe that it's 21st century. We've had a biracial president. And Kelly and I are still the only two who work that sort of anchor our work continually in this area, though there certainly is a growing cadre of people underneath us, I like to believe. So it's unbelievable and believable. It's unbelievable because of all the reasons that you might imagine. It's unbelievable because there's a growing population and whenever I go and talk, I ask many people as audience, "how many people are touched by either having been in an interracial family relationship, know somebody who's mixed race, have a transracial adoption experience, something that anchors you to mixed race," and nearly everybody in the room raises their hand. So this is an everyday experience, which nearly all of us have some kind of personal connection to, an awareness to. And yet I think in our field and in many helping professions field, we've been really slow to get outside of single race ways of engaging human experience. And there's I think a lot of reasons for that. I think one is some of the ways in which we study even pan-racial groups. So our four dominant ways of putting people in racial boxes of Black African-American, Latin-esque/Latino/Hispanic, American-Indian, Asian. Those four and white, those main dominant groups. even within them there's a huge diversity that would make you question why we even think that those groups should be clustered together. And maybe all they share is, for example, a language. And in many cases, not even that. And I just think we've been really slow and disconnected in research, in the development of our knowledge from the way that many social workers and many of us as people live and the complexity that we live. And so we continue to slice and dice racially in these really grossly inadequate ways of trying to capture people's racialized experiences. I think because that's a way in which social work has, for whatever reasons, decided that we're not going to be at the forefront of critiquing race, of writing theory. Many academic journals in social work do not allow publishing things that aren't about empirical presentations of data. So we really lag, I think, in our own field behind in generating theoretical knowledge, thinking about taking our ecological models, person-in-environment, the value of relationships, these sorts of things, and really creating our own theories and our own models that would help us to study things in the way that then those of us who are practicing are in many cases already practicing. Then I think Kelly and I were talking about this before we hopped on the phone. I think there still is in our own field

some degree or in large degree mono-racism, meaning that the idea that there is such a thing as purity in race is kind of the first layer of that, and that the normal way to do race is from a single race perspective, so that all families have only one racial identity, all people only have one racial heritage. And while we kind of know that that's not true, that's sort of how we set things up to be. And we all are carriers of that kind of way of understanding race in us. And I think sometimes that believes out in terms of how we understand the racial diversity in our own samples when we research and in our own practice model, and the ways in which we theorize race. And that's not to just in social work. That's true all the way up into how federal funding streams decide how to articulate racial disparities. Many of the racial disparities that we think are lodged exclusively in American-Indian, African-American Black, Latino populations, Asian populations are also experienced by persons who and families who identify as mixed race and multiracial. But because we don't think in those ways, then we don't fund research to study that and then people don't study that. I think is a multi-faceted issue. But Kelly, what did you find when you wrote that paper?

[00:09:40] Yeah, I absolutely agree. You know, I think when I first thought of "is this really a problem? Is there really kind of this durst, this absence of research?" And I did a study recently, the one that Gina's referring to, where I looked at sessions at the CSWE, so that's our preeminent kind of social work conference on education. It's the annual program meeting. So I looked over 10 years at the 11 conferences that have been held. And so this is over 7000 sessions on a plethora of topics ranging from substance use, child welfare and domestic violence. And out of the 7000, there were only 17 or that's like 0.2 percent of the papers, posters and panels that talked about are centered multiracial individuals and families, including transracial families. So that's such a small percentage, not even a percentage of content. Again, and this is at a conference that's about kind of social work education and moving our thinking forward. And as a profession, we're just really behind.

[00:10:38] Thank you. That's really fascinating, just the myriad factors that have gone into why this issue is not more prominent in the literature and research as it is. And building from that, something that I'm curious to hear from you about is how your general social work practice and research experiences have particularly informed your new book, Multiracial Cultural Attunement?

[00:11:05] Right. So this is Kelly. And I think when we were putting together our prospectives around writing this book together, I just remember looking at our CVs and looking at kind of some of things we were able to kind of put out over the years. And a lot of our research, which is empirical, qualitative, based on interviews of multiracial individuals and families, has really kind of expanded in some ways our theoretical understanding of multiracial identity development. So I think when Gina and I set out to develop this book, we really wanted to base it not only on existing research and literature from other disciplines, but also our own. So I know for myself one thing that I really wanted to make sure in doing my own research has been kind of pushing the field forward. So expanding theory, but another thing that was really important to me was contributing an empirical measure on multiracial individuals and families. So that was something that didn't really exist. I think there was one other empirical measure on multiracial people and identity wanting to kind of push that forward. So that was something that I was able to do that I was really kind of proud of. And it's called the Multiracial Experiences Measure. And what's unique about this particular measure is that instead of making it about the person as inherently struggling with identity, that it asks questions about your experiences, your interpersonal experiences, experiences socially that might cause issues or problems, or what are some of the strengths in those experiences that are related to your identity. So I think that was one thing that I know directly informed the book. So for people who would

be reading the book and for social workers using this, they'll have access to an empirical measure that they can use during the assessment phase of multiracial individuals and families to understand it and to better get a sense of some of their experiences around mono-racism, also some of the strengths that they've been able to acquire kind of in their environments.

[00:12:51] Beautiful. Thank you so much for sharing about that. So I know the title of your new book is Multiracial Cultural Attunement. So I was hoping that you could talk to us more about what Cultural Attunement is and how it differs from Cultural Competence.

[00:13:06] So this is Gina. I'll get us started on this. This is something that Kelly and I wrote about in the paper she was referencing earlier that we wrote for Social Work Journal initially and where we made a very conscious decision to push back a little bit on the lexicons of diversity that were and have been pretty dominant in our field and other helping professions fields of Cultural Competence. And while we certainly aren't the first people to write about Cultural Competence, we certainly wanted to anchor the discussions that we were going to be having about how to work with folks who are mixed race or who families who are mixed race from a different space. And I think, you know, when we think about Cultural Attunement, we think about it as both a conceptual departure and also an existential departure from the idea of Cultural Competence, builds on the concepts that folks might be who are in schools of social work, who have been recently as schools of social work may have read around taking on cultural humility, engaging curiosity as a way of being that is critical for understanding attunement. And in that way, it's an existential departure because it requires a person to not be the expert, to let go of our ideas that we have to have mastery over something or control over something and that we are the expert. And I think in that way, that's a huge departure from competence, even though I would argue that probably a lot of people who use the word competence don't fully engage that wholesale endorsement of competence as really meaning all that. It is a word that conveys that and suggests that particularly when we're teaching students who are learning new and think, "wow, I have to be competent." There's like 80 cultures, however many there are, cultures are contested things even from within a culture. Culture sharing groups, they constantly change and are growing. So the idea that anyone could ever be competent, even in their own culture in that kind of way is unrealistic, and in some cases one might misinterpret that to mean a level of arrogance on the part of a person who feels that they are culturally competent. So alternatively, the idea of Cultural Attunement, this is something that I really relate to a lot, especially coming from a music background in undergrad where you're playing your own instrument, but in order to play something beyond a solo, it requires that you listen to the other musicians, that you calibrate to their tone, to their pace, their volume, that there's times of leading, there's times of following. And it's a dance that's sometimes talked about in our practice literature. And it's a deeply relational approach. Throughout the book we talk a lot about in-relation work, and this is complementary to our idea of using a Cultural Attunement approach. And it's a space where the achievement happens. It requires another person. And so I think that's a really big difference than competence, where it suggests you have this knowledge, you carry it with you inside you as the expert, you take it where you go and then you deploy this competence onto people. Attunement is, by definition, a word that evokes a very different kind of way of being with another person and really makes them necessary in order for you to do the work of Cultural Attunement. And I think those are really important elements. And I guess last thing I'd say and then I want Kelly to jump in a little bit on this, is that competence also suggests something static. It's a state of being that you arrive there at some moments in your career when you're a certain age and place and you are wise and competent. And attunement suggests that this is something that's always changing, that

it's a lifelong thing, that it isn't something that you can get right with one person and get really wrong with somebody else, and that it requires this micro adjusting all the time, both within the relationship and real time, but also micro adjusting in your own sort of calibration of knowledge, what you think you know and how each relationship also attunes you back out to the larger population in a way that just can't be had by reading books on a topic or going to a training, or even being, having your own singular experience of a culture.

[00:16:50] That was perfect, Gina. She had mentioned there has been writings on cultural attunement. We were very much influenced by the work of Hoskins, who talked about some of the principles of cultural humility. So I think to add to that and to kind of push that into a practice model was something that we challenge ourselves on. And the other piece wasn't just about taking a position of not knowing, but also having social workers really recognize how they contribute to or are complicit in some of these systems that are oppressive to multiracial individuals and families.

[00:17:19] So in your extensive review of the research and theory, I know that your book goes way beyond the black-white dichotomy. And like you've mentioned, it even includes issues that are relevant to persons and families who are shaped by transracial adoption. And I'm wondering if you can speak a bit more to why this is important when thinking about the growing multiracial population.

[00:17:46] So this is Kelly. I think Gina really hit on and emphasized how diverse every racial group is and how diverse multiracial individuals and families are. And so some of the things that I think when we think of multiracial individuals and families, we tend to just think of it in terms of black and white. But we recognize that compared to other groups, multiracial, say interracial marriage between black people and white people is actually the lowest of all the different interracial groupings. So there's a large percentage of multiracial people who aren't black and white. There's a large percentage of people who identify as Asian White. There's a large percentage of multiracial people who are American-Indian. And I think also there's something that in thinking about multiraciality, that is always kind of tied to whiteness. Right, it's always about black and white, Asian and white. So we really tried to kind of push ourselves away from that and kind of look beyond that, because there's a large growth and multiracial people who are multiple minorities, who are black and American-Indian, who are black, Mexican American-Indian. And also people who are multiracial and they're second generation or third generation multiracial. So whose parents or whose biological parents are multiracial themselves. So I think we did in applying and bringing in different cases and examples and research, we really kind of pushed ourselves beyond this framing of whiteness to include and be inclusive of those stories.

[00:19:07] This is Gina. I would also add in that vein of pushing. One of the concepts that we use in the book is Intersectionality. And so also trying to get outside of just talking about race as a level of diversity, but also calling on the ways in which things like heteronormativity or biologism or other kinds of dominant systems of meaning in our society shape how people experience their multiraciality, how people come together in families that are multiracial or racially mixed as another layer of understanding some of where some of that diversity can come from.

[00:19:39] And what would you say are some of the potential challenges that multiracial individuals and families can face in addition, on the flip side, about the potential strengths?

[00:19:50] So I think Gina mentioned talking about kind of mono-racism. But I think backing out, we just want to emphasize with any kind of racial quote-unquote minority

group there are certain risks associated with being experienced as a quote-unquote minority in this country. So obviously for multiracial people and individuals and families, they're susceptible to racism and all that kind of comes with having that experience. So even thinking about intergenerational trauma and how that kind of impacts people in younger generations who've experienced that with racism. In addition, I think we really do talk about and we kind of center this concept of mono-racism. So this idea, this belief in the false belief that people can only be kind of one race. So we really kind of, I think, dig into understanding where that came from and how that additionally kind of impacts multiracial individuals and families. But the research, I think, has been, I would say pretty steady in pointing out some of the disproportionate risks multiracial individuals and families face. And this is where, again, we want to emphasize it's not the multiracial individual or family's racial identity that causes these risks, but this is, again, about being in a minority in a country that really is kind of shaped and framed by these biological beliefs in race and ultimately white supremacy as well. So thinking about some of the risks that we kind of saw and that we mentioned in the book are about vulnerabilities to depression, anxiety, increased suicide risk, substance use and alcohol use, and sexual and physical abuse. So I think that was one of the findings that really stood out to us in looking at the research was that multiracial women, I think it was one and two Gina?

[00:21:26] Multiracial women and men. One out of every three are at risk for interpersonal violence within their relationships, which was higher than other group racialized populations.

[00:21:35] Right. So if you think about these, these are all areas of social order and some of them very heavily researched in our field. But yet we're not looking at or trying to understand a little bit about what leads multiracial people, individuals and families, more at risk in these categories. So I think that was something that came. The other thing I think on the flip side are the strengths associated with some multiracial individuals and families. So these have been pretty consistent in the research as well. So it talks about individuals who are multicultural, so have access to two or more cultures, has this kind of ability or this understanding of other person's perspective. So this enhanced understanding of other person's perspectives and just being overall appreciative of different cultures. And then as with any ethnic or racial minority group, this idea of having an enhanced sense of pride and some of the strengths that come with that as far as being able to kind of deflect or deter experiences of discrimination. So those are some of the strengths at least that I can name off the top of my head. Gina, did you have other stuff to add?

[00:22:31] Yeah, I think just when things go well and young people are exposed consistently to the richness that exists in all ethnic communities, that ideally the stereotype that mixed-race people get to choose becomes more real. And you actually have a greater spectrum of resources, communities, cultural ways of knowing and doing at your disposal in your life. And I think the challenge oftentimes is, however, that the normative context of development occurs in such information poverty and a more diasporic experience of your race that it's not uncommon for a lot of mixed-race people to grow up as the only mixed-race people in their families. And the only mixed-race people in their schools, churches, synagogues, neighborhoods, whatever, then limits the ability to facilitate these potential strengths that can and should be a part of being multiracial from them because of the broader context that many young people grow up within.

[00:23:31] Absolutely. You've spoken to this and I'm curious if you have anything more that you wanted to add, but what contributes to different experiences of race and mixed race among this diverse population?

[00:23:44] Turning Gina just touched on it. So in thinking about environmental contexts, so if you're in a very homogeneous or racially homogeneous area where you are the only mixed race or perceived as ethnic minority, individual or family, you're more susceptible to discrimination, racism and mono-racism that comes with that. Also, there's a number of research that looks at kind of gender differences. So at how experience between multiracial women, self-identified women and multiracial self-identified men are different based on gender. And then also looking at class. But I think regional differences and looking at the population of the surrounding community is one of the contributing factors.

[00:24:22] Yeah, I would add there are these different layers of experiences that Kelly mentioned some of the more micro level differences. So there's certainly things like gender identity and sexuality and your race appearance and whether or not you look like you're mixed race, whatever that might be, but whether or not you're racially ambiguous or whether or not you look like some other kind of race that you aren't or you look like one parent versus the other. I think parents can have a huge impact on a young person's experience and throughout life of how you engage this concept of race. I think there's family dynamics that can shape how a young person in their own family, how race is done, how race is understood, whether or not you live in a house where race is talked about or not talked about, or parts of your culture exist and other parts don't where certain languages are spoken or not. And I think quite a bit of time Kelly and I spent in this book talking about just how impactful their parents are in their own racial awareness and their own identity development has a huge impact. And then some of the decisions about context and what schools kids go to, what neighborhoods are lived in and other institutions that the family engages in, that where parents are in their own identity and making meaning of race and it's salience both for themselves and then for their kids, can have a huge impact on some of the different ways in which multiracial people and mixed race families can have drastically different experiences.

[00:25:44] Absolutely. Thank you so much for shedding light on that. Something that I wanted to spend a little bit of more time talking about is some of the terminology that's introduced throughout the book that may be new to some readers, including social workers. So I know Kelly already talked about one of these terms being mono-racism that's used heavily, but there is also another term in the book use of monocentricity. And so I'm wondering if you can talk more to what those terms mean and especially why they're important for social workers to know.

[00:26:18] So the idea of monocentricity, and so you kind of literally take that separate, mono meaning one, single, and centering. And so monocentricity, the centering of one thing, or singular it's the centering of singularity could be used in reference to all kinds of things. In the book, we use it to reference kind of monocentricity around race and the ways in which our meaning, our profession, research, theory, practices, policies and ways of engaging each other center an assumption that everyone is just a single race. We assume that all families match in terms of race and the parents will share a race with their children even in families that are racial ethnic minority families, we assume that everyone in that family is one thing. And because we make that assumption about everyone and their race and the racial experience and the experience of their families, everything is architected around assuming that that is the normal experience. So our theories and our models assume that that's going to be the case, that we have centers that are for the African-American family or Latino families. And don't think through how do we serve a family where there is that present in the family. But there may also be other racial or ethnic heritages and identities operating in the family. What does that mean and how do we do

that? And so monocentricity refers to that dynamic of most of our world is orchestrated around the assumption that the typical family, the average family, the normal family, the normal identity, the typical racial identity and the typical racial heritage is singular. And sort of underneath that, if you dig a little bit further, what that ends up doing is marginalizing folks whose racial experience and heritage that is not. And it can add pressures for folks to do race in monocentric ways to just kind of go along to get along. And so the one drop rule is a lovely example of the kind of a monocentric organizing of the meaning of race with particular regards black people, that any drop of black blood means that you are just automatically black. But underneath that is also, Kelly mentioned this earlier, monocentricity around race is also plunked down in a larger system that honors white supremacy. And so that one drop rule and valuing everything as suggesting that person with one drop of black blood would be black also operates to protect whiteness as a modelcentric, pure racial category. And while all of this now we know in terms of science that race is not biological, we still operate as though this is true, that race is something that you inherit, that somebody can be a pure race and therefore somebody could be mixed race. And so even the very notion of mixed race is tied to a kind of monocentric understanding of race in its original form, a pure, singular thing from which multiraciality then departs. And then mono-racism is just a system meaning around monocentricity that then puts these differences in hierarchies and says that it is superior to be single race. That the better way to be the normal way, the healthy way is to be a single race. And then when you are not, that's where problems arise. So Kelly mentioned earlier that oftentimes when we meet clients in person and they are mixed race, we may assume that underneath whatever problem it is that they are experiencing that they're a mixed raceness somehow is core to that or is operating or to anticipate that it is normal for mixed race people to have problems around their race because they are mixed race. The same thing can be said about people who are mixed in the other kind of way. We assume that you have to be the same culture or that perhaps you should be the same religion or you should be from the same class. And so any kind of departure from kind of a shared identity around these things that we think of as master statuses, race just being one, we assume that that's problematic and that harmony happens when you are one thing, when you share that kind of an identity within a family or within yourself.

[00:30:09] And we see this operate very simplistically from getting asked questions repeatedly, like "what are you," or "where are your parents from?" And again, this happens to people who tend to be kind of ethnically ambiguous, where it's hard to kind of place. And again, single and put them in kind of a box, a monocentric kind of box. And it's that thinking that leads to that. And also, and I think Gina pointed this out, is that some of these is a product of being raised kind of in these messages that are constantly around monocentricity. We see a lot of individuals and family members who have kind of internalized this thinking. So when you said the one drop rule, so this idea of even socializing multiracial children into "choose one, pick one, you are this." So these are some of the things that we can see in terms of how these things actually play out with multiracial individuals and families.

[00:30:58] Absolutely. So in getting to the impact and the way that this book will connect with social workers, I'm wondering if you can talk to us a bit about your hopes of how the book will help social workers who are working with multiracial individuals and families. And included in that, you've mentioned before the practice model from your book. So I'm hoping that you can describe the four fluid phases associated with your practice model.

[00:31:26] Okay. Yeah. This is Kelly and I can just kind of talk about the phases. I think something Gina and I did, and these I believe we developed during our retreat, it is

thinking through kind of what social work practice would look like using kind of Cultural Attunement as a guide. So the phases, and I know we emphasize the word fluid because as we know with practice, it isn't linear that often even within a session you are moving through different components of our model with an individual or family. So yes, so we identified four phases of practice and the first is Critical Reflexivity. So in all these phases have a kind of inherent philosophy associated with them as well as objectives and skills. So really wanting to emphasize in that phase the worker's ability to kind of reflect and understand their biases, their thinking around race, their contribution, whether small or little or being complicit in some of the dominant structural frameworks of understanding race in this country. So our next phase is kind of Engagement. That's that in relation piece that Gina speaks about, really joining with multiracial individual or family to really understand their experiences and their perceptions. And we talk a lot about world view, of this idea of the lived experience of multiracial individuals and families as they describe it.

[00:32:44] So I would say just a flag for people because it might not come through clearly in this recording that the word we're using is Reflexivity as opposed to Reflectivity. And there's an important sort of distinction in that the idea of self awareness is certainly not a stranger to social work or to anyone who has been in a school of social work. My students are forever complaining by the second year that if they write one more paragraph on self-reflection for a paper. So that's certainly an important element of self-reflexivity. The critical Reflexivity is really the next step of awareness and being able to look forward and backwards into the way in which society has structured some of the things that we've talked about earlier around monocentricity, mono-racism, the degree to which we live in a society that's heteronormative, the degree to which we value biology as a superior way of relating to one another and being in relationship to one another, the idea of white supremacy. All of these things are powerful anchors for who we are as social workers and how we move through the world and each of us have identities that are implicated in that and either a position of power or privilege. And so critical self-Reflexivity really requires our awareness of that and our ability to understand who we are in that nest of intersecting power and privilege matrixes and to understand who our clients are in them. And so the book takes that as a next step beyond just being able to list out "I am this race, I am this gender, I am this sexuality," beyond that sort of beginning space of engaging awareness to really thinking critically about what does any of that mean in terms of how I move through the world, the things that I'm likely to see and not see, the things that I am likely to assume and not assume, and what does that mean for our particular practices? I would say with Engagement that then again, this is one of the places where we really do emphasize the relationality of engagement and that this is something that you are doing alongside critical Reflexivity and each of the other two that Kelly will talk about in a very fluid, ongoing way. So while we put them in phases so that we can talk about them, they certainly aren't to be considered standalone moments that then you finish and you move on to the next. But they are sort of the layering of work that you do as you move through the change process with families and individuals.

[00:34:52] Right. So I think even when we developed some of the case studies and thinking through some of the critical questions to help readers process through what they would do in these situations, and even in those examples, we talk about how you would use aspects of each phase or different phases within the examples. So to kind of point out and I think deconstruct when we say fluidity and being fluid in some of these differences. And the next two phases are Exploration. So I remember this as it was a very good visual. It was a way to kind of make more sense of this visually. And Gina and I talked about this at our retreat was the idea of kind of peeling back the layers to kind of understand truly kind of the world view and the experiences of the people that we're working with. And

doing that, taking what we learned in critical Reflexivity, so these connections that we were able to make between some of these structural and dominant frameworks and how they operate in making these connections between what are a multiracial individual or client is kind of talking about discussing in terms of whatever issue or problem it brings you in working with them to be able to connect those then to kind of some of these structural issues and problems, as well as looking at kind of monocentricity and seeing how it kind of operates in these situations or enhances them. What I loved about working on this book and thinking through some of these phases where it's not just these philosophical, this is what we envision it to be, but also giving people direct skills and tools that they could use through these phases. So one of the tools in the Exploration phase are the skills that we kind of talk about as critical empathy. So not only being empathetic and attempting to walk in the shoes of another person, and I think this is heavily covered in our field and discussed in terms of a skill for social work practitioners, but also recognizing the inherent injustice that is happening disproportionately to some individuals over others and to really be able to empathize with individuals that are experiencing some of these injustices. So taking it a step further then just kind of "I imagine that to be really difficult for you," but to take it towards "I imagine that can be very difficult for you knowing the history of how race has been constructed in this country and this assumption that you can only be one thing." And then I think the final phase, and this is where we really wanted to emphasize the social justice, is Action piece. What is collaborating in action? So this kind of gives you the tools of actually advocating for and making change within your own spheres of influence in order to kind of empower multiracial individuals and families. And again, we describe a couple tools and skills that social workers can kind of use in doing that and just kind of talk you through with a case study of how this could look and then how you can really empower multiracial individuals and families in your own work.

[00:37:36] That's really awesome. It's really amazing to hear about the various levels of impact that you hope to have all the way from a very individual and communal level, all the way up to accreditation and cultural shifts. That's really amazing. So to end our time together, I wanted to ask you both how people can get more information about your work and about your new book?

[00:38:01] Great. So this is Kelly and our book is on Amazon. So that is something where people who happen to be frequent Amazon shoppers can find our book there. There's also information about our book and you can purchase it through NASW Press. Those are kind of the two resources as far as accessing and getting copies of the book. Gina and I hope to be able to present at some upcoming conferences to talk about our book and maybe even are contemplating some future opportunities to do workshops or online seminars about the book.

[00:38:33] Yeah. And these are topics that Kelly and I write about above and beyond the book. So you should check out our own faculty web pages for other shorter reads maybe, on the topic areas that we both study. That definitely informs the book. And so we really encourage folks to check out the book and then also some of the additional work that each of us do.

[00:38:54] One thing that I was thinking about as Gina was talking about the impact is the idea that something that I often teach my students that practice is around asking or getting your clients to give a recommendation for a book or a movie or something to kind of get to know and understand who they are and have a little better sense of their world view and being able to work with them. My hope would just be that for multiracial individuals and families, this book is kind of a counter space. This idea that there's information about who

they are in a field that really sends them to the margins or doesn't have information showcasing kind of some of their experiences for people who live in families who live multi racially now to even have a resource to be able to pass to a social worker or counselor or a therapist and say this would be a helpful tool and kind of understanding a little bit more about my world view.

[00:39:43] Beautiful. Thank you so much to the two of you for taking time to talk about your work and to talk about your book. We really appreciate it.

[00:39:51] Thank you for having us. We really appreciate the opportunity.

[00:39:54] This is wonderful. Thank you.

[00:39:56] You've been listening to Dr Kelly Jackson and Dr. Gina Miranda Samuels' discussion on Multiracial Cultural Attunement. I'm Louanne Bakk. Please join us again at inSocialWork.

[00:40:18] Hi, I'm Nancy Smyth, professor and Dean of the University at Buffalo School of Social Work. Thanks for listening to our podcast. We look forward to your continued support of the series. For more information about who we are as a school, our history, our online and on the ground degree and continuing education programs, we invite you to visit our website at www.socialwork.buffalo.edu. And while you're there, check out our Technology and Social Work Resource Center. You'll find it under the Community Resources Menu.