

*What works for whom in clinical psychology
training?*

*Unpicking dominant discourses shaping
training experiences*

Nick Wood (UEL) & Catherine Butler (UoB)

Group of Trainers in Clinical Psychology Conference 2017

Workshop Aims

- To challenge Heteronormative (& Patriarchal) Models of CP Training
- To challenge White (& Western) Models of CP Training
- To further the develop of intersectional, progressive and inclusive training discourses

What Brought Us To Do This?

- 1. Catherine – trainee/training experiences
- 2. Nick – trainee/training experiences
- 3. Synergy: Stronger Together:
- The need to work in constructive partnerships and networks, in order to further holistic and transformative approaches to CP training

Main Questions*

- WHO are we Serving?*
- HOW Best Can We Serve Them?
- WHAT are our Training Spaces?
- <On Heteronormative and White Spaces...>
- And How Do We Make Spaces Safe & Productive for ALL?

Experiences of LGB trainees 2002

- Sexuality as a resource, educator, campaigner. But:
- Dominant identity marker vs invisibility
- Difficulties with personal/professional integration
- Feelings of isolation, lack of understanding and support
- Anticipated and actual homophobic responses from peers, supervisors, lecturers and course staff
- Disclosure dilemmas (including related to clients)
- Resulted in rejecting certain models or for some rejecting psychology

The picture 10 years on... Daiches & Anderson

- Disclosure remains a careful choice focusing on when, how, how much and to whom to disclose based on feelings of professional and emotional safety
- Careful balanced between personal and professional roles
- Permanence and stability makes disclosure easier – training therefore represents a time of some of the biggest challenges for disclosure

Similar themes for BME trainees

Rajan & Shaw, 2008

- Ethnocentricity of teaching material and dilemmas about challenging it
- Being positioned as an expert of ethnicity and race issues
- Difficulties in integrating personal and professional identities

Shah, Wood, Nolte & Goodbody, 2012

- Challenges and dilemmas of highlighting race and culture issues
 - BME as a resource, strength, additional skill
 - Seeking out safe and supportive contexts
- Paulraj, 2016
- Discourses Around & On Relating to Blackness
 - Racism, both overt and covert, within cohorts & (training) institutions
 - Both Hyper-visible & Invisible -> loneliness

Raising Awareness of Spaces

- Exploring Backgrounds and Perspectives
- The Personal is Professional is Political
- Interfacing with PPD (Personal & Professional Development) &
- Facing/Changing the Political
- Starting Small -> Holding Conversations and Dialogues
- How Do We Weight and Access ALL (Authentic) Voices?
- Transforming the Training Staff Too

Diversity conversations

- Those with marginalised positions/voices are often passed over as their knowledge holds less 'social currency'
- However, all staff/students will have multiple lived experiences of both privilege and oppression that if seen as a resource can lead to mutual learning and transformation
- **Both** power positions are important to explore
- This develops a 'critical consciousness' to acknowledge and unpack a person's social location

Your intersecting positions of power *

- Use 2-3 Labels to Identify Significant Interstices of Your Identity
- What are the positions you occupy that put you in a privileged position in training relationships?
- What are the positions you occupy that put you in an oppressed/silenced position in training relationships?
- How does the interplay between these different positions impact on you as a course member? – Consider this in relation to 2 different scenarios
- How might this impact on student learning?
- How was it to have this conversation?

Discomfort warning!

- Such conversations in group supervision are not comfortable, initial response is often fear, silence and anger
- hooks (1994) warns that classrooms will echo wider oppressive social discourses, and so it should be expected that discord and discomfort will occur
- Our challenge is to create an environment of respect and *safety* so that this can be unpacked and explored
- A safe space is not about feeling comfortable; paradoxically unless there is some risk-taking, the group will feel unsafe
- Importance of **relational safety**, which builds over time

Safety in group supervision

- It is not possible for everyone to feel safe all the time, but is the group 'safe enough'?
- hooks (1994) suggests that rather than focus on safety, focus instead on developing '*a feeling of community creates a sense that there is shared commitment and a common good that binds us*'
- But sometimes communities are hard to foster without safety, so this may go hand in hand too. (Modelling and exposure, the perfect life does not exist)
- A collaborative endeavour between trainer-trainee is thus vital
- This is helped by the group's sense of working together towards clearly defined shared goals that could not be achieved by the course staff alone - that everyone is 'mutually accountable' - and moving towards all are equally valued

Possible outcomes

- If we can encourage trainees to share their subjective knowledge and for the group to honour this, creates a sense of community and a 'laboratory of diversity'
- In being able to openly discuss oppression and discrimination, trainees have reported greater satisfaction with supervision and feel more equipped to work with their clients facing these issues
- The caveat being that supervisors need to be equipped to raise these sensitively as they have the power – and of being open to learn and listen from trainees too.
- There is a commitment to the developing relationship with a view to maintaining this when the going gets tough and for all those involved to be open to being transformed through the process (mutual learning)

Choosing What Gets Taught

- What does a 'fit for purpose' CP Training Curriculum look like?
- (In a Brexit Britain, with Trump in power in the US?)
- How do we integrate anti-oppressive teaching perspectives?
- Curriculum reviews (& Accreditation visits) –
- How Heteronormative is your Curriculum?
- How White is your Agenda?
- Decolonising Approaches within 'African' Psychology

Self-reflexivity as key

- Self-reflexivity allows trainees to tap into their '*emotional understanding of the dynamics of power*' and in sharing this learn about others' lived experience
- Avoids positioning those from minority groups as experts or 'the native informant', which can make them 'prisoners of identity'
- Enabling trainees to position themselves
- The position described above continues the lack of initiative by those in power to initiate these conversations and places those within the minority in a vulnerable position of having to 'explain themselves' to those with more power

OUR SELF-REFLEXIVITY*

Trainers should use self-reflexivity to examine how their *‘preferred ideas and beliefs impact the training conversation ... to what extent do they constrain and to what extent do they illuminate?’* (Fine & Turner, 2014; pg. 301)

- How would you capture your own identity positions/intersections (3-5 labels)?
- What are your preferred ideas/models/beliefs?
- When might you be transparent about these?
- When might you ‘withhold’ these?
- When might these be a constraining rather than illuminating influence in supervision?
- What can you do about it?

Finding (& Maintaining) Ways Forward

- Homeostasis is Easy
- Change – and especially Maintaining Change – is Hard
- Conversations may be ‘Sticky’, but sticking with them is important
- Grasping the nettles within training – how do we facilitate this?
- On Making ‘nettle soup’ – how do we **keep** engaging positively with ‘thorny’ issues that require engagement NOT avoidance.
- Wider ways of collaborating to transform curriculums?

Some 'Talking 'Race' References'

giffgaff 08:23 98%

journals.sagepub.com

SAGE journals

South African Journal of Psychology

On addressing 'Whiteness' during clinical psychology training

Nicholas Wood, Nimisha Patel

First Published August 8, 2017 | Research Article

Altmetric 3

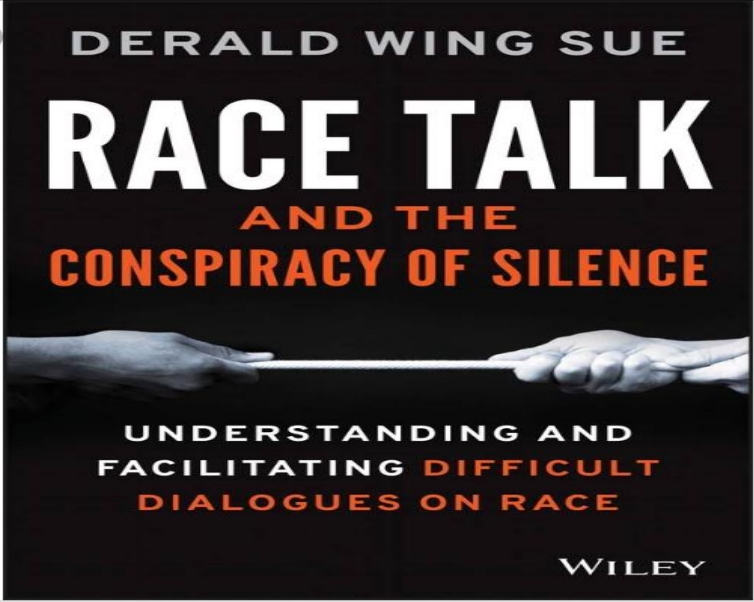
FEEDBACK

Abstract

Metrics Tools

giffgaff 08:24 98%

talking race book sue



DERALD WING SUE

RACE TALK

AND THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

UNDERSTANDING AND FACILITATING DIFFICULT DIALOGUES ON RACE

WILEY

books.google.com

t0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcSvd4ik_LID

Further References

Butler, C. (2004). Lesbian and gay trainees: the challenges of personal and professional integration. *Lesbian & Gay Psychology Review*, 5 (1), 22-29

Daiches, A. & Anderson, D. (2012). The experiences of training as a clinical psychologist with a minority sexual orientation. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 232, 14-17

Fine, M. & Turner, J. (2014). Minding the power in collaborative systemic supervision. In T.C. Todd and C.L. Storm (Eds.) *The complete systemic supervisor*. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell

hooks, B. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. London: Routledge

Paulraj, P.S. (2016) How do Black trainees make sense of their 'identities' in the context of Clinical Psychology training? Unpublished D.Clin.Psy. Thesis, UEL.
[http://roar.uel.ac.uk/5401/1/Petrisha%20Samuel%20Paulraj%20U1331814 %28Thesis%29 .pdf](http://roar.uel.ac.uk/5401/1/Petrisha%20Samuel%20Paulraj%20U1331814%20Thesis%29.pdf)

Rajan, L & Shaw, S.K. (2008). 'I can only speak for myself': some voices from black and minority ethnic clinical psychology trainees. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 190, 11-16

Shah, S., Wood, N., Nolte, L. & Goodbody, L. (2012). The experience of being a trainee clinical psychologist from a black and minority ethnic group: a qualitative study. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 232, 32-35