Teaching Introduction to Psychology: Promoting Student Learning Using Digital Storytelling and Community Engagement

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This paper demonstrates how partnering with digital storytelling initiatives, like the StoryCorps project, can yield fruitful service-learning opportunities, while also supporting innovative approaches for teaching students from a range of disciplines who are enrolled in Introduction to Psychology (PSYC 1101). While various pedagogical tools for teaching psychology exist, StoryCorps provides a unique opportunity to expose students to a large range of people and related stories to which they may otherwise not have been exposed. This paper outlines a model for how a partnership with a local digital storytelling initiative (StoryCorps) can be integrated into a community engaged course and facilitate course activities reflecting an applied, multi-faceted learning environment. Preliminary data comparing student outcomes in the service-learning course to those in the traditional PSYC 1101 course are also discussed.

Introduction to Psychology (hereafter referred to as PSYC 1101) is one of the most frequently taught courses on college campuses (Adelman, 2004). Data suggests that approximately 1,300 instructors taught the course in the 2012-2013 academic years (Market Data Research, 2014). It is further approximated that 1.7 million students take this course each year (APA, 2014). This is likely due to the potential relevance of psychology to any discipline wherein it is anticipated that the students will become professionals serving clients or patients in some capacity throughout their careers. Given their reach across diverse disciplines and the breadth of content covered in the course, PSYC 1101 instructors benefit from having a range of instructional tools to support instructional efforts. As a foundational course for psychology majors, as well as a general education requirement for many other majors, there is a need for instructional strategies that address content specific knowledge while also building competencies (e.g., soft skills) relevant across most disciplines. This may be the only psychology course that non-psychology majors take, making their experience with the content and understanding of course material particularly important.

Given the importance of psychology as a baseline course for many college students, it is critical that innovative strategies for this course be developed, implemented, and assessed to address the needs of a wide range of learners and the diversity of their learning styles. The utilization of the public media program, StoryCorps, is an example of how digital storytelling resources can benefit instructional efforts. Listening to digital stories allows students to experience a storyteller's perspective from his/her own voice and perspective (Smeda, Dakich, & Sharda, 2014). This can be of great value to instructional efforts aiming to challenge students to see the relevance of psychology in the "real world." With this in mind, the present article reviews core considerations for teaching PSYC 1101, addresses the benefits of service learning and related community-focused projects as a tool for instruction, and details an exemplar of how available public media resources can be used to teach psychological concepts in a manner relevant to everyday real-life experiences.

Introduction to Psychology Course Content

There is ongoing discourse regarding the content of Introduction to Psychology courses. To date there is no explicit model to inform content selection which could further promote uniformity in instructional practices (Gurung, Hackathorn, et al., 2016). Recognizing the importance of this course for undergraduate psychology majors and as a general course requirement for many other majors, the American Psychological Association (APA) appointed a working group to establish a common core of content for the Introduction to Psychology courses. This work builds on previous recommendations and standards (APA, 2013; Wolfe, 1942) proposing a new structure for PSYC 1101. The model emphasizes grounding in research methods and the integration of 5 pillars addressing biological, cognitive, developmental, social/personality, and mental/physical health issues. Cross-cutting themes representing the following values allow for interconnections across these 5 pillars: cultural and social diversity, ethics, variations in human functioning, and applications (Gurung et al., 2016).

Additionally, a 2014 American Psychological Society working group report (Leder-Elder, Good, Afful, Keeley, & Stiegler-Balfour, 2014) emphasized the need for a more integrated, cross-disciplinary approach to introductory psychology instruction, and the introduction of these cross-cutting themes will better serve the efforts to emphasize the interconnectedness of sub-disciplines in psychology, beginning with the introductory course. This requires a substantial amount of deliberate integration throughout the course, which the working

group acknowledges may represent significant effort on the part of the instructor. However, there are multiple pedagogical avenues to this integration. One such avenue is the incorporation of a community-based project focused on addressing a social problem, either at a global or a local level.

About Service Learning

Service learning can be an essential mechanism for addressing some of the challenges in developing the PSYC 1101 course. Academic service learning is a credit-bearing course-based experience where students engage in an organized community service activity which meets the needs of a community partner. Further, service learning facilitates students' ability to feel connected to their immediate or distal community through student provision of needed services and/or their exposure to a greater understanding of the human experience. Simultaneously, students reflect upon the service experience as a means to enhance their learning of course material or objectives (Felten & Clayton, 2011). Service learning and related community-based learning activities have been linked to higher GPAs, increased critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, increased self-efficacy, tolerance for and appreciation of diversity, and other benefits (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Peters, McHugh, & Sendall, 2006; Gallini & Moely, 2003; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000).

Service learning can take various forms, including direct-service projects and problem-based projects (Heffernan, 2001). In problem-based projects students relate to the community as "consultants," bringing their specific knowledge to bear on a question or problem for which they might make recommendations or derive a solution. Particularly in the case of institutions serving non-traditional students, the students' consultant experience can occur in the context of the full nature of their non-academic lives (e.g., full-time professionals, older returning students, parents) as they still engage in, and benefit from, alternative, applied learning opportunities and assessments. Further, project-based service learning experiences in a course such as PSYC 1101 can engage students from diverse disciplines in what might be a relatively high amount of unfamiliar academic content in a supportive (by peers and instructor), applied learning context. It is important to recognize that there are diverse examples of what service learning can look like and how partnerships can be formed. The experiences and relationships that emerge through service learning will vary significantly depending on the needs of the local community, availability of community partnerships, and the goals of the selected course.

Digital Storytelling and StoryCorps

This paper presents an exemplar of a consultant-based service-learning project in which Introduction to General Psychology students partnered with a digital story-telling initiative, StoryCorps. In this role students operate as consultants to the local StoryCorps office by providing feedback about how they are using specific stories to understand psychological concepts. At the request of the local StoryCorps office, they also provide feedback about how specific stories they reviewed did or did not resonate with them or better help them understand the human experience.

By facilitating exposure to a range of personal narratives, this partnership provides the opportunity to embed community issues into the course and expose students to case examples. In doing so, they can apply a range of possible psychological concepts and issues (e.g. resilience, brain development, mental health, and identity formation) in the lives of everyday citizens that represent the diverse people and life experiences that are present in U.S. culture. As implemented with the StoryCorps partnership, service learning is also a mechanism that can directly and overtly ensure that Introduction to Psychology courses reflect several of the APA's (2013) learning outcomes for students in psychology programs. This is done by developing a knowledge base for psychology concepts that students explore more in depth through application in course material. Such engagement contributes to critical thinking, communication, and professional development.

The StoryCorps service learning project leverages another powerful pedagogical tool, digital storytelling or narrative (Robin, 2008; Robin 2012; Alismail, 2015; Gazarian, Fernberg, & Sheehan, 2016). Digital storytelling is a modern variation on the ancient practice of storytelling; the addition and integration of available technology such as digital recording allows for the storytellers and the audience to interact and for meaningful stories to be captured and shared by many (Sadik, 2008). In many cases, students plan and create digital stories and narratives (e.g., Borgelt, Brooks, Innes, Seelander, & Paige, 2009; Shelby-Caffey, Úbéda, & Jenkins, 2014; Clarke & Thomas, 2012; Suwardy, Pan, & Seow, 2013; Simmons & Tenzek, 2016) while others implement already-produced digital stories as the impetus for student discussion or analysis (e.g., Gazarian, 2010). One readily available repository of thousands of personal digital narratives can be accessed through the StoryCorps initiative. An asset to digital storytelling initiatives is that they can be web or technology-based. Whereas some community partnerships are limited by geography and partnerships may need to occur in the same city, this geographic restriction may be avoided in partnerships that utilize digital story-telling as a learning and service tool.

Figure 1
The StoryCorps Project Cycle
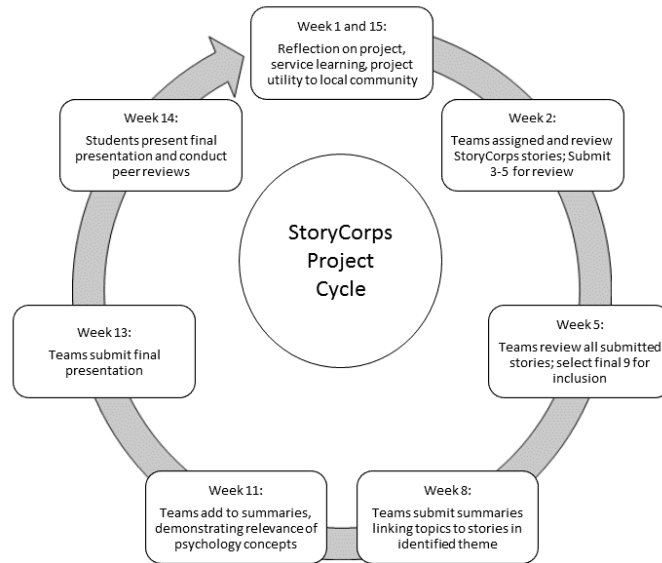
StoryCorps' Mission

StoryCorps started in 2003 with the mission to "preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world" (StoryCorps, 2016). StoryCorps involves the recording of interviews that are traditionally presented in small booths with two people who usually know each other well: one as the interviewer and the other as the interviewee. They meet and discuss issues (concerns, subjects) for approximately 30-45 minutes in the presence of a guided facilitator who is monitoring and supporting the process. Resulting interviews are all archived at the Library of Congress. A small subset of these interviews are edited to 3 to 5 minute segments that are then produced for distribution through radio networks affiliated with National Public Radio (NPR). These edited stories can serve as an instructional tool to help students better understand a wide variety of social science concepts which is particularly important given the large range of concepts taught in a survey course like PSYC 1101.

StoryCorps as an Instructional Resource

As part of the collaboration between the course and the local StoryCorps site, a representative from the StoryCorps site came to the class to explain more about StoryCorps. He discussed the oral history process and purpose and how the students' work was of value to the StoryCorps initiative. Through this partnership, students reviewed many of the initiative's stories and used them as central components of course projects. In doing so, students worked towards two primary goals: (1) analyze how psychological concepts are relevant in society through an assessment of content from selected StoryCorps stories, and (2) demonstrate the utility of StoryCorps as a university-level instructional tool by allowing student "consultants" to present their understanding of how psychological concepts are exemplified in StoryCorps stories. As an additional service to the StoryCorps partner, students provided a summary regarding their thoughts about StoryCorps stories they reviewed during the course. These summaries allowed them to indicate which stories resonated with them and helped them to better understand the human experience, as compared to those that did not.

StoryCorps stories are ideal for keeping students engaged and challenging them to truly understand the relevance and implications of various, sometimes complex, psychological terms. The StoryCorps archives have a substantial quantity and range of content from which students can select. They then use these stories to more thoroughly examine and understand psychological concepts. When students deconstruct the StoryCorps stories, analyze, then reconstruct their understanding of the stories through psychological lenses, they are engaged in the highest levels of learning (CETL, 2016).

Method

Project Details

Implemented as part of an institution-wide academic community engagement initiative, the semester-long StoryCorps service learning project used team-based learning and scaffolding as the primary frameworks to structure learning experiences for students. Independent activities, team-based outcomes, and related assessments were integrated. Feedback on each component was used to inform student efforts on the next component while also supporting their competencies for critical thinking and group-based collaboration.

Astin and colleagues (2000) identified several considerations in maximizing the positive effects of service learning on student outcomes. These considerations included (1) the provision of the opportunity for students to process the service learning experience with each other, (2) the instructor's encouragement of class discussion on the service project, (3) the frequency with which the professor connects the service experience to the course subject matter, (4) and the presence of various types of reflection activities. The application of these considerations is represented throughout the course project plan described in detail below. A timeline for the project is detailed in Figure 1.

Pre-implementation preparation and pre-project reflection essay. An important aspect of a successful service learning experience is a well-defined community partnership, one which is mutually beneficial to both the students and the community partner. In their overview of the elements of implementing successful service learning initiatives in higher education, Bringle and Hatcher (1996) note that community representatives should be involved in the identification of community project needs both at a macro (e.g., county) and micro (i.e., course) level. For this reason, an agreement between the instructor and a specifically identified community partner representative (in this case, the StoryCorps Regional Coordinator) was contacted prior to implementing the course project. The service learning agreement specified how the students' work would benefit the community partner and highlighted student learning outcomes. To help students better understand StoryCorps' goals and the project, the regional director presented to the course. Once students were briefed on the project and all questions were addressed, they completed reflection essays that challenged them to consider how this project would be of utility to their community partner and themselves.

Phase 1: Topic and segment selection. Students were introduced to the service-learning format of the course during the first week of class with a detailed review of the project guide and sample StoryCorps stories. By week two of the 16-week course students were placed into their teams of 4-6 people according to alphabetical order. The initial assignment involved two parts. First, students engaged in initial discussion regarding potential areas of interest for their overall project. Outcomes of this discussion informed the lenses through which students reviewed the StoryCorps website and selected potential stories for their projects. Students were directed to ask themselves and team members questions such as, "How does this story reflect the potential topic for our team's project?" Students were encouraged to review at least 20 stories from www.storycorps.org before submitting 3 final selections that included a brief summary of what these stories shared in common that could reflect a potential topic. Students' independent final selections of their stories were submitted for an individual grade. Following the individual submission of stories, groups finalized their decision about the broad topic that would anchor their project (e.g., parenting, discrimination, resilience, health, psychopathology). By week 5, the first team assignment is submitted, which includes the topic and final three story selections (team assignment #1). Directions are outlined in Appendix A.

Phase 2: Identifying themes within topics. The next task was for students to identify a theme related to psychology that would consistently link the stories together within their selected topic. This required an in-depth understanding of the story and the ability to recognize common issues presented within the stories. As the students worked to determine an appropriate theme, they received supportive feedback from the instructor to inform their selection process. For example, one team identified LGBTQ issues as a topic and recognized a theme of resilience in the stories that they reviewed as consultants. To support the process of getting to this outcome, students were encouraged to ask themselves questions such as, "What is a theme linking all of these stories together?" "What is a link from one story to another?" and, "What do they have in common?" Once topics, stories, and themes were identified, teams submitted the assignment, including a brief summary of how the theme is reflected in the stories and linked to the topic (team assignment #2). Directions are in Appendix B.

Phase 3: Integrating psychology concepts. One of the most challenging aspects of the project for the students was the accurate application of psychological concepts, starting at approximately week 11. This portion of the project required student teams to select at least 3 concepts that would be relevant to each of the featured stories. Selected concepts must be appropriately linked to the project's stories, theme, and topic. Multiple days are dedicated to this process

wherein students' understanding of specific concepts, many of which would have been discussed previously in the course, was challenged. The instructor intentionally allocated class time to support students in understanding how psychological concepts relate to, and can help explain, complex personal, familial, and social experiences. This process revealed the difficulty that is sometimes present when working not only to understand psychological concepts in the context of the text, but also to examine the complex and full lives of StoryCorps participants from a broader biopsychosocial lens whenever possible. For example, when exploring the topic of LGBTQ issues with a thematic focus on resilience, students connected concepts of positive reinforcement, stereotypes, and identity formation to a selected story. Team-based learning (Michaelson & Sweet, 2011) was used to help team members challenge each other and come to consensus about what they would present about the concepts and the stories in a way that was professional and productive. A goal of this process is the promotion of cohesion among team members that could support their later efforts to effectively present information to peers and demonstrate the utility of StoryCorps as a learning tool (Team Assignment 3). Directions are in Appendix C.

Phase 4: Designing a professional presentation. By week 12 teams were developing their formal presentation that integrated 3 StoryCorps stories, discussed how at least 3 psychological concepts link to each story (9 concepts in total), and explained the thematic connections among the stories. In their consultant roles teams were challenged to collaboratively deconstruct stories, apply concepts, design a creative method of disseminating their conceptualizations, and disseminate the information via an oral technology-based presentation. The integration of these responsibilities was designed to strengthen their psychology-specific and general professional skills competencies, while also meeting the needs of the community partner.

PowerPoint presentations were the minimum requirement for information delivery, but the use of other creative resources was strongly encouraged. Alternative options included, but were not limited to, a follow-up interview from original StoryCorps participants, integration of mini-movies from student replications of StoryCorps stories, and use of VideoScribe to illustrate selected concepts (Team Assignment #4). Directions are in Appendix D.

Phase 5: Oral presentation of their formal presentation and post-project essay. Oral presentations are the culminating activity for the course. Though Phase 4 activities included the development of a group project and yielded a group grade, the Phase 5 oral presentations allowed students to receive an individual grade based on their demonstrated knowledge and competencies. In the context of their group, student consultants orally presented their collaborative deconstruction of the StoryCorps stories to their peers in a manner that teaches about the 9 selected concepts. The assessment of the oral presentations was based on the following criteria for individual presenters: (1) demonstrated teamwork; (2) high level synthesis of information including concepts, theme, and topic; (3) professional dress and professionalism when interacting with peers and professor during the presentation; (4) the ability to communicate with confidence in an articulate manner; and (5) a well-organized presentation. Students' final task for the semester was to complete an additional reflection essay about their experiences in the course, thoughts about service learning, and perspectives about how this type of learning experience may (or may not) have increased their understanding of psychological concepts.

Participants

This paper reflects data from two different psychology courses: one is a service-learning course, and the other one is not. Participants in the service learning PSYC 1101 course included 24 students and the non-service learning course included 17 students. These courses were hosted at a small southeastern university that enrolls approximately 7,000 students (Clayton State University, 2016). The institution offers 34 undergraduate and 11 graduate programs to a student population with the median age of 29. Two thirds of the student population are over age 22, thus outside of the traditional college student demographic regarding age. Females comprise 69% of the student body. Race demographics indicate that the 61% of the students identify as Black, 21% White, 6%, Asian, 5% Hispanic, and 3% as multiracial. Introduction to Psychology is a core course for the majority of majors at this institution.

Measures

Student final grade average data was acquired through instructor records of final grades submitted. Attitudes about service learning were assessed using the Community Service Attitudes Scale (CSAS). Shiarella, McCarthy, & Tucker (2000) developed the CSAS scale to measure multiple aspects of peoples' attitudes toward community service. Subscales include the following: awareness that others are in need, the perception that there are actions that could relieve that need, recognition of the respondent's own ability to provide help, a feeling of connectedness to the community, and a sense of obligation to help based on personal or situational norms and empathy. It also includes an assessment of both the costs and the benefits to the

Table 1
CSAS Subscale Comparisons

	Pre	Post	df****	t
Ability	5.67	6.00	14	1.46
Awareness	6.08	6.28	15	1.15
Actions	5.80	6.08	14	1.72**
Connectedness	5.10	5.58	13	2.38*
Norms	6.18	6.26	15	0.60
Empathy	5.96	6.02	14	0.30
Costs***	3.61	3.93	11	0.77
Benefits	6.36	5.80	13	-1.26
Seriousness	4.94	5.05	12	0.46
Intention	5.63	5.79	15	0.77

*p<0.05
**p=0.1
***reverse coded
****in some cases students did not complete all items for a subscale and were dropped from analysis of that subscale.

respondent of engaging in the helping behavior as well as the seriousness of the consequences of not acting, and finally the intention to engage (or not) in community service (Shiarella, et al. 2000).

Procedures

Students enrolled in the service-learning course were asked, but not required, to complete the CSAS. Approximately 75% of the students enrolled in the courses completed the survey. The CSAS survey was administered to students in the service-learning course as part of the on-going data collection associated with the university's service initiative. Students were asked to complete the survey twice: once prior to starting the StoryCorps project (pre-test) and again afterwards (post-test). Use of all data reflected in this manuscript was approved by the university's Institutional Review Board.

What We Have Learned

While limited empirical data is available, preliminary data about the project suggests that students benefitted from the StoryCorps initiative in multiple ways. In total, 100% of service-learning students received a C+ or better as compared to 89% of the non-service-learning students who received a C+ or better. Regarding student attitudes about civic engagement, available CSAS data supports a trend in increased favorability towards service learning for most of the assessed indicators. Average ratings for the subscales are included in Table 1, as well as results of paired t-tests of the pre- and post-project ratings.

Discussion: Benefits, Challenges, and Limitations

It is important that innovative and accessible resources that support instructional efforts to make sense of concepts relevant to the range of diversity comprising today's university student population be explored and utilized whenever possible. The goal of this paper is to disseminate such a resource and provide a framework that can be modeled or adapted as necessary. While there are benefits to using non-traditional pedagogical approaches, there are also challenges and limitations. For example, student involvement the StoryCorps service learning project presented benefits, challenges, and considerations for future implementation. As participants in an indirect service-learning project, students initially did not feel that they were "hands on" enough to be making a real difference for the community partner. Thus, there was repeated effort to reinforce the significance of their contribution through the semester. Data suggests that, though there were initial concerns, students reported that their involvement with, and connectedness to, community increased. While there were, for the most part, increases in the CSAS subscales from pre- to post- project (in Ability, Awareness, Actions, Connectedness, Norms, Empathy, Seriousness, and Intention to Engage), changes from pre- to post-project were only statistically significant for Actions and Connectedness. There are a number of possible explanations for this, including small class size and the indirect nature of the community engagement project. Nonetheless, the significant increase in the Connectedness subscale, which may indicate that the completion of the project and exposure to the various StoryCorps stories fostered greater community connection, in combination with a near-

significant increase in Actions (student awareness their actions can help with a perceived need) is encouraging.

When examining the utility of this tool it is advantageous to assess how this approach aligns with emerging ideas about instruction for introduction to psychology. A strength of the structure of this course is not only that it addresses key pillars or domains of psychology (Gurung, et al., 2016), but that it challenges students to engage in an ongoing process of (1) investigation across these pillars and (2) synthesis of information in a manner relevant to their interests, both personally and professionally. In doing so, students are engaged in the highest level of reasoning. Within the scope of this project, the investigation and synthesis activities are analogous to the review and assessment of archival data, giving students some insight to processes involved in that methodology. Students spend significant time reviewing StoryCorps stories, deconstructing these stories from a psychological perspective, and applying relevant concepts. A particular value of this on-going team process is that students cultivate the development of "soft skills" that include personality traits, goals, motivations, and preferences that are valued in the labor market (Heckman & Kautz, 2012). The practices of effectively working as a team, utilizing adaptive communication and interpersonal skills, and taking responsibility have been identified as among the top 10 soft skills desired by workplace executives (Roble, 2012). One of the strengths of this project is that it works to overtly cultivate these skills through team-based learning and oral presentation activities. It is also possible that exposure to a range of stories from people of diverse backgrounds and life experiences prepares students to understand social issues in a more thoughtful and active manner.

A project of this scope also has some clear challenges. First, there is a need to make the value of the project relevant to a range of disciplines in which students are required to take this course. Some students, particularly non-psychology majors, may struggle to see the relevance of the wide variety of topics presented in Introduction to Psychology; therefore, the need to engage in such an involved project may not be obvious to them. For example, when a class activity asked students to provide an example of how or why psychology was relevant to their field, one student replied, "It is not. I work with computers all day." Other students may feel that they get enough information about how to interact with their clients (e.g., business students) or patients (e.g., nursing students) through other courses. Thus, as the project unfolds through the semester, it is important to repeatedly demonstrate the relevance of the activities and content to students' lives.

Secondly, the benefits of this course project are limited by challenging group dynamics. One of the most frustrating of these dynamics involves social loafing, wherein a person exerts less effort than their team members on a shared task but still anticipates benefitting from the group effort. In reality, differing levels of student engagement and contribution to team projects is expected on all projects – be it academic or professional. However, social loafing in group projects can feel unfair to those students putting forth effort, and they may feel unprepared to manage it. Educators of all disciplines must actively work to develop appropriate intervention strategies in the context of team projects or team-based learning practices. Such strategies include, but are not limited to, including a performance measurement for each student (e.g., final team presentations), capping the number of individuals in the team to 5, and incorporating peer evaluations during the semester (Rich, Owens, Johnson, Mines, & Capote, 2014).

Finally, the issue of burden vs. benefit (Peachy & Baller, 2015) is an important consideration when implementing team-based projects, particularly in an entry level course like PSYC 1101. Students and faculty have limited time-based resources to dedicate to any project. While applied learning is valuable, it can be perceived as disproportionately time consuming relative to traditional learning tasks. Group assignments may feel burdensome to students as they may have to communicate with 3 to 4 team members outside of class. Some members may not be as responsive. There may be additional stress associated with having to complete a major course task while not having full control regarding the quality of the final product. This stress can be exacerbated in a semester-long project. To decrease the likelihood of problems further into the course, these challenges and strategies for managing them are introduced in an overview email sent prior to the first day of class. This gives students the opportunity to engage in the course and arms them with knowledge informing their ability to determine if the course is a good fit for them at this point in their college trajectory. The course project is also discussed at length during the first 2-3 class meetings so that students can better understand project details and make decisions about whether or not the course will be a good fit for their needs and available resources.

There are challenges and opportunities for improvement that warrant further discussion when considering how this instructional resource can be integrated into courses. Faculty interested in doing team-based projects always need to be sensitive to course sizes and the types of projects that they, the faculty, can manage. As implemented in a 30-person course, approximately 6 groups can be developed, and this is usually manageable. Increased resources (e.g., a graduate student assistant) may be necessary for class sizes exceeding 60 students. Also, it may be advantageous to utilize a learning management system (LMS) for facilitated discussion groups that can allow professors to provide direct feedback outside of the formal seated course or if this activity is being

completed in a hybrid or full online format. A benefit of using StoryCorps or another open-source digital storytelling resource is that there is evidence to support that it would also benefit other fields in social science, as well as the health sciences (Simons & Tenzek, 2016; Savundranayagam, Dilley, & Basting, 2011). There is also a likely opportunity to adjust the research portion of this initiative to more overtly integrate the research process. For example, story content can be looked at from ethnographic lenses (Whitehead, 2005) to create a holistic experience of the various cultural systems influencing storytellers and resulting stories. Students can also gain exposure to more general qualitative analysis approaches by engaging in activities that involve the coding of story elements according to specific psychological concepts. For example, students can be required to log their strategies for evaluating the relevance of the psychological concerns and building a consensus regarding which terms should be used. The presentation of this data can be formalized and diversified to help students understand that research can be completed and presented in a variety of ways. Doing so may be a healthy complement to the traditional quantitative methods presented in their text. This formalization can allow for the relevance and utility of the research to become more apparent. From an academic community engagement standpoint, while these students did not present to the community partner, it is an advisable component to add to the course. This would more clearly close the loop with the partner while further increasing students' awareness of the effects their actions can directly or indirectly have on community initiatives. Finally, the costs and benefits of engaging students in this type of pedagogy should continue to be assessed. It is important to consider these limitations while pursuing innovative strategies for cultivating future professionals.

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Appendix A

Identifying StoryCorps Segments

The task for this part of the project is for each team to make the final selection of the three StoryCorps stories (www.storycorps.org) that will anchor the course projects. Teams are advised to choose from the stories reviewed by team members, but they are not limited to these options. As this review occurs, teams are encouraged to solidify their topics.
Students may ask themselves the following questions to determine if a segment is suitable for their projects:

     a. "How does this person's story reflect the topic(s) that are of interest to our team?"
     b. [thinking ahead] "What is a theme linking all of these stories together?"

In your teams discuss this question during segment selection. If it makes sense to you and if you can identify several points answering these questions, then that may be an appropriate segment to incorporate into your project. The assignment submission should include the topic, links to the stories, and titles for each story.

Appendix B

Determine the Theme

Each presentation should reflect a topic, include three stories related to that topic and integrate 9 psychology concepts. Ultimately the stories are used as mechanisms to illustrate the psychology concepts.
The task for this portion of the assignment is for each team to examine each story and formulate a theme that links the stories together. For example, the overall project topic LGBTQ issues can have theme of family connections or an alternative theme of rejection. Whatever the theme is, it should be linked to the topic and reflected in the actual stories. The assignment submission should include the topic, links and titles to the stories (as previously submitted), the theme, and a summary of how the theme connects the three stories. The titles can be the brief quotes associated with each story (example:" "I'm not interested in going home. I just want to drive my truck" from Idella Hansen and Sandi Talbott's Story).

Appendix C

Integrate Psychological Concepts

The task for this portion of the assignment is for each team to demonstrate a connection between your understanding of your topic, the theme, and psychological concepts presented in the text. For each StoryCorps segment, at least three psychological concepts should be reflected.   These concepts can be related to any of the text. Concepts should reflect different areas of psychology so do not restrict the selection of concepts to one chapter. Teams are encouraged to select topics that each team member will be able to speak about clearly and accurately during the presentation of the final oral presentation.   In doing so, they should demonstrate an understanding of how/why these concepts are relevant to people who may be hearing them and linking them to the StoryCorps segments.
The assignment submission should include the topic, links and titles to the stories (as previously submitted), the theme, and a list of the 9 terms that will be integrated into the presentation.

Appendix D

Design a Professional Presentation

The task for this portion of the project is for student to develop a presentation that demonstrates how psychological concepts are very much present in people's lives as evidenced by stories from StoryCorps participants.   In this aspect of their consultant roll students will collaboratively design the presentation that demonstrates their deconstruction of the StoryCorps stories, integration of psychological concepts, and demonstrate an understanding of this integration using (at minimum) PowerPoint. PowerPoint presentations are the minimum requirement for information delivery. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize other mechanism for presenting the content.

The final project submission will include the following components: the topic, links to the stories with images of those who participated (available on website), titles of the stories, and a statement of the topic and the theme. Additionally, the 9 concepts should be integrated in a way that allows their connection to the story to be clearly evident. Finally, a concluding slide should reflect the theme of the project. While the final PowerPoint (or alternative presentation platform) presentation is a team project, the actual presentations will be individually graded.