



"We are a community that commits itself to diversity and sustainability as dimensions of a just society" --*Lewis and Clark Mission Statement*

**LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & COUNSELING**  
**MCFT 562 Advanced Ecosystemic Relational Therapy**  
**Spring 2017**

DATE/TIME: Section 1—9:00-12:15 Thursdays  
 Section 2—1:00- 4:15 Thursdays

PLACE: Section 1—York 116  
 Section 2—York 107

INSTRUCTOR: Carmen Knudson-Martin, Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 1-3; Thursdays 4:15-6:15 (to make appointment call CPSY office—503-768-6060)

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**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

This advanced family therapy theories course integrates neuropsychobiological, ecological, and spiritual aspects of human behavior with challenges that different societal contexts bring into family life. Addresses contemporary relational, experiential, and social constructionist approaches to marriage, couple, and family therapy and explores the intersections of clinical practice and social advocacy.

**PREREQUISITE: MCFT 504**

**UNITS: three**

**MCFT STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course promotes the following MCFT program Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1.1 Students recognize the impact of power on individuals, families, and communities.

SLO 1.2 Students recognize the interconnections among biological, psychological, and social systems in people's lived experience.

SLO 1.3 Students apply system/relational theories to clinical case conceptualization.

SLO 2.2 Students' clinical practice demonstrates attention to social justice and cultural democracy.

SLO 4.1 Students apply ethical decision-making processes to clinical dilemmas.

SLO 4.3 Students demonstrate integration of family therapy theory, equity, and social location issues in clinical practice.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

As a result of this class, students will

1. Integrate theory and practice regarding the connections between biology, emotion, relationships, social context, and health.
2. Identify how theories are used to conceptualize key clinical issues and create change.

3. Apply ecosystemic/relational theories to the practice of couple and family therapy within diverse sociocultural contexts.
4. Recognize the practical and ethical implications of various theoretical frameworks in family therapy.
5. Improve skills for case conceptualization and treatment planning using an integrated, ecosystemic perspective
6. Clarify a personal ecosystemic/relational model for clinical practice.

## **TEXTS:**

### **Required**

Bateson, G. (2000). *Steps to an ecology of mind*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (originally published 1972).

Charlés, L. & Samarasinghe, G. (2016). *Family therapy in global humanitarian contexts*. New York, NY: Springer.

deShazer, S. (1991). *Putting difference to work*. New York, NY: Norton.

Hanna, S. (2014). *The transparent brain in couple and family therapy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Hernandez-Wolfe, P. (2013). *A borderlands view on Latinos, Latin Americans, and decolonization: Rethinking mental health*. New York: Jason Aronson.

McGoldrick, M. (2016). *The genogram casebook*. New York, NY: Norton.

Minuchin, P., Colapinto, J., & Minuchin, S. (2007). *Working With Families of the Poor*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New York: Guilford

Weingarten, K. (2003). *Common shock: Witnessing violence every day, how we are harmed and how we can heal*. New York: NY: Dutton

### **Recommended**

Students should also draw on a text that provides an overview of all the family therapy theories. This may be the text from CPSY 504. The following is also useful in applying theory:

Gehart, D. (2016). *Theory and treatment planning in family therapy*. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning

Another very personal and interesting account of the practical meaning of theory:

Hoffman, L. (2001). *Family therapy: An intimate history*. New York, NY: Norton

### **Selected Readings**

Brave Heart, M. Y. H., & DeBruyn, L. M. (1998). The American Indian holocaust: Healing historical unresolved grief. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research*, 8(2), 56.

Garcia, M., Košutić, I., & McDowell, T. (2015). Peace on earth/War at home: The role of emotion regulation in social justice work. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy*, 27, 1-20.

Knudson-Martin, C. & Huenergardt, D. (2010). A socio-emotional approach to couple therapy: Linking social context and couple interaction. *Family Process*, 49, 369-384

Laszloffy, T. A. (2009). Remembering the pattern that connects: Toward an eco-informed MFT. *Journal of Contemporary Family Therapy*, 31, 222-236

- Magistro, C. A. (2014). Relational dimensions of environmental crisis: Insights from Boszormenyi-Nagy's contextual therapy. *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 33, 17-28. (to find this one, I first had to go to Ebsco or the Journal)
- Maturana, H. (2000). The nature of the laws of nature. *Systems research and Behavioral Science*, 17, 459-468
- Maturana, H. R. & Poerksen, B. (2004). *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 17, 269-279.
- McDowell, T. (2015). Space, place, and just practice. *Applying critical social theories to family therapy practice* (Chapter 6). New York, NY: Springer.

### **For Further Reading**

- Almeida, R. V., Dolan-Del Vecchio, K., & Parker, L. (2008). *Transformative family therapy: Just families in a just society*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Atkinson, B. J. (2005). *Emotional intelligence in couples therapy: Advances from neurobiology and the science of intimate relationships*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Bateson, G. (2002). *Mind and nature: A necessary unity*. New York, NY: Hampton Press.
- Bergman, O. C., & White, C. (2011). *Bringing systems thinking to life: Expanding the horizons for Bowen family systems theory*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Cozolino, L. (2016). *Why therapy works: Using our minds to change our brains*. New York: Norton.
- Fishbane, M. D. (2013). *Loving with the brain in mind: Neurobiology & couple therapy*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Fosha, D., Siegel, D. J., & Solomon, M. F. (2009). *The healing power of emotion: Affective neuroscience, development, and clinical practice*. New York: Norton.
- Johnson, S. (2005). *Emotionally focused couple therapy with trauma survivors*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- Gergen, K. (2015). *An invitation to social construction, 3rd Edition*. Sage Publications.
- Gottman, J. M. (2011). *The science of trust: Emotional attunement for couples*.
- Hargrave, T. D., & Pfitzer, F. (2011) *Restoration therapy: Understanding and guiding healing in marriage and family therapy*
- Jordan, J. (2009). *Relational-cultural therapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Laszlo, E. (1996). *The systems view of the world: A holistic vision for our time*. Cresskill, NJ/Hampton Press
- Rosenblatt, P. (1997) *Metaphors of Family Systems Theory: Toward new constructions*. New York, NY: Guilford.
- St. George, S. & Wulff, D. (2016). *Family therapy as socially transformative practice*. New York, NY: Springer
- Tomm, K., St. George, S., Wulff, D., & Strong, T. (2014). *Patterns in interpersonal interactions: Inviting relational understanding for therapeutic change*. New York, NY: Routledge.



**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**a) **Participation (20 points).**

Students are expected to attend *all* classes and come prepared to engage in shared processing of the readings as they apply to their particular clinical focus and to the MFT field. The CPSY attendance policy is described later in the syllabus.

| CLASS PARTICIPATION COMPETENCIES                                                                                                                                                  | Possible points | Points demonstrated |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Prompt and dependable presence in the class.                                                                                                                                      | 4               |                     |
| Prepares for class by immersing self in course readings and reflecting on their application to personal practice.                                                                 | 4               |                     |
| Contributes to ongoing reflection and evaluation of own development of the practical and ethical implications of various ecosystemic relational theories in the practice of MCFT. | 4               |                     |
| Contributes to the reflections of other class members and the group project as a whole.                                                                                           | 4               |                     |
| Helps to create an atmosphere of safety and mutual respect among all class members.                                                                                               | 4               |                     |
| Total                                                                                                                                                                             | 20              |                     |

b) **Final Ecosystemic Relational Therapy Paper. (60 points)**

In this final paper students will describe a personal ecosystemic/relational model to guide their clinical practice. Development of this paper includes:

- a. Identify one or more family therapy theories as a base to guide your clinical practice. If you are integrating theories, consider *how* you will fit them together and how they reinforce or complement each other. Refer both to overview texts such as the Gehart text (or others) and original writings from developers or researchers of this model.
- b. Drawing on the readings assigned for this class, address how your selected model addresses the relationships between societal context, biology, emotion, relationships, and health. Be sure to include issues of power and privilege. This may mean some modification/adaptation of your selected model(s).
- c. Specify how therapy facilitates change in your model.
- d. Include specific examples of how you apply theory to clinical issues, using your case observations from the clinic. Note that the therapist you observed did not necessarily have to approach the case the way you are suggesting. This is an opportunity to imagine what you would do based on your selected orienting theoretical framework. Be sure to protect confidentiality of clients (change names and other kinds of identifying information).
- e. Address the practical and ethical practical considerations when applying this model with attention to social justice and cultural democracy.
- f. Response should include 12-15 pages of double-spaced text (not including references). **Due April 13**

This paper will be uploaded on Task Stream as part of program evaluation. An evaluation rubric for the paper is attached at the end of the syllabus.

c) **Ecosystemic Relational theoretical presentation (30 points)**

Student groups will make 15 minute presentations that illustrate foundational ecosystemic relational theory concepts. This should be a creative presentation based on the ideas of Bateson and/or Maturana. It should experientially capture the neuropsychobiological, ecological, spiritual connections in working with families in the larger sociocultural context. Groups are encouraged to use drama and/or art to help make their points. Presentation should also convey relevance to creating clinical change.

| Ecosystemic Relational Theory Presentation                                                                        | Possible points | Points demonstrated |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Presentation clearly identifies specific foundational ecosystemic concepts from Bateson and/or Maturana.          | 10              |                     |
| Presentation emphasizes the integrative connections between clinical issues and ecosystemic relational principles | 10              |                     |
| Presentation is creative, well-prepared, and professionally delivered                                             | 10              |                     |
| Total                                                                                                             | 30              |                     |

d) **Case Observation Log and Theoretical Reflections (60 points). Due March 23**

Each student must observe at least 20 hours of marriage, couple, and family therapy conducted at the Lewis & Clark Community Counseling Center. Students must submit a log documenting their clinical observations and complete the following assignments. The most important part of the observation experience is attempting to make sense of what you see through a particular lens (see assignments below). Documentation for each assignment need not be lengthy. One paragraph summary per session is sufficient.

- List of dates and times of all observations
- I. Listening for larger societal discourse. For three sessions, listen for and record all possible larger societal discourses that might be relevant to the session, whether or not they were discussed or followed up on in session.
- II. Recognizing neuroemotional process. For three sessions, listen for and record the neuroemotional processes that appear likely to be happening during this session. Consider the social context that gives rise to the emotions and the internal physiological responses clients are likely experiencing.
- III. Recognizing interpersonal process. For three sessions, observe and make note of the interpersonal dynamics happening in the session (between partners/family members or between client and therapist, and those that are embedded within client stories, whether or not identified and discussed in session).
- IV. Theoretical Application. For each of six sessions select one systems/relational theoretical framework and watch the session through that lens. Identify what the treatment issues would be from your identified theoretical lens and what the lens would suggest in terms of strategies to create clinical change. Over the course of this assignment, at least three different theoretical lenses should be applied.
- V. Theoretical Integration. For each of five sessions, observe with an awareness of your evolving personal ecosystemic relational model to guide clinical practice in ways that promote social justice and cultural equity. Make note of what resonates for you as you move toward selecting a model, and the questions and thoughts about application or integration that arise for you.

| Observation Log Book                                                                                                                                                       | Possible Points | Points demonstrated |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Identified relevant societal discourses for three sessions                                                                                                                 | 9               |                     |
| Recognized neuroemotional processes and sociocultural context that gives rise to them for three sessions.                                                                  | 9               |                     |
| Recognized interpersonal dynamics occurring in each of three sessions or in the stories discussed in session.                                                              | 9               |                     |
| Applied one theoretical lens to six sessions, utilizing at least three different theories overall.                                                                         | 18              |                     |
| Reflected on issues relevant to own evolving ecosystemic relational model to guide clinical practice in ways that promote social justice and cultural equity. (5 sessions) | 15              |                     |
| TOTAL                                                                                                                                                                      | 60              |                     |

**5. Self-of-Therapist Presentation. (30 points)**

Students will make a 10-15 minute presentation that captures their evolving professional identity and growth at this point in the program. Students may find it helpful to organize the presentation around a metaphor or image. A useful starting point is the final self-assessment paper from MCFT 511 (first fall). The presentation should address the following:

- a) How your social location influences what you bring to therapy
- b) Theoretical ideas from ecosystemic relational therapy that are most resonant to you
- c) Areas of personal awareness and growth since beginning the program and why they are important to your clinical work.

| Self-of-Therapist Presentation                                                                             | Possible Points | Points demonstrated |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Awareness of impact of own social location on clinical practice.                                           | 10              |                     |
| Identification with key theoretical ideas as a foundation for clinical practice.                           | 10              |                     |
| Reflects on areas of personal awareness and growth since beginning the program and why they are important. | 10              |                     |
| TOTAL                                                                                                      | 30              |                     |

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY/SPECIAL ASSISTANCE**

Lewis & Clark College adheres to a nondiscriminatory policy with respect to employment, enrollment, and program. The College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap or disability, sexual orientation, or marital status and has a firm commitment to promote the letter and spirit of all equal opportunity and civil rights laws.

## **PARTICIPATION IN THE LEARNING COMMUNITY**

Students are required to attend and actively participate in all scheduled class meetings. This includes being on time, being prepared, following through on group projects, and otherwise engaging with colleagues as fellow professionals. Becoming a therapist involves looking closely at ourselves, our values, beliefs, and biases. This can be a very personal, and sometimes emotional, process. Treating colleagues with respect, listening deeply to their experiences, and being open to diverse world views encourages a collaborative milieu of care in which we can all challenge ourselves and each other to critically examine and develop our skills and perspectives. In order to prepare for each class, students should carefully read and study all assigned materials to be ready to discuss, debate, and apply the content of readings. Class discussion and interaction with colleagues are fundamental to the process of learning to be a therapist and all sessions include necessary information. Therefore, if you must miss a class, fellow students and the instructor may ask you to contribute to learning community in another way. According to the Lewis & Clark Counseling Psychology attendance policy, missing 3 or more hours of a 1 credit course may result in a failing grade. For this course, any absence of more than one hour requires a makeup assignment. If you must be absent or late, please email the instructor at least several hours prior to class.

## **SPECIAL ASSISTANCE**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability and/or you have emergency medical information to share please make an appointment with the instructors as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of the student to make his or her disability and needs known in a timely fashion and to provide appropriate documentation and evaluations to support the accommodations the student requests. Requests for accommodations should be routed through the Student Support Services office in Albany 206. Please review the L&C policy at:

[http://www.lclark.edu/offices/student\\_support\\_services/rights/disability\\_policy/](http://www.lclark.edu/offices/student_support_services/rights/disability_policy/)

## **CPSY DEPARTMENTAL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

## **EVALUATION AND GRADING**

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Participation                  | 20points          |
| Final paper                    | 60 points         |
| Observation Logbook            | 60 points         |
| Group Presentation             | 30 points         |
| Self-of-therapist Presentation | 30points          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | <b>200 points</b> |

|               |                |                |
|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| 188-200 = A   | 181-187.5 = A- | 176-180.5 = B+ |
| 166-175.5 = B | 160-165.5 = B- | 156-159.5 = C+ |
| 146-155.5 = C | 140-144 = C-   |                |

## TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

| Date             | Topic                                                                  | Readings                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Assignment/Presenter                                                                             |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1<br>Jan 12 | <b>Course Overview &amp; Overview of Ecosystemic Relational Theory</b> | Bateson<br>What about Frenchmen?<br>How much do you Know?<br>Style, Grace, and Information in Primitive Art<br>Comment on Part II                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                  |
| Week 2<br>Jan 19 | <b>An Eco-informed approach to family therapy</b>                      | Bateson<br>A Theory of Play and Fantasy<br>The Cybernetics of Self: A Theory of Alcoholism<br>Comment on Part III<br>Comment on Part IV<br>Effects of Conscious Purpose on Human Adaptation<br>Form, Substance, and Difference<br>Comment on Part V |                                                                                                  |
| Week 3<br>Jan 26 | <b>Applying ecosystemic principles</b>                                 | Bateson<br>From Versailles to Cybernetics<br>Roots of Ecological Crisis<br>Maturana (2000)<br>Maturana & Poerksen (2004)<br>Laszloffy (2009)                                                                                                        | Be prepared to discuss 1 <sup>st</sup> observation assignment                                    |
| Week 4<br>Feb 2  | <b>Interpersonal neurobiology, Attachment, and Community</b>           | Hanna, chap 2, 3 & 6<br><br>Charlés & Samarasinghe Giaber, "Family Therapy in Libya"                                                                                                                                                                | Group presentation<br>_____                                                                      |
| Week 5<br>Feb 9  | <b>Biology of Family Therapy</b>                                       | Hanna chap 4, 5, 7 & 8<br>Charlés & Samarasinghe Killian, Time, Trauma, & Ambiguous Loss<br>Charlés, Engaging the humanity in front of you                                                                                                          | Group presentation<br>_____<br><br>Be prepared to discuss 2 <sup>nd</sup> observation assignment |
| Week 6<br>Feb 16 | <b>Creating Systemic Change</b>                                        | DeShazer<br>Chap 6-9, 12-13<br>Knudson-Martin & Huenergardt (2010)                                                                                                                                                                                  | Group presentation<br>_____                                                                      |

|                     |                                                    |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 7<br>Feb 23    | <b>Decolonization, Trauma, &amp; Resilience</b>    | Hernandez-Wolfe, chap 2-4<br>Brave Heart & DeBruyn (1998)                                                | Group presentation<br>_____<br>Be prepared to discuss 3rd observation assignment                                   |
| Week 8<br>March 2   | <b>Justice and Relational Healing</b>              | Hernandez-Wolfe, chap 5-6<br>Garcia et al (2015)<br>Charlés & Samarasinghe Polanco, Knowledge fair trade | Group presentation<br>_____<br>4 <sup>th</sup> observation assignment                                              |
| Week 9<br>March 9   | <b>Structural therapy in community context</b>     | Minuchin chap 2-6                                                                                        | Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____<br>_____                                                                  |
| Week 10<br>March 16 | <b>Bowen theory—mapping the context</b>            | McGoldrick chap 1-4<br><br>McDowell (2015). Space, Place, & Just Practice                                | Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____<br>_____<br>Be prepared to discuss 5 <sup>th</sup> Observation assignment |
| Week 11<br>March 23 | <b>Intergenerational Healing</b>                   | McGoldrick chap 5-7<br><br>Magistro (2014)                                                               | <b>Observation Logbook Due</b><br>Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____<br>_____                                |
| March 30            | <b>SPRING BREAK</b>                                |                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |
| Week 12<br>April 6  | <b>Witnessing Personal &amp; Societal Violence</b> | Weingarten chap 1, 3, 4, & 5<br>Charlés & Samarasinghe Shanini, Family therapy in postwas Kosovo         | Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____<br>_____                                                                  |
| Week 13<br>April 13 | <b>Social Constructionist Practices</b>            | Weingarten chap 7, 8, & 10<br>Charlés & Samarasinghe Palit, Collaborative therapy with refugees          | <b>Final Paper Due</b><br>Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____<br>_____                                        |
| Week 14<br>April 20 | <b>Advancing Toward Practice</b>                   |                                                                                                          | Self of Therapist presentations<br>_____                                                                           |

**Final Ecosystemic Relational Therapy Paper (60 points)**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Marginal<br>(0-3 point)                                                                                         | Emerging<br>(4-6 points)                                                                                               | Proficient<br>(7-8 points)                                                                                                                         | Accomplished<br>(9-10 points)                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Identifies one or more family therapy theories as a base to guide clinical practice.                                                                                                                                    | Selected family therapy theory(s) not described or inaccurately described.                                      | Selected family therapy theory(s) described, but with inaccuracies and little clarity about implications for practice. | Selected family therapy theory(s) accurately described, but how they work together (if more than one) and implications for practice are not clear. | Selected family therapy theory(s) accurately described; how they work together (if more than one) and implications for practice are clearly identified.    |
| 2. Integrates theory and practice regarding connections between biology, emotion, relationships, societal context, and clinical issues.                                                                                    | Addresses each systemic level separately, or does not include all levels; link to clinical issues is not clear. | Begins to consider how systemic levels integrate to affect clinical issues.                                            | Theoretical integration across systemic levels with examples that show connection to clinical issues.                                              | Detailed theoretical integration across systemic levels with well defined examples that show connections to clinical issues.                               |
| 3. Specifies how therapy facilitates change in selected theoretical model.                                                                                                                                                 | How selected theoretical model facilitates change is not explained.                                             | How selected theoretical model facilitates change is somewhat explained.                                               | How selected theoretical model facilitates change is explained.                                                                                    | How selected theoretical model facilitates change is explained at a sophisticated level.                                                                   |
| 4. Theory is applied to specific clinical issues through case examples.                                                                                                                                                    | Case examples are not provided or not appropriate to selected theory.                                           | Limited case examples, or examples only loosely connected to the identified theory.                                    | Case examples are provided and connected to the identified theory.                                                                                 | Case examples are detailed and well illustrate the identified theory.                                                                                      |
| 5. Paper demonstrates practical and ethical integration of family therapy theory, equity, and social location issues.                                                                                                      | Suggested approach does not address power, equity, and social location.                                         | Practical and ethical considerations regarding power, equity, and social location issues are superficially addressed.  | Practical and ethical considerations regarding power, equity, and social location issues are addressed with some illustrations.                    | Practical and ethical considerations regarding complexities of power, equity, and social location issues are addressed in detail with clear illustrations. |
| 6. Paper is well organized, clearly and concisely written, follows APA style, and appropriately cites a variety of scholarly sources, including original writings from developers or researchers of the identified models. | Paper not well organized or focused, many APA errors, and limited sources.                                      | Considerable problems with organization or focus, APA style, or sources.                                               | Some problems with organization or focus, APA style, or sources.                                                                                   | Well organized, clear writing, appropriate APA style, and draws on a variety of scholarly sources.                                                         |

