



The emergence of moral, professional, and political geographies in a clinically simulated parent-teacher interaction



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Clinical simulation pedagogy is proposed as an innovative data gathering approach.
- The PSTs' concerns led them to modify their language and emotional responses.
- The PSTs questioned the boundaries between home and school.

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ABSTRACT

This study explored pre-service teachers' (PSTs') actions during and reflections on a clinically simulated parent-teacher interaction. We used Hargreaves's (2001a) *Emotional Geographies of Teaching* framework to ground and interpret the simulation data. Results indicate PSTs wrestled with the concept of professionalism, held reservations toward the actual and probable reactions of the standardized parents, and constrained both their language and actions. Our discussion centers on the presence of moral, professional, and political geographies within complex parent-teacher interactions. Implications suggest the necessity of engaging with the practice of parent/caregiver communications, as well as the emotional geographies that undergird such interactions.

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1. Introduction

In the last few decades, there has been a great deal of research on parental involvement. Studies reporting the positive effects of parental involvement on student wellbeing are recognized by policy makers, teachers, parents, and students (Epstein, 2010; Fan & Chen, 2001). As stakeholders recognize the importance of parent-teacher relationships, teacher preparation programs are responding to the need to prepare pre-service teachers (PSTs) to engage in and establish effective partnerships with parents/caregivers. Effective partnerships, though, require teachers to successfully navigate unforeseen contexts (Epstein, 2010; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003). Hargreaves's Emotional Geographies of Teaching framework (2001a) highlights the uncertainties of parent-teacher partnerships, leading teacher

educators to question how we might prepare preservice teachers (PSTs) to navigate different emotional geographies.

In this study, we use Hargreaves's (2001a) framework to examine PSTs' decision-making and facilitation skills within a clinically simulated parent-teacher interaction. We questioned what, if any, emotional geographies PSTs' might engage with and reflect on as they interacted with two (standardized) parents who disagreed on their daughter's post-secondary path(s).

2. Literature review

2.1. Emotional geographies of teaching

Following Denzin's (1984) assertions on the emotional contexts surrounding teaching and learning, we ground this study in the assumption that emotions arise from interactions between individuals, and we recognize the value of exploring individuals' experiences during their interactions with others. To examine the

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interactions between PSTs and standardized parents, we utilized Hargreaves's (2001a) Emotional Geographies of Teaching framework as both a conceptual foundation for designing this study and an analytic lens for interpreting the resulting data.

Hargreaves (2001a) recognizes teaching as a profession that links knowledge, cognition, and skill and requires emotional relationships with students, colleagues, and parents. The concept of *emotional geographies* guides the exploration of the emotional bonds between individuals via their emotional distance and closeness during a given interaction (Hargreaves, 2001a). There is no absolute definition for emotional distance or closeness between teachers and parents. Emotional terrain are shaped by culture and social context, and thus the emotional geographies of teaching are not concrete phenomena (Hargreaves, 2001a; Lasky, 2000). For example, the frequency of interaction between parents and teachers might not always result in emotional closeness (Hargreaves, 2001b).

Hargreaves (2001a) identifies five sub-groups of emotional geographies: *sociocultural*, *moral*, *professional*, *physical*, and *political*. *Sociocultural distance* occurs when race, culture, gender, and ability levels cause disassociation between teachers and parents. *Moral distance* generally takes place when teachers and parents cannot reach agreement or do not have similar views concerning what actions/decisions are in the best interests of a student. Conversely, *moral closeness* occurs when teachers and parents reach mutual agreement. *Professional distance* arises when the norms and definitions of teacher professionalism impact parents' and teachers' interactions. Professional distance might also lead these individuals, especially teachers, to examine and/or question the extent of professional boundaries. *Physical distance* can be seen in terms of the frequency and intensity of parent-teacher interactions. For instance, the number of parent-teacher interactions in a semester could be an indicator of the parents' and teacher's physical closeness to, or distance from, each other. Finally, *political distance* surfaces when there are elements of power and hierarchical power structures between teachers and colleagues, parents, or students. For example, parents or teachers might feel a need not to disclose their emotional reactions if they are reluctant to experience another party's reactions towards themselves.

In concert with Denzin's and Hargreaves's assertions on the emotional contexts of teaching, we emphasize the disequilibrating uncertainties of novice practice. Frequently, novice teachers refer to a distinct 'gap' between the requirements of teacher education and the challenges of classroom practice (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999). Shulman (2005) explores this gap between preparation and practice, noting the signature pedagogies across the professions of medicine, law, and the clergy that lessen the distance between preparation and practice. He argues, in part, that teacher education does not have clear 'signature' pedagogies that guide teacher candidates in exploring the uncertainties of the profession (2005). Shulman (1998) emphasizes the Piaget (1959) concept of cognitive disequilibrium, noting that a "violation of expectations" (p. 519) results when novice teachers' expectations of practice do not align with their early classroom experiences.

Consider Hargreaves's Emotional Geographies framework in light of the perceived 'gap' between preparation and practice (Korthagen & Kessels, 1999), the perturbation that occurs when one experiences a situation one did not expect (Piaget, 1959), and the uncertainty that results within professional practice (Shulman, 2005). Viewing Hargreaves's framework through this broader lens of novice teacher uncertainty leads to questions of how to best illuminate and prepare novice teachers for the emotional, uncertain landscape of novice teaching. That is, how should teacher educators prepare teacher candidates for the broad sociocultural geographies of a given school, and the manifestations of race, class, gender, and

ability contexts in daily classroom practice? How do novice teachers learn to navigate the hierarchies and power structures (i.e., political geographies) and are there ways that teacher educators can prepare them for the uncertainties and anxieties of these situations? Finally, how do novice teachers navigate the uncertain, nebulous boundaries between homes and schools (i.e., professional geographies), particularly as both parties – parents/caregivers and teachers – seemingly work toward the same goal of what is in the best interest of the child (i.e., moral geographies)? Difficult meta-questions such as these arise from Hargreaves's Emotional Geographies framework, but are sharpened when we examine the disequilibrating uncertainty they foster in novice teachers.

To examine our specific research question of what emotional geographies TCs might engage with in a clinical simulation, we turn to examine the continuing importance of parental involvement in schools, and the emerging position of clinical simulations in teacher education.

2.2. Parental involvement

Portions of the research body on parental involvement focus on the links between involvement and student achievement (Castro et al., 2015; Hill & Tyson, 2009; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Jeynes, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2012; Park & Holloway, 2016; Wilder, 2014). For instance, Jeynes's (2003) meta-analysis of twenty-one studies on the effects of parental involvement on minority students indicates that parental involvement improves students' grades. Similarly, Park and Holloway (2016) observed a positive relationship between school-based parental involvement activities and students' performance in mathematics. A longitudinal study of the literacy skills of low-income students showed that parental involvement is associated with higher literacy skills and recommended increased parental involvement as a way of decreasing the achievement gap between high- and low-achieving students (Dearing, McCartney, Weiss, Kreider, & Simpkins, 2004).

Parental involvement is associated not only with higher student achievement, but also with other positive student outcomes: decreased dropout rates (Parr & Bonitz, 2015), improved student perception of self-competence (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001) and positive transitioning to new school environments (Grolnick, Kurowski, Dunlap, & Hevey, 2000). For instance, Barnard (2004) indicates that parental involvement in elementary school students' education corresponds with long-term positive effects, such as decreased high school dropout rates and increased on-time high school completion. Grolnick et al. (2000) found that students with involved parents showed increased competence, and their transitions to junior high improved.

While some research studies suggest a positive relationship between parental involvement and student achievement and wellbeing, other studies have found no association between student achievement and parental involvement (Okpala, Okpala, & Smith, 2001; Smit, Driessen, Sleegers, & Teelken, 2008), and others suggest a limited relationship (Bronstein, Ginsburg, & Herrera, 2005; Domina, 2005; ElNokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Hawes & Plourde, 2005). For instance, in their meta-analysis, Mattingly, Prislín, McKenzie, Rodriguez, and Kayzar (2002) found a limited association between parental involvement and student achievement and between parental involvement and positive changes in students' behaviors. ElNokali et al. (2010) claim these mixed findings on the positive effects of parental involvement on student achievement might be caused by selection bias or by the use of measures that are too broad to show a significant association. From another perspective, Gonzalez-Pienda et al. (2002) suggest that parental involvement has indirect effects on student achievement, either increasing self-esteem or decreasing

problematic behaviors.

Although the literature suggests a complex representation of the effects of parental involvement on student achievement (Okpala et al., 2001), as education scholars, we recognize the tenets set forth by other scholars. That is, supporting parents through effective parental involvement activities not only helps them support their children (Epstein, 2010), but also influences their perceptions of working with school professionals (e.g., teachers, administrators, guidance counselors) (McWilliam, Tocci, & Harbin, 1998), and potentially positively impacts student achievement and wellbeing (Fan & Chen, 2001; Xu, Kushner Benson, Mudrey-Camino, & Steiner, 2010). As teacher educators, we further recognize the importance of these studies on teacher preparation contexts. We suggest it is not only important to prepare PSTs to engage in the practice of parent-teacher communications, but to also better understand their experiences during such interactions. To illuminate PSTs' early understandings of parental involvement, we shift to examining the concept of clinical simulations.

2.3. Clinical simulations

For more than a half-century, medical educators have used clinical simulations in the preparation of future physicians, nurses, and physical therapists (Barrows, 1987, 1993, 2000; Vu & Barrows, 1994). Utilizing *standardized patients* – professional actors who are trained to emulate the body language, mannerisms, and evidence of a distinct medical ‘case’ – Howard Barrows pioneered the concept of the medical simulation (Barrows & Abrahamson, 1964; Barrows, 1987). In a simulation, a learner (i.e., a future physician) is situated in a medical simulation room, meets face-to-face with a standardized patient, and is challenged to accurately diagnose the concerns of the standardized patient, practice professional communications, and to appropriately determine regimen(s) of treatment and/or appropriate next steps. The use of standardized patients provides significant instructional and assessment advantages. First, standardized individuals can be available any time of day and participate in a large number of simulations in a closely scheduled sequence. Second, using standardized individuals allows for more ease of communication about sensitive topics that prospective learners would be likely to encounter. Third, using standardized individuals means an interaction between a learner and a standardized individual can be paused to discuss a specific issue, and can then be resumed as needed (Barrows, 1993). Fourth, using standardized individuals allows learners to cope with problematic situations or individuals in a controlled environment and enables instructors to design interactions for a specific learning problem and provide feedback on student performance (Monaghan et al., 1997). Lastly, using standardized individuals helps instructors ensure that every learner in a given cohort will be exposed to similar conditions (Vu & Barrows, 1994). The use of standardized individuals for the purpose of teaching (Vu & Barrows, 1994) and evaluation (Barrows, 1993, 1996, 2000) is well established in medical education environments throughout the United States.

Parallel to their use in medical education, clinical simulations hold potential as pedagogical and assessment tools in the context of teacher education. Currently, clinical simulations are utilized for two distinct purposes. First, simulations in teacher education allow each PST in a given cohort to engage in the same instructional context – be it with a (standardized) parent, student, or colleague. When PSTs are placed in traditional field placements (i.e., K-12 classrooms), teacher education faculty have little to no control over the types of instructional opportunities they will engage in; there is great variance in the professional situations a cohort of PSTs encounters through field work (Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009;

Hatch & Grossman, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Like the medical educator's use of simulations, teacher educators currently utilize simulations to more effectively account for each and every PST's exposure to and experience within common scholastic situations. For example, teachers must be prepared to discuss a student's academic and behavioral performance with her/his parents or caregivers. Yet, teacher educators cannot control or otherwise guarantee that PSTs experience this distinct situation in traditional field placements. Thus, this particular instructional context is simulated to give each PST an opportunity to practice and engage (Dotger, 2013).

Second, by implementing simulations in teacher education, faculty can illuminate and study exactly how PSTs synthesize knowledge (from coursework) into practice (in simulation). It is not enough to simply simulate a number of different instructional contexts for PSTs. Instead, both PSTs and teacher educators must use the resulting simulation video data to explore what specific instructional practices were utilized (e.g., questioning, anticipating, monitoring, selecting) and to what effect (Forzani, 2014; Stein, Engle, Smith, & Hughes, 2009; Thompson, Windschitl, & Braaten, 2013). Deliberate attention to balancing simulated action with data-informed reflection provides PSTs with opportunities to carefully review, self-critique, and then share with peers their approaches, errors, assumptions, and decisions in a simulation. Importantly, the PST's peers engaged in the same simulation, experiencing the same contexts, questions, and challenges. Unlike the varied experiences of traditional field placements, the shared practice of a given simulation allows PSTs the dual opportunity for shared analysis. That is, a PST cohort can look carefully at a specific question that a parent asked about classroom policy, and then examine, compare, and contrast how each PST navigated that specific instructional situation. Across several different studies, [Second Author] has situated different cohorts of preservice and early induction teachers within simulations that focus on dis/ability, support of differences, and inclusive classrooms (Coughlin & Dotger, 2016; Dotger, 2013; Dotger & Ashby, 2010; Dotger, Harris, Maher & Hansel, 2011). Similarly, Self (2016) and colleagues have adopted this simulation approach at a different university, situating PSTs within simulations that focus on historically marginalized populations in schools.

Clinical simulations in teacher education build directly from tenets of situated cognition and communities of practice (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Because a simulation focuses on a very specific instructional situation, PSTs can engage in and make meaning from a situation of reduced professional complexity (Grossman & McDonald, 2008). The focal point is on the PST's actions, decisions, and understandings that occur ‘in situ’ (Brown et al., 1989). In compliment, because all PSTs rotate through the same simulation, the PST community forms around two sets of practices – the set of actions and decisions within the simulation itself *and* the later practice of carefully analyzing the resulting simulation video data. These shared practices of engagement and data-informed reflection work in tandem to build and foster the PST community.

The use of clinical simulations as an instructional pedagogy in teacher education also provides a new opportunity for education scholars to examine how PSTs perform in discrete, bounded environments. Building from what we observed in PST cohorts, particularly as they engaged in other simulations with (standardized) parents/caregivers, we wanted to further examine their navigation of emotional geographies within simulations. This study utilizes a single clinical simulation – the Goss simulation – to support an initial investigation of emotional geographies.

3. Methodology

Our study sought to explore the emotional geographies undergirding PSTs' interactions within and reflections on a simulated parent-teacher conference. We embraced a phenomenological approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), exploring meaning through individuals' interactions in various circumstances. The circumstances in this study were those within a single clinical simulation, where Lisa and David Goss were standardized parents who engaged with each PST in a face-to-face interaction. This section outlines the participants in this study and the preparation they received, the simulation setting, the training of the standardized parents, and our procedures for data collection and analysis.

3.1. Participants

This study was associated with an undergraduate teacher education "foundations" course designed to provide PSTs with exposure to a wide range of school-related situations through simulations. Thirty-one PSTs enrolled in this course participated in four clinical simulations across the 15-week semester. One simulation, the Goss simulation, served as the primary data source for this study. Twenty-eight pre-service teachers—four males and 24 females—signed a university-reviewed Institutional Review Board (IRB) consent form (#13–005), thereby agreeing to allow us to analyze their data from the Goss simulation. In addition, six PSTs—one male and five females—agreed to participate in semi-structured interviews to discuss their experiences during the Goss simulation. Pseudonyms were created for each participant so as not to disclose any personal information.

3.2. Implementation

3.2.1. Simulation setting

For the purposes of the foundations course, as well as this study, we utilized the services of a nearby medical simulation facility. This facility houses twenty-two simulation rooms designed for collecting video and audio data between medical personnel and standardized patients. In addition to the simulation rooms, the facility houses training rooms for the standardized individuals, rooms for conducting digital observations of participants and moderators, and instructional classrooms. All of the data for this study—including PSTs' pre-simulation questions, videos of each PST's simulation, and post-simulation debriefing sessions—were stored in this facility's closed-loop server.

3.2.2. Preparing PSTs for the Goss simulation

Prior to the Goss simulation, the thirty-one PSTs participated in two other simulations. Thus, the PSTs were familiar with the clinical simulation concept and general procedures before they engaged in the Goss simulation. One week prior to the Goss simulation, a Teacher Information (TI) Protocol was distributed to all thirty-one PSTs. This protocol positioned each PST as a novice, first-year teacher in a hypothetical school, described their general teaching responsibilities in 11th grade subject areas, the disposition of "high expectations for all students", and described a recent interaction with one struggling student—Melissa Goss.

The TI Protocol characterized Melissa Goss as a successful student athlete who played on the tennis and basketball teams of her school and had a 3.6 GPA. The protocol noted that each PST had noticed a recent downward shift for Melissa's grades, and that each PST had verbally approached Melissa to offer support. However, when the teacher tried to start a conversation, Melissa exclaimed, "I

can't! I have got to go! I have got way too much going on to be worrying about this now!" The protocol indicates that each teacher (i.e., each PST) communicated with Melissa's other teachers and her guidance counselor, realizing that Melissa was having problems in most of her classes. After this insight, the teacher contacted Melissa's mother to initiate a parent-teacher conference to discuss her declining grades and recent verbal outburst. Importantly, the TI Protocol does not script or direct how each PST should engage with Mrs. Goss in the forthcoming parent-teacher conference, nor does it forecast exactly what Mrs. Goss (or Mr. Goss, as he chose to also attend) might ask in the conference.

3.2.3. Standardized parent training

Seven professional actors who regularly serve as standardized patients were hired and trained to serve instead as standardized parents—David and Lisa Goss—for the Goss simulation. A four-page Standardized Individual (SI) Protocol outlined in detail the general disposition of both David and Lisa, and their differing perspectives on the post-secondary avenues their daughter—Melissa—should pursue. Importantly, the SI Protocol outlined very specific triggers—the exact verbal representations and non-verbal mannerisms—that prepared each actor portraying either David or Lisa Goss on how to engage with each other and each PST in the simulations. For instance, the actors playing Lisa Goss were told that if the PSTs noted Melissa's missing homework assignments, they should act surprised and respond with a statement like "Well, this isn't going to help her to get where she needs to go."

By design, the actors portray an estranged couple that disagree. Initially, their distance is evident through non-verbal cues, such as how they intentionally placed their chairs far away from each other, and quietly smirked at each other's statements. As outlined in the SI Protocol, and carefully rehearsed in an extensive 2-h SI training session, the actors begin a verbal argument with each other while in conference with each PST. Through their verbalizations to each other, the actors represent David and Lisa Goss as parents who hold significantly different expectations for their daughter. David proposes his daughter utilize her athletic skills at Division II schools, arguing she can play a sport, receive a solid education, and hold little financial debt after graduation. In contrast, Lisa proposes that Melissa stop playing sports, and focus increased energies on raising her current 3.6 GPA so that she may be admitted to the highest caliber universities. As directed by the SI Protocol, the Goss's present a couple that want different paths for their daughter, and are not engaging in balanced communications with each other. In portions of the simulation, the conversation continues between David and Lisa, without requiring the PST to actively engage in dialogue. For example, at one point in each simulation (in accordance with the SI Protocol) David uses an angry tone and directly asks Lisa, "Why do you continue to push our daughter? She is doing her best! Why isn't her best good enough for you?" At other points in the simulation, verbal triggers are presented directly to each PST. For example, Lisa turns to each PST and directly requests "What do you think Melissa should do?" By design, David Goss concludes each simulation. Turning away from the argument with his spouse, he asks of each PST, "Where do we go from here?" in an effort to determine a plan of action in moving forward.

3.3. Data collection and analysis

On a designated afternoon, all thirty-one PSTs reported to the medical simulation facility to engage in the Goss simulation. In coordination with medical simulation staff members, we guided the PSTs through the face-to-face simulations with David and Lisa

Goss. Once situated in the simulation room, each PST had a maximum of 20 min with the Goss parents.¹ In two subsequent weeks, we conducted nine small-group post-simulation debriefing sessions with the PSTs. Three weeks after the simulation and small-group debriefing processes concluded, the first author contacted ten randomly selected PSTs (of the 28 who consented to have their video data analyzed). Of the ten contacted, six agreed to participate in brief (i.e., 20 min) semi-structured interviews.

Given the structure of the Goss simulation, the concepts of decision making and facilitation were included in a preliminary code list. Additionally, we adhered to a suggestion by LeCompte and Goetz (1982), who proposed using a theoretical framework to increase external reliability, and we incorporated concepts from Hargreaves's (2001a) Emotional Geographies of Teaching framework, including the codes of *moral*, *professional*, and *political distance* into our preliminary code list. Guided by Lincoln and Guba's (1985) coding methods, a subset of the simulation videos was coded to ensure the codebooks captured the emerging data. Revisions to the codebook were discussed, which included creating new codes and coding categories for addressing emerging concepts and reviewing pre-determined codes or code schemes in light of potential and emerging concepts, to identify new or previously unrecognized relationships. For instance, during the debriefing sessions, PSTs expressed surprise, confusion, and frustration over having to cope with both parents, since many of them had expected to face only one parent. There were no codes in the simulation codebook to address these feelings on the part of the PSTs, so the researchers coded these feelings and added the codes to the codebooks. Another example of the adaptation of the codebooks can be seen in the necessity to enhance a distinct code, "facilitation interruption," with seven new sub-codes, as many of the participants during the debriefing sessions made clear the reasons behind their acting to interrupt the standardized parents.

Creswell (2012) recommends the use of a triangulation methodology, which is the utilization of various techniques to acquire data on a topic from contrasting contexts and perspectives, to facilitate cross-checking and increase the accuracy and credibility of research findings. The researchers used the simulation codebook to analyze the PSTs' written response to the pre-simulation questions and the resulting twenty-eight Goss simulation videos, in order to get a better understanding of the PSTs' actions, decisions, and reflections. Additionally, we used the simulation codebook to create a parallel debriefing codebook, which was used to analyze the transcriptions of the post-simulation debriefing sessions and the semi-structured interviews, giving us an additional perspective on the PSTs' meaning making from their experiences within the Goss simulation. For instance, when the simulation recordings were analyzed, it was clear that many of the PSTs were reluctant to interrupt the parents; however, the simulation data did not throw any light on the reasoning behind their hesitation. During the debriefing sessions, the PSTs discussed the challenge they had felt when they tried to interrupt the standardized parents. The following excerpt exemplifies some of the discussions on this subject that arose and presents PSTs' perspectives on how they chose the interrupt the conversation:

Hanna: I didn't know how to stop them talking. [Reflection Facilitation- Interruption-How to Interrupt/RF-I-H]

Carin: I know, they were just arguing ...

Hanna: Yea, I, like, didn't even, uhh, [3 s of silence] I didn't know how to interrupt. [Reflection Facilitation-Interruption-How to Interrupt/RF-I-H]

Carin: I just [1 s of silence] as soon as they said something that I can talk about, I was like "Yea, yea, you know" [Reflection Facilitation- Interruption-Waiting for a Pause/RF-I-W]

Hanna: I gave them, like, couple of minutes. [Reflection Facilitation- Interrupting-Not Interrupting the Argument/RF-I-N].

4. Findings

This study focused on the emotional geographies PSTs' might engage within the Goss clinical simulation. In the following section, we report findings associated with moral, professional, and political geographies that PSTs navigated and reflected upon.

4.1. Moral geographies

Generally, teachers and parents strive to act in the best interest of students, but at times, teachers' and parents' perspectives on the best decision or course of action may conflict. According to Hargreaves (2001a), moral geographies emerge when teachers and parents have a difference of opinion/perspective about what is in the best interest of a student. Thus, in this study, a moral distance emerges when PSTs and the standardized parents differ on Melissa's situation and the best course(s) of action in moving forward.

Even though many of the PSTs mentioned the stress they felt when engaging with the standardized parents, some were not afraid to take risks if they believed the situation could affect Melissa's wellbeing. Many PSTs tried to convince the standardized parents to include Melissa in the decision-making process, although, by design, the standardized parents resisted. Gloria, for instance, took risks to remind the standardized parents that this decision would directly affect Melissa's life; "... and regardless of where she chooses to go, I think it is important that you guys, umm, sit her down and talk to her about what she wants to do. 'Cause it is her life; not either of your lives." Similarly, Olivia approached the standardized parents by suggesting a focus on Melissa's career choices rather than on college selection, and she cautioned them to not make any hasty decisions.

Olivia: Has she expressed any interest in any major or area or field that she wants to go to?

Lisa: No.

Olivia: She is not sure yet?

David: She is not sure where she wants to go.

Olivia: Does she like math and science more than, maybe, humanities? It is important to focus on getting into college, but you can't pick your college until you really know what you want to go into. I would really appreciate it if you said, "Well, Melissa, have you considered, maybe, these career options. What do you want to do after you get out of college?"

During her debriefing discussion, Nicole exemplified the frustration of the PSTs with the actions of the standardized parents and emphasized the importance of focusing on Melissa's wellbeing rather than her grades:

Nicole: They [David and Lisa] both had valid points. Both of them had, you know, some of the points were really good, some of them were—I just wanted to reach out and shake them: "Do you hear yourself right now?" But, umm, I tried to, like, make the focus on Melissa as a human being, not Melissa as a grade or basketball player, but Melissa as a whole.

Becky's expression of her worries about how Melissa's home life might affect her overall well-being reveals many of the PSTs' concerns, and the reasoning behind many of their actions to advocate on Melissa's behalf:

Becky: Well, as a teacher, my primary concern is my students. I want them to be safe. I want them to come to school and feel safe and know that they can count on me. I obviously don't go home

¹ Dotger (2013) provides extensive, step-by-step detail on the procedures associated with implementing a given simulation.

with them. I don't know what is happening at home. I don't know if they have great parents or they have the worst parents in the world. I have no idea. So I need to establish a good relationship with the child so I can have better insight into that. So I can see how it might affect her performance or see if, hey, maybe I need to step in. ... They are children, you know, they can't just stand up to the parents and be, like, "Stop! Leave me alone" and run away.

Many PSTs noted an awareness of the ramifications of their actions on the relationships within the Goss family, expressing concern about how their actions in the conference could affect the parents' actions towards Melissa. Keeping in mind Melissa's well-being, PSTs questioned their decisions to confront the standardized parents:

Nicole: I feel like if this were a real-life situation, Melissa might be in the worst position. Because I feel like I angered her mom and concerned her dad. I mean they were both concerned, but I think I angered her mom, and I think that when her mom gets angry at her, the dad gets angry at the mom. So, I was like, I don't know what kind of family drama I have started. I am glad I am not there to see that happen.

4.2. Professional geographies

Teaching is an occupation grounded in relationships, and teachers need to constantly establish and/or sustain their relationships with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents. Hargreaves (2001a) explored the professional relationships between teachers and students, and between teachers and parents, and questioned the norms that define these relationships. This study defined *professional distance* as the degree to which the PSTs focused on Melissa's familial concerns, and how the PSTs determined boundaries between themselves and the Goss family. Although all PSTs had encountered the same situation with Melissa, namely, a sudden change in Melissa's behaviors and a decrease in her grades, their approaches to establishing a boundary between home and school varied in simulation with her parents. PSTs approached this professional geography from several perspectives, including (a) their academic expertise, (b) the standardized parents' willingness to share, (c) the origin of the problematic behavior (home or school), and (d) traditional norms of professionalism.

As PSTs reflected in post-simulation debriefings on their experiences with David and Lisa Goss, they questioned perceived boundaries between home and school. PSTs voiced such questions, "Like, we are teachers, where is the boundary before stepping into the home, like, leaving your realm?" or "How much we are allowed to impose on their home life? Like, make suggestions or that sorta thing?" While some PSTs elected to focus on Melissa's school-related issues in simulation, others said that they would overstep boundaries if family problems affected Melissa's academic success. Ted exemplifies this perspective, stating:

Ted: When it comes to academics, I think we have every right to state our beliefs. Because that is what we are doing, you know. Parents are not really involved with the classroom; parents are not there. It's teacher and student. So when things outside of the classroom are affecting things inside the classroom, then my concern becomes outside of the classroom. Because, I mean, I have my concern bubble, and then if things come into it, it widens.

During the semi-structured interviews, a few PSTs advocated for the idea that teachers should also be concerned with family problems, since their focus was Melissa's general wellbeing and not just her grades. In the following example, Nicole describes why she did not choose to focus solely on academic problems:

Nicole: I just think I handled it so much differently. I tried not to focus so much on academics because that was not worrying me when I read the profile. What was worrying me was she was

shutting down, she was blocking people out, and her grades have been slipping. All of that adds up to something greater than 70s vs. 90s. I was trying to get them to see that perfection in school and sports is not in the end gonna help Melissa. So I really tried to get them to see that the academics and basketball were important, and she needed to find balance and all of that, but Melissa as a human being, as a person, is slipping from us and we needed to bring her back with little steps.

Still other PSTs, like Kalie, questioned any type of boundary crossing at all:

Kalie: I find it, like, very ... [2 s silence] ... it is like a shaky ground. I would love to be, like, all up in their business. ... People would get defensive about the way they parent their children because they think that is right, and I am not there to criticize their parenting. I am there to tell them, like, their daughter is about to fail in my class.

Some PSTs acknowledged the importance of respecting the privacy of the Goss family and suggested that a teacher should cross these professional boundaries only at the cue of a parent/guardian. For instance, Becky suggested that the boundary between school and home should be established around parents' desires.

Becky: I don't think my teachers have ever gone beyond what I allowed them to, and I think I should practice those similar, you know, practices. Anyways ... if they come to you with very personal things, then I think we are allowed to help more and, like, step over that I am just your teacher, and now I am a little bit more to you in some respect. They didn't invite me into the home as far as their pressure on Melissa. So I thought, it wasn't, I wasn't allowed to. It would have been inappropriate for me to, like, you need to calm down and I tried to be, like, you know, well it is about Melissa. It's her academics, it's her ... it is good that you are supporting her, but it is up to her. I tried to keep it, you know, you can only go as far as they let you.

4.3. Political geographies

Hargreaves (2001a) posited that teachers' professional relationships with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents hold tenets of power and hierarchical structures. This study defines political distance in terms of the pressures PSTs reported that led them to modify their comments and actions in their interactions with the standardized parents.

One of the triggers in the Goss simulation highlighted the parents' opposing perspectives, directing them to disagree over how much time Melissa should be dedicating toward either athletics or academics. Many PSTs were puzzled when faced with the standardized parents' disagreement; they report not expecting a problematic situation, and not being prepared to navigate it. Many PSTs believed that they should have interrupted the argument, and nineteen of them struggled to do so. Four PSTs took no action and allowed the standardized parents to argue for several minutes. Fifteen monitored the situation and the standardized parents' behaviors to find an appropriate moment to engage and ease the tension. Nine of twenty-eight PSTs directly interrupted the argument and facilitated more civil discussion of the situation. During the simulation, the PSTs encountered unexpected political terrain, which elicited feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. In the following example, Annie gives a picture of many of the PSTs' thought processes as she discusses her uncertainty over interrupting the disagreement:

Annie: It was very difficult. Umm, I had issues with trying to figure out if I should butt in or I shouldn't butt in. Like, I didn't really know what to do. I was just lost for words, and I couldn't figure out what to do. So I just let them argue. I felt like I was doing the wrong thing, instead of jumping in. But I didn't know how to jump in.

Even though most PSTs believed that they should interrupt the argument, it was clear that they were considering the consequences of their actions. Generally, the fear of a negative response from the standardized parents triggered some hesitation on the part of the PSTs. Gaby's exemplifies this hesitation:

Gaby: Well, because one parent wants one thing and the other parent wants the other thing, and you don't wanna really choose a side. So, you are listening to them and you feel like you should stop them. 'Cause they have been arguing, like, for a few minutes now, so you should move on, but then you just wait a little longer to see if it will end and it does end in a couple minutes.

While PSTs made various suggestions on how the standardized parents could help improve Melissa's academic success, these same PSTs noted in the debriefing sessions that they modified their comments for the sake of establishing a positive relationship with the standardized parents. In the following excerpt, Gaby's interaction with Lisa Goss exemplifies the power structures in conversation that PSTs expressed concern toward:

Gaby: She wants to go to these colleges too right? You (Lisa) are not forcing her or anything?

David: She wants to play basketball.

Gaby: Okay.

David: That is her first love and it has never been a problem before. She has played basketball and tennis for years, and her grades since middle school have been good.

Gaby: I am ... it doesn't seem like. Is there another thing that might be?

Lisa: Why would you suggest that I am forcing her into anything? I am a bit taken aback by that statement.

Gaby: I am not; I just wanna know if she wants to go to those colleges as well.

David: You [facing Lisa] had been a little demonstrative and telling her where she should be planning on going. You know you have been applying pressure.

In similar fashion, Kalie explained during a debriefing session her awareness of power structures and how she modified her language in order to maintain the relationship:

Kalie: I just wanted to say, like, you guys just are being uptight assholes; like, let her do what she wants to do. Like, I mean, from the conversation we were having it doesn't sound like she wants to do basketball at all. If you were being this pushy, I wouldn't wanna do it, even though I did like it. Like yea, I felt like saying stop pushing her doing basketball and stop pushing her on her grades. I mean there is a point you have to be polite, I want her parents to talk to me, like, in real life if there is an issue, I want them to talk to me, like, not try to get behind me.

Gina expressed similar concerns about articulating her opinion of the standardized parents' actions, "I had to restrain my impulse to say, 'Look. You can't treat your kid like this. She is going to crash and burn' because it is not my place to tell them how raise their kid." Pania also stressed how her comments about the standardized parents' actions could affect professional relationship with them:

Pania: I think not saying your opinion helps. Because if you say your opinion and what if the parent doesn't agree? So again guard is gonna be put up; nothing gonna get through to them ... if they don't like what you said, I just think, it is gonna make the whole situation worse.

Perhaps the most striking example of a PSTs' modified approaches comes from Annie, as she reports in debriefing how her perceptions of power dynamics in the conference room made her feel:

Annie: I felt like I was walking on eggshells, because I didn't know what was gonna happen. I didn't know if they were gonna get mad at me and start yelling or if they were gonna react the way they did. They didn't have a bad attitude about it. They were, like, okay I

understand where you are coming from, but I was really scared that they were going to say something. I didn't say what I truly wanted to say, but I jumped around it and said it in a way that they would be able to take it.

5. Discussion and implications

Our study examined how PSTs engaged with two standardized parents (Lisa & David Goss) who disagree on their daughter's future academic and athletic path(s) during a simulated parent-teacher conference. To analyze the data thoroughly and report the findings accurately, we intentionally segmented our prior sections, looking at distinct emotional geographies. Our discussion of these findings, though, spans across the moral, professional, and political geographies. This is intentional, as it best encapsulates the multiple dimensions that each PST was confronted with during the Goss simulation. Following our discussion, we outline implications of this study on preparing teachers to navigate the emotional geographies of teaching.

By design, Lisa and David Goss verbally disagree on the degree to which their daughter, Melissa, should focus on academics and/or athletics in preparation for, and when enrolled in, an undergraduate college degree program. When faced with two parents who clearly are at odds regarding their daughter's future, many PSTs reported concerns about confrontation. Despite these concerns, many did engage in an effort to emphasize Melissa's wellbeing, advocating that Melissa should be the one who decides her future. The question of engaging (or not) in the Goss's disagreement highlights uncertain professional geographies, where PSTs were immediately challenged with whether or not the Goss's discussion was appropriate territory for a teacher's input. This professional geography – with questions of boundaries between home and school – is dually compounded by political geographies and questions of power structures. PSTs not only faced the dilemma of whether or not to engage, they also faced a situation in which they held little power if they chose to engage.

While the design of the Goss simulation compounds the professional and political geographies, many PSTs engaged in the discussion from the moral geography standpoint. Such terrain allowed PSTs to enter the conversation from a reasonably safe position, encouraging a focus on what is in the best interest of the student. Resulting data show that PSTs repeatedly emphasized they were concerned not only about Melissa's grades and in-school behavior, but also about her overall wellbeing. PSTs used references to Melissa's performance in their respective classes, but also expressed concern for Melissa's overall performance in school. Other PSTs took the approach of expressing concern for Melissa's wellbeing and success beyond the realm of high school, with an emphasis on the stresses and uncertainties associated with selecting and preparing for college. Engaging in the conversation by starting from this moral terrain – with a focus on what is in the best interest of the student – represented reasonably neutral high ground in which PSTs positioned themselves and continued to monitor the unfolding disagreement between Lisa and David Goss. Navigating the simulation from the position of the moral high ground caused some PSTs to examine the boundaries of professionalism. Designed to be a discussion that is – at first glance – not one best had in a school setting, PSTs struggled with how much they should involve themselves in the student's and the standardized parents' home life. PSTs questioned what the "professional thing to do" would be in this particular situation. Some PSTs chose to follow the norms of traditional professionalism, briefly described as avoiding emotional involvement and controlling emotional responses toward the problems of students and parents (Hargreaves, 2001a). Indeed, some PSTs chose not to engage within

the relationship between the standardized parents and Melissa. Such an approach lends support Hargreaves and Goodson's call for a new definition of teacher professionalism (Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996).

In the post-simulation debriefing data, PSTs expressed questions of *to what degree* and *in what manner* to engage in the situation unfolding within the Goss family. The 'degree of engagement' question suggests PSTs could operate solely from the moral high ground – citing the best interest of the student – from a relatively safe distance, while also relying on the traditional perceptions of the uninvolved 'professional'. Alternatively, PSTs could elect to engage and involve themselves in the situation to a greater degree. The effort to do so is described in part by Oplatka (2007), who defines *emotional labor* as a concept that involves "selling the emotional self for the purposes and profits of the organization—a smile for sale, for example" (p. 1378). Like the teachers in studies by Hargreaves (2001a) and Oplatka (2007), some PSTs in this study experienced emotional labor by engaging in the Goss discussion, manifested through concealed emotions, modified language, and amended actions. That is, PSTs described feelings of frustration, anxiety, annoyance, and hesitation as they modified language away from saying what they really wanted to say, and instead issued either more balanced or more distant comments on the situation in which the Goss's differed.

Returning to Oplatka's definition of emotional labor, one challenge is to help PSTs better understand the many purposes of the public school organization, their role(s) within that organization, and how to engage as both an individual teacher and representative of the broader school. Through the emotional geographies framework, a parallel challenge is to help PSTs identify emotional geographies – distinct terrain within schools and classrooms – that require one to navigate power structures (political geographies), recognize and potentially cross boundaries (professional geographies), while operating from the perspective of what is in the best interest of the student, the classroom, and the school (moral geographies). The question is how to address these two challenges – where PSTs learn about their role(s) within schools, and the emotional geographies that undergird those role(s).

We do not believe that PSTs can map the scholastic lay-of-the-land from safe and distant college classrooms, nor do we believe that a simple, rote identification of types of emotional geographies is sufficient through teacher preparation coursework. Neither requires PSTs to emotionally labor, navigate uncertainty, or construct identity. Thus, one implication of this study is the need for PSTs to actually practice navigating emotional geographies. We suggest that such practice can be achieved – in part – through carefully designed clinical simulations. Across deliberately sequenced simulations – that are coupled with data-informed debriefing sessions – PSTs experience professional uncertainty, engage in multiple scholastic practices, and begin shaping the professional ethos (Hargreaves, 1992). In 2008, Dotger et al. engaged a cohort of PSTs in a series of six simulations that did not include the Goss simulation represented in this study. Importantly, the same emotional geographies – moral, professional, political – emerged in that earlier study as points of uncertainty, discussion, and professional growth for the participating PSTs. Between that early study and that which we report herein, nearly 2000 PSTs have participated in different types and differently configured series of simulations. That is to say, schools of education hold the capacity to design and implement challenging learning experiences – in the form of simulations – that can help PSTs more authentically engage with scholastic situations, their roles and responsibilities as novice teachers, and the emotional geographies that manifest within schools and classrooms.

Accepting that PSTs should practice navigating this emotional

terrain, one might argue that PSTs should engage with these geographies as they manifest in fully contextualized field placements, rather than within a bounded clinical simulation. We fully acknowledge that clinical simulations do not replace daily practice in fully contextualized classrooms. In fact, simulations are not designed to do so. Instead, simulations reflect the very heart of practice-based teacher education (Zeichner, 2013; Grossman et al., 2009), where teacher educators help PSTs experience and carefully reflect upon very discrete moments of situated practice, and then build from those small, limited experiences toward broader methods, decisions, and dispositions. The significance of this study – and others that utilize clinical simulations – lies in the richness of the designed-simulation-as-scaffold. Like other teacher educators who are currently exploring practice-based teacher education (Forzani, 2014; Grossman et al., 2009; Kazemi, Lampert, & Franke, 2009; Self, 2016; Thompson et al., 2013), we emphasize challenging PSTs within a shared practice and supporting them in the shared analyses of practice, to ultimately foster growth and development as PSTs move from shared pre-service learning to individual classroom novice teaching.

The current emphasis on practice-based teacher education raises the challenge of defining the practices of teaching and the dual challenge of teaching PSTs how to enact those practices (Levine, 2010; Singer-Gabella, 2012). One such practice is engaging in parent-teacher interactions (TeachingWorks, 2014). This particular practice – but certainly others – surfaces emotional geographies (Hargreaves, 2001a; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003). Questions of power, boundaries, and the 'right course of action' arise when parents, colleagues, and PSTs interact to discuss a given student. If teacher educators elect to guide PSTs through the practice of engaging in parent-teacher interactions, we suggest doing so through a clinical simulation pedagogy, where PSTs experience the challenge of very distinct interactions with parents, and have the appropriate support and guidance to carefully unpack the decisions, actions, and geographies within a complex interaction.

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