

Name: Alexander Drummond MSc(Dist.) BA. MBACP(Accred)

Professional Role: Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist in private practice

Research Institution: University of Bristol - MSc (2009)

Email: alex@talkmebetter.com

ABSTRACT: Paper

Keywords: Transgender, LGBT awareness, Counsellor training, Professional development.

T-Girls, Timocracy And Therapists' Taxonomies

Aim/Purpose: To investigate the phenomenon of male cross-gendered identities with a view to informing clinical practice. The study further questioned the level of training and awareness of sexual minority and diversity issues within a randomised sample of BACP listed counsellors

Design/Methodology: 1200 counsellors listing their details on the BACP website were contacted by the researcher using a 'systematic-random-sample process' and invited to participate in an anonymised internet survey. 246 took part and submitted data. This study met the ethical requirements of the University of Bristol.

Results/Findings: A significant number of therapists contacted were unsympathetic towards research and/or LGBT issues. The study specifically identified a lack of training at core level and only limited professional development into LGBT issues. Understanding of the phenomenon of male transgenderism presenting as cross-dressing is generally poor.

Conclusions/Implications: The findings of this study suggest that gender-identity and sexuality are broadly speaking ignored in counsellor training in the UK. This paper therefore, invites therapists to review their understanding of gendered identities and particularly male-to-female gender crossing by introducing (and elaborating on) new and emerging constructs such as transgenderism and queer theory whilst adding evidence to previous assertions (Davies & Neal 2000, King et al 2007; Shaw et al 2008) that a lack of understanding of the issues of sexual minority clients exists within the profession, negatively impacting on the quality of service delivered to a significant number of clients.

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Shaw, L. Butler, C. & Marriot, C. (2008) **Sex And Sexuality Teaching In Clinical Psychology Courses.** Clinical Psychology Forum (187, July 2008):7-

Presenter -**Helen Rowlands**
Director Welsh Psychotherapy Partnership Ltd
Presenter -**Dr. Rachel Davies**
Relationship Therapist
Couple Counselling Alliance
Contact Address
Welsh Psychotherapy Partnership Ltd
54 Charles Street
Cardiff
CF10 2GF
Tel 02920 396998

Abstract - Workshop

Same difference? Reflecting on therapy for LGBT clients

Rationale / what it has to offer counselling research and practice

Training in sexualities is largely absent from mainstream counselling and psychology training (Allison et al., 1994). Historically homosexuality was considered a mental disturbance or deviant activity that could be cured or suppressed by engagement in therapy. Even today schools of therapy differ in the extent to which total acceptance of alternative sexualities and LGBT lifestyles are embedded into their philosophy.

We contend that all therapists, as ethical practitioners, should give consideration to how they approach working with these clients. This process requires personal and professional reflexivity and attending this workshop will contribute to this journey.

Research on LGB therapy is limited but growing. In order for the research agenda to be driven by practitioner issues it is necessary for the voice of practitioners to be heard and promoted. Participants at this workshop will have the opportunity to both shape a publication and see their views incorporated into a research proposal as part of a new initiative at the Welsh Psychotherapy Partnership Ltd.

Who the workshop is designed for

This workshop will be of relevance to all those involved in counselling and psychotherapy however you define your own sexuality. No previous knowledge or experience of LGB therapy or research is presumed.

Methods

Ideas from key researchers in the area will be used to stimulate debate on research priorities. In addition a "group carousel" technique will be used to consider key questions. Each small group rotates through the questions commenting and adding to the ideas generated by the previous group. A final plenary will collate the responses of the participants. This output will be used as the basis of a paper for a counselling journal and in the development of a Welsh research study.

Reading

No preparation is required.

* Reference

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NCCR Research Conference November 2009

Name: Sheila Spong

Institution: University of Wales Newport

Email: Sheila.spong@newport.ac.uk

Abstract type: paper

Title of presentation: The challenge of prejudice

Aims and purpose

The key questions asked in this paper are whether it is ever appropriate for counsellors to challenge what they perceive as prejudices held by their clients, and if so when. The project explored the how several small groups of counsellors talked about challenging client prejudices

What the research involved

The findings presented here are from a larger research project which looked at counsellors talking about counsellor/client influence. Six focus groups (30 participants) discussed a number of questions and practice scenarios. Participants were counsellors of any modality/ orientation recruited through a range of contact routes. The project received ethical approval from the University of Manchester.

Results/Findings

This paper will show what the participants understood by “clients’ prejudices”, and the types of arguments used by the participants to suggest that counsellors should and should not engage with challenging client’s prejudices. It also links these specific findings to the wider issue of the counsellor’s influence on the client. This is a small scale project based on limited data and as such it can only offer tentative findings.

Conclusions/Implications

This study highlights some complex ways in which counsellors respond to competing phenomenological and external value-based elements within counselling discourses.

Blurring the Boundaries of Creative Social Science Research .

Jack Rochon Psychotherapist Visiting Lecturer University of Wales

Workshop abstract

Emerging qualitative methodologies such as narrative inquiry and auto ethnography are blurring the boundaries of social science research. This workshop meets a growing interest in these creative ways of researching and examines my struggle to make sense of them. Listening to and re-telling stories creatively, defies its sweet sounding simplicity. Even when successfully realised it often invites the question - what's the point? You are invited to discuss the validity of these methods and consider whether they add to what we know.

This way of researching can be highly seductive to counsellors on at least three counts. Firstly, it legitimizes the inclusion of researcher response in a way that mirrors many counsellors' experiences of working with clients. Secondly, it allows for versatility, originality and widely creative methods, again a feature of many counselling approaches. Finally, it invites self-disclosure or autobiography often an important part of counsellor development and Diploma training programmes and thus comfortably familiar.

I intend to present two examples from recent MA and Doctoral submissions (UWN 2009 & University of Bristol 2009, respectively) and to contextualise the journey from germinating thoughts to finished article. The audience will be asked to work in small groups to consider their own responses to the material before being invited to feedback to the whole workshop.

I found that methodological newness around narrative inquiry and auto ethnography created heightened difficulty and confusion. Paradoxically, it made an exciting trail for me to pursue. My experience argues that the deconstruction of polarised understandings of self, mean we no longer need to be victims of our own personal history. I further found that the creative blurring of social science research boundaries facilitate this process. I contend that these creative methodologies have the flexibility and complexity to provide a conduit to research revealing 'the most private kind of feelings' (Richardson 2001:884) that may not accessible to others (Wheeler & Richards 2007).

I warmly welcome those who may be encountering narrative inquiry for the very first time as well as more experienced researchers.

Key words: Auto ethnography, narrative inquiry.

Julia Buckroyd Emeritus Professor of Counselling, University of Hertfordshire

Additional Author: **Sharon Rother**

Workplace affiliation: University of Hertfordshire

Main professional role: consultant on obesity and eating disorders

Email: J.Buckroyd@herts.ac.uk

Telephone: 07751 884748

Title of Paper:

Identifying the meanings that overweight women give to their eating behaviour

Aims and purpose of the research:

The search for effective responses to obesity has included a range of strategies including information giving, pharmacology, behavioural approaches, bariatric surgery and awareness of the need to understand the function and meaning of the overeating. To date there is no demonstrably successful approach, with the possible exception of bariatric surgery. Most weight loss is followed by weight regain. In seeking to evolve more useful treatment, it seems worthwhile to investigate the meanings ascribed by overweight people themselves to their overeating and overweight.

What the research involved

As part of a larger research project, 79 obese women were interviewed with a view to their enrolment in a therapeutic group programme. A purposive sample of 20 of these interviews was selected for the length and coherence of their responses to the semi-structured interview. These interviews were then analysed using grounded theory to identify themes until saturation of the themes.

The Findings

The themes identified demonstrate that there are many meanings ascribed to overeating by overweight people, but prominent among them are meanings that suggest that overeating is in part driven by an overvaluing of food and an unconscious belief that food can compensate for life's difficulties.

Conclusions/implications of the research

These findings validate developing approaches to overweight and overeating that recognise the prevalence of emotional eating. The implication is that the functions and meanings of food are important in determining eating behaviour and that these factors should be assessed in offering responses to overweight people.

Newport Centre for Counselling Research -- November 14th 2009

Conference Paper Proposal

Name:- Lesley Spencer

Institution:- University of Wales, Newport

Role: - Senior Lecturer in Counselling

Address:- UWN, AYY Campus

E-mail:- lesley.spencer@newport.ac.uk

Telephone: 01633 432518

Title:- Dilemmas, Difficulties & Delights in using Narrative Inquiry in a Health Setting

Aims and Purpose of the Research

This paper reflects on some of the ethical dilemmas and personal difficulties of an ethnographic researcher in doing an 18 month study of families going through a genetic counselling process for the risk of sudden arrhythmic death syndrome (SADs). Tragically some of these families have already lost family members by the time they are referred to the genetic counselling service, leaving them grieving and fearful for themselves and other family members. The overall study aims to look at the lived experience and needs of these families and the significance of what genetic counselling has to offer them.

What the research involved

This ethnographic study combines participant observations of the clinic appointments attended by the families, with narrative interviews with family members, clinical staff and a reflexive account of the researcher's own processes (Speedy 2008)

Initial Findings

Gaining NHS ethical approval to research this highly sensitive area resulted in significant dilemmas for the researcher in obtaining informed consent from families who need to be seen quickly by the genetics service. How these dilemmas were tackled will be explored; as well as the challenges of managing the multiple roles in ethnographic research (Coffey 1999, Clandinin et al 2006). The delights are the rich narratives which emerge when co-constructing narrative conversations with families and clinical staff (Etherington 2004).

Implications of the research

This paper illustrates the complexities of working with highly sensitive issues such as grief and fear of dying, as well the joys and challenges of a

researcher involved in ethnographic study. It will be of relevance to anyone interested in narrative inquiry; finding creative ways to work through ethical dilemmas; and research in the NHS.

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Coffey A (1999)***The Ethnographic Self – Field and the Representation of Identity*** London: Sage

Etherington K (2004) ***Becoming a Reflexive Researcher – Using Ourselves in Research*** London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Speedy, J (2008) ***Narrative Inquiry & Psychotherapy*** New York: Palgrave MacMillan

Dilemmas, Difficulties & Delights in Narrative Inquiry

Here is the story that it is agreed that I should tell you.....

Dilemmas

- Managing complex roles – dual roles in the organisation
- Note-taking – restrictions from LREC

Difficulties

- Changes over time.... changing political scene

Delights

- The narratives of the families
- Observing... the team in action
- Richness...

General information

Name: Dr Valerie Owen-Pugh

Institution: Institute of Lifelong Learning, University of Leicester

Professional Role: Lecturer

E-mail: vap4@le.ac.uk

Paper Abstract

Closing with the enemy? The dilemmas of identity faced by psychodynamic counsellors training in cognitive-behavioural therapy

A qualitative study was carried out to explore the dilemmas of identity experienced by qualified psychodynamic counsellors studying cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Participants were 12 students on a BA 'top-up' programme which included an introductory module in CBT as a compulsory element. Thematic analyses were carried out on participants' learning journals, and also on the transcripts of two focus groups convened a year after the module was completed. Participants were also offered an opportunity to comment on the results of these analyses. Although all participants found their learning beneficial in the long term, they initially found themselves caught up the resolution of a series of existential dilemmas associated with risk. The thematic analyses suggested that, as they first engaged with the module, participants held polarised views of psychodynamic therapy and CBT, with the former being understood as ethical and the latter as unethical practice. They were also highly resistant to engaging with module content. However, as time went on, their views underwent significant change; by the time the focus groups were held, participants understood them both to be ethical and effective therapy. In contrast, participants' strong opposition to the UK Government's Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) initiative remained unabated. The study's findings are interpreted from the perspective of Dalal's discussion of symmetrical and asymmetrical logic, and suggestions are offered for ways in which trainers might help counsellors to overcome their resistance to engaging with unfamiliar modalities.

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ABSTRACT for 2009 Newport Centre for Counselling Research Conference

Your name (and any title): Dr. Linda Dubrow-Marshall

Institution/Workplace/Affiliation: Cardiff University & University of Glamorgan

Your main professional role: Counsellor at Cardiff University, & Visiting Fellow in Psychology at University of Glamorgan

Email: Dubrow-MarshallL@cardiff.ac.uk

Paper Title:

The Use of Single Session Therapy in a University Counselling Service

Aims & purpose of the research:

The purpose of the research was to consider and evaluate the model for single session therapy used at a university counselling service.

What the research involved:

The Student Counselling Service at Cardiff University has adapted what is known as the 'Cardiff Model': some students are seen for single session therapy in an extended 90 minute therapeutic consultation, while selected students are seen for up to 10 additional counselling sessions. A detailed intake form is completed by clients prior to the initial session. The CORE Outcome Measure and a University Assessment Survey are completed by the clients at the therapeutic consultation and in a fifteen minute follow-up session approximately four weeks later.

A literature review was conducted to determine if recommendations had been incorporated and adapted into the 'Cardiff Model' use of single session therapy. The effectiveness of the single session therapy was evaluated quantitatively through an examination of pre and post outcome measures and qualitatively through selected case studies.

The findings:

The single session counselling model incorporated research recommendations. For clients who completed pre and post outcome measures, 65% showed reliable improvement, and 42% showed both reliable and clinical improvement, demonstrating effectiveness of single session therapy for selected clients. Case studies provided supportive qualitative data.

Conclusions/Implications of this research:

It is possible to adapt a single session model of counselling within a university setting. The efficacy of single session therapy for some clients in a university setting has been demonstrated, suggesting further research questions.

References:

Cameron, C. *Single session and walk-in psychotherapy: a descriptive account of the literature*. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, December 2007 7(4), 245-249.

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