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Voicing Relationships: A Dialogic Perspective

Leslie A. Baxter

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One of the field's most respected scholars advances a dialogic perspective on communication in personal and familial relationships, presenting the next iteration of relational dialectics theory (RDT).

"This is an excellent book and moves one of the major theories in the social sciences forward in very innovative ways. Indeed, this book extends beyond RDT by addressing limitations in the family, interpersonal, and personal relationships literature. I believe this book will prompt many discussions among theorists and researchers in those areas and has the potential to provide exciting new directions in the study of relationships." —Glen H. Stamp, *Ball State University*

"Leslie A. Baxter is offering up something here that is desperately needed and fills a big hole for those who adopt RDT as their theoretical framework. . . . I found the conceptual content of the book to be clear, compelling, and provoking. . . . The chapter on contrapuntal analysis is the only one of its kind." —Melissa Wood Alemán, *James Madison University*

Voicing Relationships presents a dialogic perspective on relating, inspired by the dialogism work of the Russian theorist of literature and culture, Mikhail Bakhtin. Written by Leslie A. Baxter, one of the theory's originators, this groundbreaking book presents the next iteration of the theory, along with a methodological primer for contrapuntal analysis that includes guiding readers through a sample analysis.

Developing a rich palette of dialogic concepts useful in the study of interpersonal communication, the book's central argument is that meaning making emerges from the clash of competing systems of meaning, or discourses. Relationship communication is embedded in culture, history, difference, and conceptions of the ideal. In addition, the book gives us a method by which to study communication dialogically—contrapuntal analysis.

Key Features

- **Centers communication at the heart of relationships** with an interdisciplinary focus on communication from fields such as psychology, social work, and sociology
- Offers **an up-to-date distillation of two decades of relevant research** to organize major findings and issues
- Moves scholars and students **beyond simplistic uses of relational dialectics** or using the dialectical pairs in overly-simplistic "cookie cutter" ways
- Provides scholars and students with **guidance in using RDT** to guide their own research

Intended Audience

Voicing Relationships is ideal for use in a wide range of courses, such as Interpersonal Communication; Family Studies; Couples, Marriage, and Family; and Counseling.

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