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The Development and Distinction of Emerging School Professionals: Boundary Work of Guidance Counselors and School Psychologists

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The Development and Distinction of Emerging School Professionals: Boundary Work of
Guidance Counselors and School Psychologists

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to the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences
at West Virginia University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

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Madison Wilson

As a compulsory part of our society, schools are a prominent institution in the United States and abroad. In a system with multiple domains of specialized professionals, it is important to define their roles, determine where there is overlap, and assess if both professions are functioning to best assist students. This study examines the boundary work and professionalization of two emerging mental health professions within the school system: guidance counselors and school psychologists. Thematic analysis of the boundary work in the editorials of each professions' flagship journal show that much of the boundary work between the journals is similar and has not differed much over time and includes themes of professional structures, developmental psychology, and the altering of teachers and administrators. The only exception to this is both professions' new, contemporary focus on social advocacy and community activism. Further research in this topic may explore boundary work between guidance counselors and school psychologists and teachers and administrators since these are the main boundaries being drawn within the two professions analyzed. Additionally, if social justice and community work continues to be a focus of these professions, further research will be required to understand how school psychologists and guidance counselors justify their entrance into this problem and how they carve out their piece of it.

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Introduction

As a compulsory part of our society, schools are a prominent institution in the United States and abroad. Within a school system, many types of professionals work towards the institution's public goal, most explicitly to educate students by teaching them the knowledge and skills necessary for future success. While this may describe the colloquial view of the education system, sociologists have argued that the school system serves alternative purposes within a society (Meyer 1977). School, and the professionals within it, may serve to socialize children and prepare them for adult life. This can involve the direct transfer of knowledge, but also involves the learning of soft skills valued by a specific society, such as social interaction with peers, emotional regulation, or respect for authority. Among the purposes of schools include guiding and assisting students who struggle with any of the knowledge or skills deemed necessary for success. Although this institution focuses on education, there are several professionals within the school system who are not teachers, as teaching is traditionally defined. While teachers are often thought of as the only educators in the school system, other professionals also facilitate learning and the development of skills.

Mental health and psychological assistance is an important component of school, containing two main types of professionals: guidance counselors and school psychologists. School psychologists are professionals who work in a school setting to assist those with emotional, behavioral, and academic difficulties ("NASP" n.d.b). This includes assessing and diagnosing students during standardized testing, informal conversations with students, teachers, and guardians, classroom observations, developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and working with additional school professionals, students, and guardians to implement plans

and accommodations. Guidance counselors also hold individual and group sessions with students and collaborate with school faculty and staff (ASCA n.d.). The advice they provide, however, is more generalized, while that of school psychologists' is narrowed to more specific psychological problems. While a guidance counselor advises students on their future career, school performance, and stress, a school psychologist is generally advised if difficulties with a student persist, become worse, or the guidance counselor suspects a psychological disorder may be involved.

Though these professions share a common explicit goal of assisting students, they also reflect broader goals of society, the school institution, and related organizations which may not always serve the students' best interests. This could include school-level goals and struggles, such as attempts to raise test scores to increase funding, unequal opportunities for marginalized students, and more. On a societal level, the educational system may also serve to assist the function of other systems that are unrelated to the explicit purpose of schools, but rely on them nonetheless (Meyer 1977). For example, parents are able to travel to work because their children attend school during work hours which keeps countless systems of work in motion. From an institutional perspective, schools may also serve to confer status based on diplomas/degrees allocated. Furthermore, school systems have been described as agents in a broad classification system regarding status and expertise that is intertwined with other societal systems, such as the government and economic systems. In this way, the school system produces occupational categories and labels individuals by expertise knowledge that is generally state-regulated. School psychologists and guidance counselors have a great responsibility in shaping students' future successes and struggles, sharing the task of which lifelong label students will accrue or be led towards as they progress through the educational system. This includes the career and college

advice they receive, the diagnosis or misdiagnosis of psychological disorders, and the type and extent of service that the students receive. In this way, school psychologists and guidance counselors act as gatekeepers to resources that can alter the course of a student's life.

This study uses the sociology of professions as a framework and uses Gieryn's (1983) concept of boundary work to describe established demarcations of school psychology and guidance counseling. In turn, it supplements the sociological understanding of professions by analyzing two often overlooked professions in the school system. Additionally, it contributes to literature in the broader fields of the sociology of work and education. The understanding of these professions' histories allows us to see their developments within the school system, possible divergences, and functional practicality. In a system with multiple domains of specialized professionals, it is important to define their roles, determine where there is overlap, and assess if both professions are functioning to best assist students. By searching for and analyzing the boundary-work of school psychologists and guidance counselors, this study will aid in the understanding of how these professions maintain distinct identities without role overlap. As these professions emerge further and become a popular element of the school system, it is important to distinguish how their expertise and distinction were developed and how this serves the broader educational institution.

Literature Review

Sociology of Professions

According to Hughes (1994), a profession is a type of occupation that provides specialized, esoteric services. Professions as we know them today developed in the nineteenth century with an increase in specialized service-based occupations in medicine, law, accounting,

and university education in England and the United States (Abbott 1988). These professions originally stood out as unusual against commercial and industrial careers, as they were much like other civil servant occupations from an earlier time. Professions differ from regular jobs in that they always provide a more focused and specialized service. Additionally, they often train under older experts in their field, lay exclusive claim to certain issues, and claim an expert status.

While professions may attempt to solve specific problems in order to maintain or create a type of social order, but generally specify their interests through claiming to advance knowledge or improve practice on a distinct topic (Hughes 1994). The strain between the theoretical and practical within a profession often leads to a demarcation between academics and practitioners within a field, especially when putting the theory into practice is possible and is of interest to the profession's continuation and growing influence. While both school psychology and guidance counseling are partially composed by academics who advance research and teach new students of their respective field, this study focuses on practitioners within the school system. Research in these fields is generally focused on practice, with practitioners using their theoretical work to improve applications of their specialized knowledge. Application of this knowledge within the school system is the main function of both guidance counseling and school psychology, forming their most common and visible esoteric service.

The esoteric services provided by professionals can include physical action and advice tailored to client's problems (Hughes, 1994). Both guidance counselors and school psychologists provide the latter, with their education and presumed knowledge legitimizing their practice ("ASCA" n.d.; "NASP" n.d.a). Both professions require a Master's-level education, practicum, and certification specifically in school psychology or guidance counseling. This education is based on principles of educational and childhood psychology and including aspects of research

methods and statistical analysis. The professionals are taught science-backed assessment and intervention strategies in their respective field. They use these tools to assist students with issues related to mental health.

School psychologists and guidance counselors rely on their specialized knowledge to separate the services they provide from advice given from nonprofessionals or those in professions distinct from their own. As professions begin to develop, they create professional structures, such as training programs, organizations, specialized journals, and credentialing and accreditation programs (Abbott 1988). This helps brand their services as those of an expert, enhancing confidence in their services and status as professionals. A key part of this legitimization process includes transfer of power and prestige to those who undergo the education, especially at the graduate level, that is required to practice as a professional (Hughes 1994).

At the base of a claim to many professions is the idea that they are trustworthy on specific matters due to their advanced education in a certain subject. While some occupations hold the characteristics of professions, in that they provide an esoteric service, they are often not labelled as such by sociological researchers and the public (Abbott 1988). This mostly occurs with professions lacking some aspects of professional structures (ex. clergy members of some religions) or lack university-level training and higher status associated with expertise and professionalism (ex. plumbers and mechanics). While the labelling of these border occupations is often debated, school psychologists and guidance counselors have and currently participate in the typical features of professionals, making this demarcation less relevant. With a graduate-level education, the assumption is that advanced education and training serves to better equip the guidance counselor or school psychologist to help students.

The sociology of professions has also focused on the influence of technology and shared professional identity. As a relatively new profession, school psychologists, and to a lesser extent guidance counselors, are emerging professions. New professions evolve out of changes in society: both technological and social (Hughes 1994). Technological and social factors affecting these professions may include new scientific tests for mental health disorders, increased social emphasis on mental health, the shift away from physical punishment in schools, and an increased focus on higher education. These factors can provide an opportunity for a profession to arise by creating a need for something new and providing tools for practitioners to meet the need with.

A unified identity of members is also important in the process of professionalization. The common experiences of professionals' education and certification formed a shared identity and a set of shared norms about best practice (Gorman and Sandefur 2011). Additionally, professional organizations, such as the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), serve as an attempt to unify professionals with seminars, mailings, conferences, and more (Swan & Newell 1995). They also attempt to unify professionals by facilitating weak ties that serve as networks for the exchange of knowledge between professionals with a shared identity. This connects those in each profession to each other through mutual relations, thus increasing the spread of information throughout each field (Granovetter 1973). In recent years, however, specialization of work, growing diversity of professions within a given organization, the increased opportunities for expert services, and diversification of sociodemographic traits of workers in traditionally homogenous professions have all contributed to a weakening of collective identity within members of a profession (Gorman and Sandefur 2011). This can undermine solidarity within a profession, leading to fragmented ideas of what the profession is and does.

As with most modern professions, guidance counselors and school psychologists work in organizations with others in their own and related professions, such as teachers, administrators, and third-party faculty and staff. Systems of professions are interdependent, with each discipline performing designated activities (Abbott 1988). This system is most often hierarchical, with greater expert status and higher levels of development as a profession leading to increased prestige and subsequent monopoly over intellectual and material resources. Within an interdependent professional system, the strength of social boundaries is often dependent on how integrated the different professions are (Crabtree 2009). Research within these systems (Shuval and Mizrachi 2004), largely based in the medical system, suggest three factors that are crucial to the strength of social boundaries: task differentiation (Abbott 1988), level of cooperation, and degree of spatial separation. These boundaries are especially salient for professions who appear, at a surface level, to solve the same problem (Crabtree 2009). In these situations, professionals may be driven to approach the task with a less integrative approach, emphasizing their unique approach and tools as the best solution.

Even though each profession in a system such as this is theoretically colonizing a separate area of expert knowledge, they must often collaborate, using each service they provide to reach a common goal or solve a common problem. Despite this surface cooperation though, task differentiation and spatial separation may serve to construct strong boundaries (Shuval and Mizrachi 2004). In the context of this study, for example, school psychologists and guidance counselors may differentiate similar mental health problems that they cooperatively solve by applying different tools from their respective education backgrounds. Additionally, while they work within the same school system, guidance counselors and school psychologists may

maintain a stronger degree of spatial separation as a form of boundary work, by separating into different offices.

Zetka (2001) suggests that division of labor between various professions and occupations within a singular project can cause conflict between groups that may have different goals and values. While this study focuses on the construction of complex medical equipment, the mechanism of several different skilled groups working on the same problem is applicable to school systems dealing with struggling children. Teachers, parents, administrators, doctors, school psychologists, and guidance counselors are among some of the professions working towards the goal of helping the student, though they may perceive different interventions and results as best practice. Further studies of this mechanism have suggested that groups with knowledge differences may not only have different goals, but also use these differences to assert their perceived higher status and insist that their knowledge is better suited than that of other professions to monopolize control over the issue. (Bechky, 2003; Oborn and Dawson 2010). While the current study does not examine interpersonal conflicts between the professions, these differences and authoritative claims are an aspect of professionalization and examples of boundary work.

Boundary Work

One component of professionalization is the distinction between members and nonmembers. To make this demarcation, professions apply certain characteristics to themselves to distinguish what thoughts, actions, practices, etc. make them unique from others. Defining and guarding expertise is essential to the maintenance and expansion of professional influence. Professionals carve out an area of expertise and distinguish it from other professions by creating demarcations between their work and that of similar professionals. Gieryn (1983) describes this

as boundary-work, which attributes characteristics to a certain field, defining what it is, is not, what it does, and why others are not included in its domain. This creates a set of divisions between and definitions of different fields of knowledge. Gieryn's (1983) definition of boundary-work and subsequent studies of boundary-work in different professions provide an outline for operational criteria in this study. First, boundary work must be applying some characteristic to a profession. This includes both applying characteristics to one's own profession and to other professions for contrast. This contrast is another feature of boundary work: it must be done for the purpose of distinction. While this purpose may not be stated, it can still be evident if the characteristics are applied uniquely to a profession, showing that they have some distinct authority over something. While many topics may be discussed in common between professions, boundary-work can be distinguished by unique, differentiating aspects that are stating what a profession is and is not.

Gieryn identifies the motive of professions to engage in boundary work as the pursuit of professional goals. These goals could include academic authority, increased career opportunities, and exclusive use or possession of resources such as funding and influential positions. These goals largely overlap with those of professions, further demonstrating the connection between professionalization and boundary work. Although Gieryn's work focuses on how boundaries impact what is defined as science, both as a discipline and ideology, the same mechanisms can be applied to the process of professionalization. Like academic disciplines, professions, even from the practitioner end, also engage in demarcation and definition as a means of maintaining authority over knowledge and practices.

Gieryn also states that expansion of the field's boundaries, protection of its intellectual territory through monopolization, and protections of autonomy within their profession, are

universal features of professionalism. In this way, these boundaries are not always constructed for academic debate, but rather for increased authority and prestige (Turner, 1974). This is particularly important for practitioner-based professions, as less emphasis is placed on academic debate and more on demonstrating which actions they are best suited to perform.

Authority, status, and trust in their expertise is important for creating and maintaining professional status. Gieryn (1983) mentions status as a motivating factor in performing boundary-work, and further work has emphasized the connections between these three central concepts. Gauchat and Andrews (2018) theorize that boundary-work within professions serve the purpose of simplifying comparisons of professions for various audiences so that they can evaluate the profession's status. Their study on public differentiation between scientific disciplines show that individuals can discern relative expertise and prestige, even without being in the fields themselves. As previously mentioned, perceived expertise is essential to a profession's authority over its sphere of influence. This expertise, shown in the unique traits and practices defined by boundary work, must be discussed in some public manner so that others can discern it. These examples of boundary work help professions maintain their status as distinct professions by demonstrating their unique attributes.

There are several strategies for employing boundary work, when a profession is motivated to create distinctions. This is especially noted in systems of professions in which various professionals are performing similar tasks. Allen's (2000) study on boundary-work within a hospital system suggests that there are three main strategies of boundary-work: taking control, establishing expertise, and identity work. These were observed in nurses' practices and rhetorical devices. "Taking control" refers to the decision to demarcate professions and distinguish one's own profession as unique, rather than allowing others to define it. While

“taking control” referred mostly towards the nurses establishing roles as opposed to physicians or other medical practitioners, the other two strategies are more related to how these roles are established. Identifying what a profession does, what it is best at, what tools it uses, and who uses them is key to demarcating responsibilities and maintaining distinct professional authority over some domain within a professional system. Essentially, if professions do not choose to define themselves in unique ways through boundary work, they risk being overrun by others who chose to do so.

While boundary work may be important, if not essential, to the distinction of an occupation as a profession, it can restrict the effectiveness of the service the profession provides. The issue of boundaries that inadequately inform education and training of professionals is highlighted by Nishikawa (2011). This study of care-related professionals, frames professions that aim to provide advice or care, often referred to as helping professions, as knowledge professions that are limited only in the availability of professional knowledge and institutional barriers that prevent application of this knowledge. Knowledge workers seek to apply expert knowledge to concrete problems, although they may face organizational barriers, such as an emphasis on workshops and further education that may not be the most effective medium to educate professionals on how to better serve clients. Nishikawa (2011) found that collective learning and collaboration had a more positive effect on the level of care that those in helping professionals provide than increased formal education and training.

This suggests that the advanced education that school psychologists and guidance counselors receive may serve more as a professionalization aspect than one that allows school psychologists and guidance counselors to better help students. While school psychologists and guidance counselors now find themselves concerned with professional status, their origin lies in

extracurricular services within the school system. The following sections describe the development of school psychology and guidance counseling before, during, and following professionalization. Through a combination of societal need and specialized tools, both professions rose in influence, currently fitting the above descriptions of professions, despite their recent emergence.

School Psychology

Fagan and Wise (1994) propose that the history of school psychology is divided into two stages, the hybrid years (1890-1969) and the thoroughbred years (1970-on), distinguished by variations in professionalization. The hybrid years consisted of several types of professionals, such as teachers, therapists, and guidance counselors, practicing psychoeducational assessment for special education. School psychology was more of an add-on to their current education and practice. The thoroughbred years contain times of professional development, such as a growth in number of training programs, practitioners, state and national organizations, expansion of literature and research, and further development of guidelines for practice.

The emergence of school psychology was part of a broader social reform in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, particularly that concerned with child welfare (Cohen 1985). These concerns translated into initiative which reshaped the treatment of children through child labor laws, juvenile courts, vocational guidance, and most importantly to school psychology, compulsory schooling (Cohen 1985; Cravens 1985; Siegel & White 1982). As a result of these initiatives, there was increased focus on improving children's lives and an opening for the development of corresponding professions specialized to meet this need. For school psychologists, this opportunity arose from a consequence of compulsory schooling: children with special needs were now attending school when they previously had not (Fagan & Wise 1994).

While the position was filled by other educational professionals at its onset, the field of psychology has made its first steps in colonizing an aspect of the school system. In 1899, Chicago established the first clinic practicing psychology in a public-school system (French 1984). The attachment to the field of psychology was not yet established, though, and the clinic was named the Bureau of Child Study and Pedagogic Investigation and dealt with assessing both learning abilities and physical conditions. The individuals working in these clinics were called examiners, or later Binet-testers, reflecting an early positivist tradition and emphasis on assessment (Kaufman 2000). Throughout the early 1900's, other schools located within large-city education systems followed and installed similar programs (French 1984).

Between 1900 and 1930, child psychology clinics proliferated in a variety of settings, including courts, hospitals, and universities, with psychologists assessing and treating a variety of emotional, behavioral, and learning issues (Fagan and Wise 1994; Wallin 1914). While the presence of these clinics and interest in child psychology grew, another branch of psychology was gaining popularity, one that gave psychologists a further push into the education system. Standardized tests gained greater public acceptance following their use on United States soldiers during the First World War (Fagan and Wise 1994). Alfred Binet's Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and David Weschler's Intelligence Test for Children (WISC) were used increasingly by school professionals and research psychologists (Kaufman 2000) before gaining popularity with the "examiners" working as early school psychologists (Fagan and Wise 1994). With this growth came the realization that these individuals were performing a distinct and unique task and needed corresponding education. In the mid-1920s, several universities such as New York University, Pennsylvania State University, and Ohio State University began offering training programs and recommending classes for psychologists planning on practicing in or researching schools (Fagan

1986). Following these developments, the Great Depression stagnated employment and growth in the field, resulting in little change or development. By 1940, two states, New York and Pennsylvania, were offering state certifications in school psychology (Fagan and Wise 1994), and approximately 500 school psychologists were practicing nationwide (Fagan 1988). While the separate professional identity of school psychologists was making progress, it was not uniform across states.

As a result of the post-war “Baby Boom,” schools were growing in size, as was the need for school professionals (Dunn 1973). This increase in population (and subsequently demand) gave rise to further role definition and professionalization in school psychology. This coincided with changes in the focus of the American Psychological Association (APA). In the mid-1940s APA began to reorganize, involving themselves in the regulation of professional psychology fields (Fagan and Wells 2000). This interest culminated in the 1949 Boulder Conference, a national gathering of psychologists and related professionals. It was held to clarify standards for doctoral training, with a focus on clinical psychology (Raimy 1950). Discussions at this conference strengthened the scientist-practitioner model, insisting that professional psychologists were scientists before practitioners, emphasizing research, and further popularizing doctoral level programs (Devonis 2014). These movements within the field of psychology provided guidelines for professional psychologists, paving the way for accreditation programs. As clinical and counseling psychology began to integrate further with the APA, school psychology would begin to organize their own standards in relation to the APA with hopes of gaining an accreditation program through the organization.

In 1954, the APA organized the Thayer conference to discuss roles, qualifications, and training in school psychology, recognizing the shortage of psychologists in schools (Cutts 1955).

At the time of the conference, there were only about 1,000 school psychologists working as practitioners (Fagan 2005). Following the Thayer conference, disagreements over accreditation domain erupted between the APA and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), of which NASP was a member (Fagan and Wells 2000). School psychology would not receive a doctoral accreditation program until 1970. Master's and specialist level education accreditation remained under the domain of the NCATE, with NASP serving as the accreditor underneath NCATE, as they still are today. At this time, approximately 5,000 school psychologists were practicing nationwide (Fagan 1988). While certification was coming from multiple different organizations, school psychology had made an important step in professionalization, and its numbers were growing. The foundations of a professional identity were present, though not fully implemented, ushering in what Fagan and Wise (1994) call the "Thoroughbred Years."

Fagan and Wise (1994) mark this time in the development of school psychology as one of further establishing symbols of professionalism, such as association growth, credentialing, and literature. The number of school psychologists grew to 10,000 by 1980 and 20,000 by 1988. This spike is largely attributed to the enactment of the Education for All Handicapped Act in 1975, and a subsequent expansion of special education programs. With APA tensions dissipated, NASP saw significant growth with 16,000 members in 1992, up from 856 in 1969 and 3,385 in 1978. In 1989, the National Certification System in School Psychology (NCSP) was initiated, which included practicum hours, Master's in school psychology requirements, and a national examination developed by the Educational Testing Service. Simultaneously, *School Psychology Review* and *School Psychology Quarterly* began publishing articles on practice and research, alongside several books with guidelines and theories for practice. In 1990, the enactment of the

Americans with Disabilities Act again directed public and governmental attention to special education, consequently increasing the need for school psychologists (Fagan and Wise 1994).

After the development of much of its professional structure, school psychology continued to grow as a discipline. According to a 2014-2015 study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, 44,210 full-time psychologists employed by schools, but possibly higher with part time employment (Institute of Educational Sciences 2015). NASP currently reports approximately 25,000 members. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 again showed how education legislature affects the prevalence of mental health professionals in schools, sparking more interest in and demand for school psychologists and explaining a rise in numbers (Ball, Pierson, and McIntosh 2011). With its professional shell built, current focuses of school psychology center around bettering practice, increasing methodological rigor of interventions, and distributing new knowledge through journals and professional organizations. (Burns, Kingbeil, Ysseldyke, and Petersen-Brown 2012).

New interventions and practices were being suggested, but school psychology still uses many of its old tools. While the practice has been increasingly critiqued, intelligence testing and cognitive profile analysis, which urges school psychologists to make placement decisions based on strengths and weaknesses of various cognitive assessments, are still common in school psychology (McGill, Dombrowski, and Canivez 2018). In an attempt to standardized diagnoses and interventions, these measures emphasize standardized scores rather than the practitioner's interpretations. Despite being presumed reliable, the reliability and validity of these tests was called into question, with replicated studies showing high potential for confirmation bias and clinical error (Macmann and Barnett 1997). Still, about half of school psychologists rely on this type of assessment alone (Benson et al. 2019). Others use a variety of newer methods that

combine quantitative assessment with subjective interpretation and cultural sensitivity (McGill, Dombrowski, and Canivez 2018). This departure from purely quantitative, standardized methods opens the possibility of role confusion in school psychology. As they take on new tools and methods, their field may be crossing into new territories, possibly those already staked by other related professions.

Guidance Counseling

Similar to school psychology, guidance counseling was initiated, influenced, and popularized by several historical events, legislations, and trends in education and the treatment of children. The concerns for child welfare, rise in specialized education, and corresponding legislation that increased the presence of school psychologists also increased the presence of guidance counselors (Gysbers & Henderson 2000). While the professional development of school psychology and guidance counseling were influenced by many of the same factors, there are features unique to guidance counseling and their practice. These features arise from several factors, including guidance counseling's emphasis on vocational training and school psychology's position within the broader field of psychology. The unique elements of the history of guidance counseling and its professionalization are detailed below.

Guidance counseling began to informally emerge in the late 1800s as a response to the Industrial Revolution (Gysbers 1990). Vocational preparation was essential to supply a growing workforce, creating the need for individuals trained to offer this guidance. (Baker & Gerler 2004; Sciarra 2004; Gysbers & Henderson 2000). Like school psychology, guidance counseling was also precipitated by child welfare reforms of the late 19th and early twentieth centuries (Cohen 1985). In addition to supplying a workforce, there was also public concern about broadening opportunities for students and preparing them for a more successful life (Gysbers 1990). The

earliest guidance counselors found their way into schools under the title of “vocationist,” typically comprised of teachers with extra duties of aiding students in vocational and educational pursuits. Under what is termed the services model, early guidance counselors functioned as career guides, suggesting classes, academic paths, and career possibilities.

Like school psychology, the popularization and acceptance of standardized testing after World War I opened opportunities for guidance counselors to use science-backed tools that the public and research communities accepted vocational assessments, which measured interest, abilities, and aptitude gained favor in the profession (Romano, Goh, and Herting Wahl 2005). This was often a collaborative effort with early school psychologists performing intelligence tests, as there was interest in suggesting careers by perceived intelligence level and subject-specific academic tests. There were other practical elements to vocational assessment, including inventorying students’ specific skills and work experiences. While popular in schools prior, vocational assessments gained increased utility during the 1930s, when the Great Depression spawned a need to assess worker abilities and aptitudes and to provide emotional support for young people in a time of crisis (Myrick 1997). The increase in distressed young people, as well as the popularization of humanism within guidance counseling, created a new element to the guidance counseling role: mental health assistance.

Although guidance counseling was present in American schools for decades, it was not until the mid-20th century that the field began to grow and establish itself as a serious and distinct profession. This development was marked by the introduction of a national professional organization and corresponding professional journal. In 1952, guidance counseling reached a milestone in the process of professionalization, with the formation of the first and current national organization for the field: the ASCA. Without the competing organizational dynamics

that plagued school psychology during this stage, guidance counseling was able to quickly progress in forming symbols of professionalization. Shortly after the formation of the ASCA, in 1954, the ASCA published the first issue of an exclusive guidance counseling journal, *The School Counselor*.

The 1950s also saw historical events that would provide further justification for the presence of guidance counselors in schools. In the late 1950s, schools began to more heavily emphasize science, technology, and math, largely because of the Russian 1957 Sputnik Launch (Romano, Goh, and Herting Wahl 2005). Cold War tensions fueled a race towards technological superiority, a race which the federal government was willing to fund." In this landscape of new and complicated career choices, more guidance counselors were needed to help students advance academically, particularly in rigorous STEM fields (Wittmer 2000). A combination of legislations in the late 1950s to 1960s, such as the National Defense Act of 1958 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, provided large allotments of funds to train guidance counselors in promoting careers in science and technology (Beesley 2004; Gysbers and Henderson 2001; Paisley and Borders 1995; Wittmer 2000). As a result, the population of guidance counselors grew, as did its professional organization and journal. In 1967, the organization added a second, more specialized guidance counseling journal, *Elementary School Guidance and Counseling*, to keep up with the increasing demand for school counseling literature (Bauman et al. 2003).

In the 1970s, lack of enrollment and funding in public schools led to a decrease in guidance counselor positions (Baker 2000; Beesley 2004; Gysbers 1990). It also motivated the profession to clarify its role and positive contribution to the school system, as guidance counselors were often seen as a marginal, less essential member of the educational system (Baker

2000; Beesley 2004). While guidance counselors had previously justified their position by pointing to the obvious need for new vocational guidance, the historical events and trends that created their positions were behind them and fading. The profession needed to focus on clearly defined goals and positions to make a solid case for their place in schools. During this period, research in developmental-based guidance programs proliferated (Chandler 2006; Green & Keys 2001). This trend continued into the 1980s, where developmental analysis broadened guidance counseling's professional authority by combining both vocational and psychological principles and interventions (Chandler 2006).

As varying state prerequisites and assumptions of previous experience as an educator waning in the 1990s, guidance counselors began developing their own certification system, which follows a similar model to that of school psychology (Hatch and Bowers 2002). Ambiguity in relation to the purpose of a school counselor was still prominent at this stage, paving the way for the ASCA National Model and national certification for school counselors in 2001 (ASCA 2003). This model specified a support role for administrators and other educational professionals, further emphasis on developmental studies, and a clarified purpose of helping students reach individual academic and career goals and intervening in times of personal crisis that affect student's learning. It also introduced the requirement of a Masters degree and practicum hours in school counseling, although states still allow teachers to obtain certifications for practice without this requirement. ASCA certification also introduced the requirement of the Educational Testing Service-developed Professional School Counselor PRAXIS exam.

While they developed their credentialing system later, guidance counselors have a larger presence than school psychologists. According to a 2015-2016 study by the U.S. Department of Education, there are approximately 114,350 full-time guidance counselors employed by schools

nationwide, but this figure does not include those who are employed part-time (IES 2016). Both professions have grown from their inception as additional teacher responsibilities. As they find themselves growing, though, the two professions may find their boundaries encroaching on one another. With efforts from school psychologists to deemphasize hardline, positivist testing and efforts from guidance counselors to integrate psychology into their practice, it is possible that negotiation of responsibilities in a school could arise. Even after the majority of professional structures were developed, the process of professionalization and identity-building may not stagnate and could take the form of a negotiation of new boundaries.

The purpose of this study is to examine the boundary work of guidance counselors and school psychologists after they emerged as professions with corresponding professional structures. This study examines editorials from the flagship journals of each profession, assessing whether they performed boundary work and if so, what its characteristics are. It is expected that these editorials will contain boundary work, specifically that demarcating school psychologists and guidance counselors, as they are similar in their backgrounds and practices.

Methods

Data for this study was taken from editorials of the main NASP and ASCA flagship journals: *School Psychology Review*, *The School Counselor*, and *Professional School Counseling*. *School Psychology Review* began publishing in 1972. The journal published editorials quarterly from the point of its founding until 2003. After this year, editorials decrease in number, being published once or twice a year. After 2010, editorials became even more sporadic, but at least one editorial is typically included in each volume. The school psychology journal published 148 editorials between 1972 and 2020. The guidance counseling journals published a total of 224 editorials between 1953 and 2020. Most editorials were composed by the

journal's editor, although guest editors composed the editorials for sporadic special issues. *Professional School Counseling* was established in 1997. This associated journal was published under the title *The School Counselor* from its founding in 1953 to the establishment of the current title. *The School Counselor* published editorials quarterly. *Professional School Counseling* published approximately five editorials a year from 1997 to 2003, after which it typically only includes editorials for special issues (typically once a year). The entire universe of editorials for both professional journals was analyzed in this study, totaling 372 editorials.

These editorials were selected as a proxy for a statement on the profession's goals, focuses, and interests at the time of publication, as they are the flagship journals for the major professional organizations for school psychology and guidance counseling. Editorials can communicate messages from their sponsoring organization, mention movements and changes within the field, feature special issues on popular topics, and feature articles that communicate goals and proposed focuses for the profession. The articles provide chronological data for historical comparison of each professions' boundary development and negotiation. Each editorials may or may not contain boundary work, as they sometimes contain information that is unrelated to professional boundaries. Since boundary work is often made public, the public's knowledge of these boundaries may help increase their power and influence (Siebert 2020). Thus, it is expected that, as the public voice for each professional journal, editorials will contain boundary work. Instances of boundary-work in the data were identified by using Gieryn's (1983) definition of professional aspects that indicate boundary work: practitioners, methods, stock of knowledge, values, and work organizations. Boundary work occurs when professionals use their acquired expert knowledge to defend their claim to one of these aspects, and the editorials were coded as such.

Editorials containing boundary work were further analyzed in two qualitative ways: temporally and thematically. First, editorials were analyzed for themes, and the themes of the two professions were compared. These themes were then analyzed to see if there was a change in themes over time, within each profession and when compared to each other. A spreadsheet was used to track each editorial, noting the journal title, year of publication, adherence to boundary-work criteria, and what theme the boundary work contained.

This project compares historical case studies of boundary work in two emerging mental health professions within the school system, guidance counselors and school psychologists. Comparative historical methods use systemic comparison of cases to isolate differences and similarities in two or more cases (Mahoney 2004). The comparison of these cases allows us to locate and describe the mechanisms under which these cases operate. Comparative historicists use the histories of these cases as their data, akin to field notes, survey responses, or interview transcripts. The comparison of school psychologists' and guidance counselors' boundary work in this study focuses on the different roles that each profession has claimed authority over time, in the context of a developing and changing educational system. These emphases can change as each profession demarcates responsibilities as a sign of rising professionalism. The goal of this analysis is to determine if boundary work has occurred, if or how professional domains have changed, and if there is a temporal association to any of these factors.

To measure mechanisms for professionalization in these two cases, this study will use a cluster of methods derived from John Stuart Mill's "Method of Agreement and Difference" (1843/1974), namely typological theory (George and Bennett, 2005). This method of coding qualitative data examines similarities and differences in the cases by noting frequent attributes and examining other cases for these attributes (Goertz and Mahoney 2012). The attributes in this

study include themes of what distinction is being made in the boundary work being performed. These attributes can then be reduced to common themes, producing a classification system, or typology, for the dependent variable. The typologies are composed of different, but thematically relevant attributes into a broader type (Becker 1998). Qualitative researchers use typological theory to create typologies that detail the cases' values on independent and dependent variables, with the independent variables in this case being the two professions and the dependent variables being the discovered themes. These typologies are pulled from the content of the editorials being analyzed, and may contain overlapping elements. This type of coding, known as "fuzzy-set analysis" (Goertz and Mahoney 2012:166) does not construct sharp boundaries between typologies and is intended to give a gradual and fluid description of the data. Since this analysis is intended to describe the transitional trends in boundary work, this approach to coding provides the best format for providing nuanced results. By isolating these factors, we can determine which types of boundary work are present in the cases and their level of influence on professional boundaries within the school system.

This study's analysis combines typological theory with standard qualitative coding that constructs sets and boundaries surrounding codes. Similarly to qualitative comparative analysis, popularized by Charles Ragin (1987), this analysis searches for differences and commonalities among the two professions' development and labels them by the two processes of emerging professionals described in similar studies, the specific boundaries being negotiated, and specific efforts to legitimize authority over certain issues (Becker, 1998).

This study borrows its coding from the findings of Jennings' and Evans's (2020) study on professional demarcation of clinicians and foster/residential care workers. Findings from Jennings and Evans are particularly applicable to this study, as both examine professionalization

and role demarcation in sets of knowledge workers who handle child and adolescent mental health. Building on Gieryn's (1983) statements of boundary work, this study examines clinicians and foster/residential care worker's different roles in treating child and adolescent self-harm. Additionally, relevant to this study, foster/residential care workers are also in the process of asserting a professional identity.

Results from interviews and focus groups with residential/foster care workers reveal two central processes in residential/foster care work's attempt to emerge as a profession: contestation of expertise and legitimation of professional identity. Contestation of expertise describes boundary work that defines which roles are appropriate for each profession, based on their knowledge. Legitimation of professional identity involves the actions professionals take to establish their profession as a serious authority over some issue. This can include attending professional meetings or the establishment of professional organization or qualifications. These processes are used in this study for coding developments in the professionalization and role demarcation of school psychologists and guidance counselors as they have developed throughout history. This will determine if these principle processes occurred in the professionalization of school psychologists and guidance counselors and will detail the boundary work of designating issues to each profession based on their expertise. By analyzing editorials from the flagship journals of NASP and ASCA, this study will be able to examine possible shifts in professional boundaries and focuses over time.

Results

Using Gieryn's (1983) indicators of boundary work in professions as criteria, analysis of the editorials shows that approximately 69% of editorials in *School Psychology Review* contain boundary work. Similarly, 72% of editorials in the guidance counseling journals, *The School*

Counselor and *Professional School Counseling* contain boundary work. This pattern is relatively stable over time for each journal. This confirms that editorials serve as reasonable data for further analysis of boundary work.

Thematic analysis of the boundary work in these editorials show that much of the boundary work between the journals is similar and has not differed much over time. The only exception to this is both professions' new, contemporary focus on social advocacy and community activism. The professions' create different professional structures, such as organizations and certification systems, that are distinct for their profession but generally have the same professional structure. Not only are the general themes of the boundary work in each journal similar, but they also overlap in the specific criteria that each profession claims as esoteric knowledge: a background in developmental psychology and science-backed intervention strategies. Thus, analysis finds that guidance counselors and school psychologists are not drawing boundaries between each other but rather between themselves and other common alters, namely teachers and administrators. The similarities between boundary work includes claims of the same base of knowledge, the same alters to whom they draw boundaries between, and current changing interests.

Professional Structures

Professional structures include organizations, publications, training programs certifications, accreditations, and other structures that unite professionals under a common label. While many of the professional structures were constructed by the time that each profession's journal was first published, existing structures are emphasized in the data and some structures are defined and discussed. Editorials in both the school psychology and guidance counseling journals emphasize their respective connections to their professional organizations in their first

issue (Guidubaldi 1972a; Embree 1953). The induction of *School Psychology Review* was introduced as a response to NASP members' desires for a professional journal summarizing new school psychology research, with the first editorial stating, "Support . . . , was provided by NASP members who responded to a survey conducted last year. Ninety-six percent of the respondents (approximately 25% of the NASP membership) indicated interest in a journal that would provide broad coverage of relevant articles through a time-saving format" (Guidubaldi 1972a:2). Similarly, the first article of *The School Counselor* addresses readers as "ASCA members" and includes a thank you to ASCA officers, governors, committee chairmen, and members (Embree, 1953).

In following issues, journal editorials continue to state connections to their respective professional organizations through mentions of the explicit connection, inclusion of ASCA and NASP standards for practice (ex. Brantley 1977; Felix 1963) topics and discussions at ASCA and NASP conferences (ex. Sheridan & D'Amato 2004; Sink 1999a), and later organization-based certification and accreditation standards (Elliott 1989a; Shapiro 1991; Harrison 2000; Brott 2002; Kuranz 2003; Cole 1990). Additionally, school psychology editorials distinguish NASP from APA, noting the difference between school psychology practitioners and school psychology professors and researchers (Elliott 1987). This distinction forms the focus of *School Psychology Review*: applied research that is intended to be used by practicing school psychologists to better their work in schools.

During the time period that the editorials were drawn from, each profession developed national certification standards for professionals. Each profession begins by discussing their organization's standards for education in their field, before discussing testing measures used for certification. As professional structures are a major component of professionalization and

boundary work, it was expected that these movements would be mentioned. This further solidifies the notion that editorials are representative of boundary work, as it is clear from the brief historical overview of these professions that they represent major steps in constructing a unique, professional identity. While mention of professional structures is expected in the analysis of any profession's boundary work, some features of the editorials studied are more specific to school psychology and guidance counseling and are less easily predicted. In addition to mention of professional structures, school psychologists and guidance counselors also emphasize other aspects that define them as distinct professionals. Implicitly, this boundary work also discusses what other professions are not.

Knowledge of Developmental Psychology

Educational background is an important tool in professional boundary work that emphasizes some type of unique, expert knowledge. Both school psychologists and guidance counselors claim a background knowledge of developmental psychology as their esoteric knowledge within the school system. This, they believe, puts them in a position to better understand children and advocate in their best interest. While both professions claim a knowledge base in developmental psychology, believing that scientific studies on the psychological development of children is necessary for positive student outcomes, their application of this knowledge is slightly different. While school psychologists claim cognitive aspects of developmental psychology as their esoteric knowledge, guidance counselors focus on socioemotional aspects of developmental psychology. Cognitive aspects of developmental psychology view children's development through learning and thinking processes, while socioemotional aspects of developmental psychology focus on emotional regulation and development of relationships with others. While this changes the specific mental health problems

and the tools that school psychologists and guidance counselors deal with and use, they are still applying information from the same field.

This knowledge base is made clear early on in each professions' editorials, with school psychologists mentioning it within the first year of publication where the editor praises the feature article on cognitive developmental psychology and encourages the use of an "educational-developmental view of man as a new approach to school psychology" (Guidubaldi 1972c). *The School Counselor* first mentions psychology as a base of know it in its sixth year of publication, stating that the best guidance counselors' behavior "should reflect his enthusiasm for his work arid his belief in the fundamental educational-psychological-vocational-sociological principles that are the foundation of our profession" (Camp 1958). Later, the connection to developmental psychology is made clearer, with a 1962 editorial promoting the article "Developmental Guidance in the Elementary School" (Felix 1962; Miller 1962). Further examination of the mentioned article explicitly demonstrates the connection of guidance counseling to developmental psychology, stating, "careful study of the child's developmental history and his present physical, mental and emotional needs is paramount in understanding and guiding individual growth. This is the meaning of the developmental concept in elementary guidance" (Miller, 1962). By promoting articles that advocate for a developmental approach to guidance counseling, editorials can use their platform to suggest ideological and conceptual tools for practitioners to use. This early mention of children's mental and emotional development functions as a claim of esoteric knowledge as guidance counselors back up their practice with their education in psychological theory.

The focus on developmental psychology is ongoing and is mentioned throughout the history of both professions' editorials. Both guidance counseling and school psychology journals

continue to claim developmental psychology principles as esoteric knowledge, and the tie to developmental psychology becomes more specific, with the mention of educational tools that correspond with this field of knowledge. Though both professions are based in developmental psychology, the difference in focus affects the tools that each profession claims as their distinct practice. School psychologists claim tools that are based in assessing cognitive and behavioral milestones and assisting students vary from typical development. Guidance counselors use more humanistic tools based in socioemotional studies of development, though their early years contain some cognitive developmental assessment. Humanism here refers to the humanist tradition of teaching or therapy, which is person-centered, emphasizes unconditional positive regard, and encourages processes that lead to self actualization (Cole 1988; Baker 1998). While more interpersonal, the practice of this type of psychology, and subsequently the practice of guidance counselors, is still based in science and psychological research, emphasizing guidance counseling's tie to empiricism.

School psychologists focus on cognitive developmental tools, mainly assessments. School psychologists use a variety of testing to gauge cognitive development and develop interventions. They have an emphasis on assessment, mentioning pitfalls, alternatives, and benefits to the practice. These tools include assessing developmental level of students through intelligence tests (Grimley 1976b; Braden 1990; Harrison 1999; von der Embse and Kilgus 2018) School psychologists also use developmental psychology to assess behavioral disorders, noting what sociocognitive level students should attain for their age and implementing interventions when milestones are not achieved (Watson, Gresham, and Skinner 2001). Their focus is largely on students who exhibit atypical development. This includes developmental analysis of general learning delays (Grimley 1976a), gifted placement (Grimley 1976b), general

conduct disorders (Shapiro 1993) and hyperactivity disorders (Grimley 1976c; Shapiro 1994a; Power 2009a). This emphasis continued into the 21st century with editors stating in 2001 that school psychology research is focused on, “the application of functional assessment procedures within the general classroom setting, with academic behaviors, with low frequency behaviors, and with children without developmental delays” (Watson, Gresham, and Skinner 2001). In addition to testing, school psychologists also mention cognitive bias modification therapy as an esoteric tool (Clarizio 1979). This intervention is based in the cognitive domain of developmental psychology, furthering their connection to this realm of knowledge. Their goal is to use these principles to help struggling students, largely those with learning disabilities.

Guidance counselors focus less on quantitative assessment and take a more humanistic approach to their application of developmental psychology. During early years, before school psychologists became a larger force, many guidance counselors performed aptitude tests, which were based in developmental principles. A 1959 editorial *from the School Counselor* states, “The goal is to have every child tested for aptitudes in the seventh to ninth grade. One aim is to uncover abilities that should not be wasted” (Camp 1959a:26). While this type of testing is similar to that later performed by school psychologists, it reflects the difference in scope of school psychologists’ and guidance counselors’ work.

Later guidance counselors developed a niche of applying socioemotional principles of developmental psychology to their practice. Guidance counselors use these tools in a broader way than school psychologists, emphasizing that they interact with all students, not just those with disabilities or disorders. Their tools, though, still derive from developmental psychology. For example, a 1990 editorial of *The School Counselor* highlights an article which provides advice for developmental-based guidance counseling programs (Cole 1990; McLaughlin 1990).

The article highlights the importance of programs with this focus, stating “Such a guidance program, then, addresses the developmental needs of all students, is put into practice, and includes a system for collecting credible evidence showing that the objectives appropriate for each student have been attained” (McLaughlin, 1990). By choosing to feature this article, the editorial emphasizes that guidance counseling sees a developmental focus as part of their esoteric knowledge. Despite seeming less science-based due to its interpersonal, humanistic nature, the practice of guidance counselors is still rooted in the empirical base of developmental psychology.

Though they attempt to distance themselves from the therapist title (Cole 1986), guidance counselors discuss talk therapy (Capuzzi 1981), group and peer counseling (Cole, 1990), and relationship-building (Capuzzi 1982a; Capuzzi 1982b; Baker 1996) as important application of their developmental background. Specifically, they state their expert role in helping students with planning their future, managing stress, enhancing students’ independence and positive regard, and handling emotional or relationship difficulties. This continued into the 21st century, with the editor of *Professional School Counseling* stating in 2001 that high-quality, comprehensive guidance programs are focused on developmental studies and featuring the article, “Maintaining and Enhancing the Developmental Focus in School Counseling Programs” (Hughey 2001; Paisley 2001). Like other featured articles of this nature, this article suggests that focusing on developmental psychology can improve the efficacy of guidance counseling practice (Paisley 2001).

While their application of developmental psychology focuses on different domains of the field, this similar background is important in distinguishing school psychologists and guidance counselors from other school professionals. By claiming the same base of knowledge, school psychologists and guidance counselors group themselves as a distinct realm within the school

system. Although they distinguish themselves from each other in the application of developmental psychology, they both draw their validity from this field, specifically its position as a science. By basing their practice in empirical research in developmental psychology, both professions are able to claim their practice as science- and research-based, implying that others within the school system do not have this base. This forms guidance counselors and school psychologists as a type of united front against those that they draw their main boundaries between: teachers and administrators.

Commonality in Definition of the Alter

Contrary to much of the research on professionalization and boundary work, school psychology and guidance counseling do not demarcate much of their expertise from each other, despite being closely related in practice and expertise. Instead, they draw from the same field of knowledge, only differing in their area of application. In these editorials neither school psychologists nor guidance counselors mention each other. Rather, both professions draw explicit boundaries between educators and administrators and their respective profession, contrasting themselves to these professions. These boundaries contain two main themes: emphasis on science and an individualized approach to working with children.

As previously mentioned, both guidance counselors and school psychologists position their professions as the science profession within the school. They claim that this base provides them with empirically tested research and intervention strategies that creates and informs their practice. This claim is explicitly stated and reflected in emphasis on research-based article submissions of both professions' journals. This distinction is seen early in the development of each profession and is a consistent theme throughout the history of both professions' editorials.

This claim was echoed in several ways throughout the journals' histories. In 1967, the guest editorial introduced a special issue titled *From Theory to Practice*, authored by the executive director of the American Personnel and Guidance Association, a larger organization of which the ASCA was a branch. It expresses a desire for a focus on science and research:

Throughout the full series, one is constantly reminded of the need for vastly increased attention to the assessment of counseling outcomes. Good will and good working relationships are simply not enough to justify the counselor's role in the human development arena. Increasingly, counselors must devote attention to research and evaluation of counseling—its effectiveness and its outcomes. (Dugan 1967:259)

These desires were met, with increasing focus on research- and science-based assessments and interventions in editorials for both school psychology (ex. Clarizo 1979; Knoff 1986; Stone 2001; Volpe and Suldo 2014) and guidance counseling (ex. Hansen 1967; Carroll 1977; Hughey and Akos 2005). The research-focus of school psychology is exemplified in a 1992 *School Psychology Review* editorial, in which the editor emphasizes school psychologists' role as practitioners with research-based interventions. In this editorial, this boundary is represented by a changing structure within the journal: the inclusion of a new section of articles for future issues. The editor introduces a new call for papers on applied research described below:

At the back end of the journal you will find an article which I hope will serve as a stimulus for practitioners to consider submitting some of their intervention efforts to the Review for possible publication. This is a section which I have promised in previous editorials entitled, "Research into Practice." The article I have provided can serve as a prototype for the types of article I would like to see appearing in subsequent issues of the *Review*. (Shapiro 1992:5)

The definition of school psychologists and guidance counselors as science-guided practitioners of psychology signifies common elements of their identity, but it also demarcated them from other professionals within the school system, namely teachers and administrators.

These boundaries also state how school psychologists' and guidance counselors' backgrounds put them in a more valuable position than others in the school system. These distinctions are made evident throughout both of the journals' histories. In the first issue of *School Psychology Review*, the editor states:

Several investigators are recommending that school psychologists devise services that are grounded in developmental and social psychology principles. Intervention systems that utilize paraprofessionals and peer influence and others that are legitimately ensconced under the heading of curriculum are being vigorously pursued. (Guidubaldi 1972b:2)

This describes school psychologists as adjacent to the main professionals in the school. This sentiment is echoed in other editorials. For example, 1994 editorial featured suggestions that school psychologists could aid administrators in reforming school policies and decisions (Shapiro 1994b). A later editorial emphasizes the importance of cooperation of school psychologists and special education professionals:

The role of school psychologists is to work with other professionals in the school using their scientific background- school psychology and special education professionals can develop data-based estimates of what constitutes "acceptable progress" for students with learning disabilities (LD) to use in informing policy and practice. (Stone 2001:463)

Later editorials also mention this boundary, labelling school psychologists as consultants to teachers who have students with learning disabilities (Power 2009a), suggesting that they could help with homework design (Power 2009b), and provide general advice to teachers and administrators (von der Embrose and Kilgus 2018).

Early guidance counseling editorials also emphasize the value of their profession within the school system. A 1959 editorial describes guidance counselors superior position in stopping juvenile delinquency and social disturbances within the school:

As specialized personnel on-the-job in elementary and secondary schools throughout the country they share the responsibility of helping stem the tide of juvenile delinquency. They are in a unique position to assume leadership in this area. [...] Assiduous pursuance of guidance goals will aid in the prevention of much of the hostile acting-out behavior of our disturbed youth. (Camp, 1959b:22)

Guidance counselor leadership, the editor argues, would allow schools to meet the needs of parents and families affected by this problem, stating that their background provides them unique insight. The emphasis on guidance counselors and school psychologists as necessary paraprofessionals with a role to guide teachers and administrators is echoed throughout the history of both professions' journals. Hansen (1967) directly states the need for teachers and administrators to communicate and have a working relationship with guidance counselors for optimal student outcomes. Others state that guidance counselors deliver services not only to students and parents but also to teachers and administrators, particularly in the area of "systems intervention and program planning, development, and management" (Capuzzi and Noeth 1984:203). This boundary continues throughout the history of the journal, with Cole (1992) stating that guidance counselors serve as student advocates when other professionals have different focuses. Bryan and Holcomb-McCoy (2011) again emphasize the importance of collaborative work in their editorial.

A common knowledge base in the science of developmental psychology also creates another boundary between school psychologists/guidance counselors and teachers/administrators: individualized vs. nonindividualized approaches to assisting students. School psychologists' and guidance counselors' focus on development causes them to focus on assessing individual variations in learning and behavior, compare students' development on cognitive and socioemotional domains, and intervene in specialized ways. In contrast, they see administrators as focusing largely on organizational and institutional movements, which affect

students but do not always involve individualized interaction with them. Teachers, on the other hand, do interact with students, but largely on an aggregate format; they focus on an entire class rather than each individual student. In this way, school psychologists and guidance counselors define themselves as the true student advocates and helping professionals within the school system. This is exemplified in a 1993 editorial of *The School Counselor* which emphasizes the importance of guidance counselor's individualized approach to solving student issues:

A skilled school counselor can make a difference in a young person's life as few others in the school building do. No else in the school knows as many resources, talks to parents as often, or is seen totally in the helping role. (Cole 1993:163)

School psychology editorials echo this sentiment. A 1972 editorial makes a bold assessment of the value of school psychologists, stating in the editorial that "no other profession is in a better position to improve the quality of life in our society on such a large scale" (Guidubaldi 1972b:2).

These boundaries distinguish guidance counselors and school psychologists from the rest of the professions in the school system, though they still recognize their importance. Administrators make institutional decisions, and teachers interact with students for longer periods of time than school psychologists or guidance counselors. These are vital functions within a school system, and both guidance counselors and school psychologists believe that their scientific input could better these practices. Both professions suggest that administrators and educators could better serve students if they were advised by each profession. School psychologists emphasize their focus on assisting students with special needs for whom a standardized approach will not work as one important distinction in this category, and suggest that their knowledge on these issues should be consulted when making administrative and classroom decisions. This claim appears early in *School Psychology Review* editorials and

persists throughout the journal's development (ex. Kupisch 1978; Shapiro 1994a; Akin-Little, Little, and Gresham 2004); Burns 2015). Guidance counselors describe their emotional support role and personal relationships with students as an important insight that, combined with their emphasis on research-based interventions, would improve student outcomes. Like the school psychology editorials, editorials from the school counseling journal display this early on in development, and the theme persists throughout later editorials (ex. Peterson 1970; Capuzzi and Noeth 1984; Sink 2011).

School psychologists' and guidance counselors' individualized developmental approach leads them to designate themselves as student advocates who bring scientific information and results from sessions with students to administrators and teachers. They believe that this input would help administrators make more student-focused initiatives and legislation and would help teachers base their education in psychological principles. Overall, school psychologists and guidance counselors see themselves as helping professions that focus on individual students' needs more than any other profession within the school system.

Expanding Boundaries into Community

While ties to professional structures, emphasis on developmental psychology, and differentiation between themselves and administrators and teachers are still present in later editorials, new traits and focuses are applied to each profession in recent times. Starting in the late 1990's and continuing into the early 21st century, both school psychologists and guidance counselors began describing themselves as agents for social change. They begin to mention social issues, such as racism, homophobia, community violence, and interventions for mental health issues including autism and ADHD outside of learning assessments and school accommodations. This additional role is described as that of a community advocate, where

school psychologists and guidance counselors see their developmental background and individualized approach as essential for making changes outside of the school system.

While the movement from the school to the community may be more subtle in previous examples, some editorials explicitly state the goal and importance of expanding their services into the community. For example, Power (2003) writes an editorial in *School Psychology Review* titled “Promoting Children’s Mental Health: Reform Through Interdisciplinary and Community Partnerships,” clearly stating a shift in boundaries towards community interaction. Power’s editorial suggests that school psychologists would be better equipped to assist students if they considered multiple systems outside of the school setting in their interventions, stating the need for “the coordination of multiple systems of care in the community, including the educational, health, mental health, child welfare, recreational, and faith-based institutions” (Power 2003:13). He also emphasizes the growing need for school psychologists to partner with community stakeholders to perform collaborative participatory action research. This theme is still present, with school psychologists suggesting that engagement in social justice and community work as late as 2020 (García Vázquez et al. 2020)

Guidance counseling editorials express a similar shift in boundaries towards working with community actors and an expanding definition towards that of a community advocate. For example, a 1999 editorial, titled “Reflections for the Future of School Counseling,” proposes that a shift towards a broader perspective is required for guidance counselors to manage the “ever-increasing and insurmountable societal and familial problems that impact the quality of education and our work with students” (Sink, 1999b:ii). The editor then highlights articles that exemplify this system approach, which include topics such as multisystemic approaches to counseling, collaboration with school-to-work systems, and fostering community collaboration

and partnerships. These suggestions did, in fact, reflect the future of guidance counseling, as subsequent editorials continued to state this boundary. A later *Professional School Counseling* editorial emphasizes that the role of the guidance counselor is changing (Hughey 2002). The editor calls for the profession to adapt by quoting a 2000 article from the journal: "The reconceptualization of the school counselor's role as a leader and change agent- advancing school, community, and family collaboration- is essential" (Bemack 2000:300). This expanding boundary and emphasis on community interaction continues throughout the editorial's history, with mentions of community engagement in 2020. This editorial calls for, "university-family-community partnerships, use of child-teacher relationship training, and strategies for establishing a culturally sustaining comprehensive school counseling program," directly stating the profession's expanding involvement at the community level (Foxy and Lewis 2020:2).

As community partners, school psychologists and guidance counselors believe their perceived role in advising teachers and administrators could be expanded to advise others that hold influential positions in the community, although they do not mention what specific role or profession these individuals hold, often referring to them and community stakeholders or community organizations. At the heart of this change is an expanding boundary of where guidance counselors and school psychologists can use their esoteric knowledge to create positive change. Originally based in schools, school psychologists and guidance counselors now state that their roles and background are uniquely suited to advise community-level change in various social justice issues. Again, they use their base in developmental psychology as a defining demarcation between themselves and whoever else may be acting in the community on these issues.

Discussion

The inclusion of professional structures in the editorials were expected, as these are major features of professional boundary work. The lack of differentiation and demarcation between school psychologists and guidance counselors, however, contradicts assumptions of the theory on professions and boundary work. The two professions claim the same knowledge base as their esoteric knowledge: developmental psychology. Although they focus on different domains of this field, school psychologists on cognitive development and guidance counselors on socioemotional development, both rely on their background in developmental psychology and its position as a science to claim authority over issues within the school system. This unites them within a category outside of other professionals within the school system, specifically teachers and administrators who both school psychologists and guidance counselors mention in the editorials.

Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of this boundary work.

Table 1. Qualitative Characteristics of the Boundary Work of School Psychologists and Guidance Counselors.

	School Psychology	Guidance Counseling
Professional Structures	Training programs, ETS-based accreditation, NASP, <i>SQR</i>	Training programs, ETS-based accreditation, ASCA, <i>TSC/PSC</i>
Knowledge Base in Developmental Psychology	Cognitive/Behavioral: CBM, IQ testing, IEPs, special education placement	Social/Emotional: Humanistic interventions, UPR, self actualization, career and post-secondary advice
Individualized and Scientific Approach to Student Issues	Psychological focus on the individual, empirically-tested interventions for students with more severe issues/differences (dyslexia, ADHD, autism)	Psychological focus on the individual, empirically-tested interventions for broader issues (future planning, stress, bullying)
Teachers and Administration as Focal Alters	Advisors to teachers and admin, true advocates for students	Advisors to teachers and admin, helping professionals for students

As both school psychology and guidance counseling are emerging professions often seen as auxiliary to education, this partnership may be an effort to create a greater impact and gain greater respect within the school system. As guidance counselors and school psychologists exist in small numbers within a school, this united front may be an effort to gain influence over the large number of teachers and the prescribed authority of administrators. Administrators have authority in that they make institutional decisions, and teachers have authority in their sheer number within the school system, leaving school psychologists and guidance counselors in a more marginal position with limited authority. School psychologists and guidance counselors may not have drawn strong boundaries between each other yet because they cannot gain or maintain influence within the school system if they separate themselves more. They may not yet be at the stage to afford losing professional progress by alienating one another, forming a united front in order to solidify their professional status within the school system.

Additionally, the boundaries drawn between school psychologists/guidance counselors and teachers may be an artifact of the professions' development. While administrators are intrinsically separated from school psychologists and guidance counselors in that they have less interaction with students, teachers are more similar in practice. Boundaries may be drawn between administrators because of their difference in focus, but the strong boundaries drawn between teachers and the two professions studied requires further explanation. Prior to the publication of the editorials and establishment as professions, both school psychologists and guidance counselors were once teachers with extra duties and responsibilities. The labelling of teachers as a common alter in the boundary work of each profession may be a distancing from this past. This could be a professionalization tactic for school psychologists and guidance counselors to solidify their professional identity as separate from teachers. Overall, while likely

not the only contributing factor, it is important to note that this boundary may be an artifact of each profession's past. If school psychologists and guidance counselors continue to be a growing force within schools, with distinct, stable identity and authority, they may begin to draw boundaries between each other. While both school psychology and guidance counseling have made significant progress in professionalization, they are still emerging professions and may still be negotiating boundaries related to their origin.

Further research in this topic may explore boundary work between guidance counselors and school psychologists and teachers and administrators since these are the main boundaries being drawn within the two professions analyzed. This research may examine how teachers and administrators define themselves, particularly regarding individualized approach and science. It is possible that teachers and administrators also view themselves as being scientific and research-based, conflicting with boundaries drawn by school psychologists and guidance counselors.

The professions' entrance into social justice and community work also poses questions for additional research. As further community work and advocacy increases, school psychologists and guidance counselors may run into boundaries between social workers and community organizers. This may require further demarcation and boundary work as focuses change and develop. If their boundaries remain the same, they will likely integrate themselves into the social justice sphere by using their background in science-backed interventions and developmental psychology. This will likely be challenged by sociologists, social workers, and non-school psychologists and counselors who may claim a similar base. Even their background in children's learning and interaction with children is unlikely to be unique at the community

level. Thus, their unique position as school employees will likely prove to be an important boundary, as they are located in a setting that children are mandated to attend by the state.

Overall, school psychology and guidance counseling are emerging professions, and this analysis covers their early years of professional development and boundary work. It is possible that as they grow and integrate themselves as part of the school system and community that they will continue altering and creating boundaries to justify their position and claim over certain issues. This may even include boundaries drawn between school psychologists and guidance counselors, which were not observed in this study. Though these explanations and predictions offer possible insight into why these professions have constructed boundaries as they have and how they will change in the future, these speculations are based only on themes observed in this study. As demonstrated in the history of guidance counseling and school psychology, these two professions are vulnerable to social movements and other broad forces and will likely change in response to their temporal social environment.

Conclusion

School psychologists and guidance counselors are emerging professions within the school system and are similar in that they both have an auxiliary function of managing student mental health. Professions lay claim over certain issues by claiming to have a unique knowledge that equips them to solve a certain problem. As professionals, school psychologists and guidance counselors serve as knowledge workers in a helping profession. Their unique knowledge and skills shape the advice that they are able to provide to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and others who work to better students' learning.

An aspect of professionalization is boundary work, or demarcations that describe what a profession is, is not, does, and does not do. Boundary work serves to distinguish the profession

and emphasize the special knowledge or skills that define the profession and justify its position. Boundary work is particularly common and necessary in a system of multiple professions, such as a school system. As emerging professions, school psychology and guidance counseling have historically worked to define their boundaries to defend their newer position in schools. This begins with the construction of professional structures, such as organizations, professional journals, and certification standards. Once professional status was reached, school psychologists and guidance counselors focused on erecting boundaries of what esoteric knowledge and skills define and distinguish them.

While literature on professionalization and boundary work would suggest that boundaries would largely be drawn between similar professions, the results of this study suggest that school psychologists and guidance counselors, despite having similar functions within the school, draw boundaries between themselves and teachers and administrators rather than between each other. They distinguish themselves from teachers and administrators by emphasizing their education and expertise in developmental psychology, a scientific, research-based field. While school psychologists and guidance counselors apply these principles differently within their designated roles in the school, they do not compare themselves to each other, aside from noting specialization in cognitive vs. socioemotional developmental psychology. In contrast, explicit boundaries are drawn between school psychologists/guidance counselors and teachers/administrators.

The story of the professionalization and boundary work of school psychologists and guidance counselors is still being written. Further research on the current boundaries and alters would better inform the dynamics surrounding boundary construction of professionals within the school system. Additionally, if social justice and community work continues to be a focus of

these professions, further research will be required to understand how school psychologists and guidance counselors justify their entrance into this problem and how they carve out their piece of it. As school psychologists and guidance counselors continue to grow in numbers across the nation, their distinction and purpose in schools will likely be discussed more. As a historical study, this research provides a model for assessing historical boundary work and professionalization in interprofessional systems, and it raises an interesting contradiction of current sociological theory. While further research is required to analyze the exact causes of the type of boundary work school psychologists and guidance counselors engage in, this study provides an introductory explanation to the professionalization and boundary work of the two emerging professions.

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