

Humanistic Approaches to Multiculturalism and Diversity

Perspectives on Existence and Difference

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and important perspectives on
ies in clinical theory and psy-
chological humanistic psychol-
ogy and dignity of people. At the
role of historical and ongoing
on human experience. The
ward the inclusion of cultural
action in the psychotherapeutic
therapists working with clients

PhD, associate professor in the
Development, and Educational
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to be written! It is a multi-
ling approaches to psychotherapy
empowerment in psychotherapy.
social position, and relationship
chapter is a gentle invitation to
beliefs, and by the end of reading
clients' lived experiences and gain
action."

Professor of psychology, University
of Massachusetts Boston, USA

possible to graduate students, aca-
demic provides critical thinking and
experiences, psychological literature,
be validated, challenged, and
orientation, research paradigms,
use of self in work and life."
of the PsyD program and associate
professor, University of Denver, USA

iversity is at the very core of a
psychology itself, has been woefully
multiculturalism, racism, and the dehu-
manization of this book, therefore, is
forefront of current debates and
subject, it deserves a place on the
list."

Roehampton, UK, and author of
Existential Therapies

Afterword

Back to the Future

Ilene A. Serlin

The premise of this book, that humanistic and existential-humanistic psychology must reflect on itself with a multicultural lens if it is going to stay relevant to a fast-changing global world, is very necessary and timely. While most of the issues addressed in this book, such as microaggressions and social change, need to be addressed in contemporary scholarship, there were existentialists such as Sartre and Camus who advocated social action and there were practitioners such as Charlotte Selver who taught about other ways of knowing (Criswell & Serlin, 2015). Some of these people are not taught any longer and should be included in curriculum for the new generation. We can go "back to the future" to build a strong and wide foundation with which to move forward while integrating contemporary scholarship and issues to deepen the relevance for the current times.

Like many of us from the '60s, one of my first influences for knowing myself came from reading Siddhartha, the privileged prince who leaves the palace, encounters suffering in the world, and becomes the Buddha. Many other myths reinforce the image of psychology as the journey of a solitary young hero in search of the holy grail (enlightenment, meaning). However, my foundation teachers were female. Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex* (2009), opened my eyes to the reality that women's existence is different than that of men, and that women have been "other" to the centrality of men throughout history. Women's consciousness movements flourished during the same time as the emancipatory movements of humanistic psychology; however, when I was president of Division 32 of the American Psychological Association (Society for Humanistic Psychology) in 1996, we were below other divisions in terms of percentage of women in leadership (Serlin & Criswell, 2001). Women typically do not operate as sole heroines, nor do women have the good ol' boy network of men. Other divisions practice and offer training in mentoring for women, but Division 32 has not started a mentoring system.

My first therapist, teacher, and eventually colleague/friend, was Laura Perls, wife of Fritz Perls. Although *Ego, Hunger and Aggression* (Perls, 1969) was written on their dinner table, Laura's name is not on the book. When urged to write, she said that her students were her legacy, and she

maintained close relationships around the world for many years. Laura's way of Gestalt was very different than Fritz's; she was subtle, quiet, and supportive rather than confrontive. Fritz was hungry for public acclaim, so he wrote more and is better known. Fritz is famous for his quip: "I'm not in this world to live up to other people's expectations, nor do I feel that the world must live up to mine." While his attitude helped create the stereotype that Gestalt therapy is selfish, Laura studied with Martin Buber and embodied "I-Thou" relationships. Laura's epistemology was not linear male; it was interconnected and relational (Serlin & Shane, 1999). Including her in a humanistic psychology curriculum is important because it corrects and balances the understanding of Gestalt therapy.

Another challenge faced by existential-humanistic psychologists is ontological: What does it mean to be human? Some chapters talk about the loss of humanity that comes with microaggression and objectification of those who become "other." The question and experience of what it means to be human will certainly be further challenged with the advent of artificial intelligence and genetic editing. While existential-humanistic psychologists need to be involved in this conversation, they should remember to include all humans in an I-Thou relationship.

Finally, while this book covered many aspects of new multicultural awareness, there are others that would also be valuable and continue to need to be addressed in the evolving humanistic and existential literature. This book provides a foundation for furthering this scholarship. One is a new application for existential-humanistic psychology. As people around the world become more traumatized, people are torn from their communities and sense of place, and existential-humanistic therapists need to understand the meaning of communal pain and suffering in trauma (Serlin & Cannon, 2004). Next is more focus on the suffering of women, and that of Mother Earth (environmental issues). While honoring women's ways of knowing (Goldberger, Tarule, Clinchy, & Belenky, 1996) and somatic awareness, existential-humanistic psychologists should remember and teach those who pioneered these approaches 50 years ago (Thomas Hanna, Eleanor Criswell, Ida Rolf, and Michael Murphy). Finally, as positivist science and scientific methodology is challenged by non-Western and indigenous ways of knowing, existential-humanistic psychology should continue to vigorously promote methodological diversity (Haraway, 1991; Yakushko, Hoffman, Morgan Consoli, & Lee, 2016).

In conclusion, this book provides a much-needed update on humanistic and existential-humanistic psychology. The first step of this update is conscious-raising about areas that are left out, especially ones on multiculturalism. The next step is to write about these areas, and make sure that the new writing, as well as the historical pieces by existential-humanistic psychologists, is in textbooks and available to psychology students. Finally, existential-humanistic theory needs to be taken out into the world, whether it is clinical (influencing the psychotherapy guidelines at APA),

leadership (creating mentoring programs), social (taking action on social or environmental issues), or research (documenting our work). In this way, we can ground our new thinking and writing in concrete action in the real world. This book, *Humanistic Approaches to Multiculturalism and Diversity: Perspectives on Existence and Difference*, is a wake-up call for the need to refresh our thinking and application about the future of humanistic psychology.

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