

who have disabilities and are sexually abused experience the 'double whammy effect' that reflects 'part of the history of man's inhumanity to man'.

The first chapter introduces the survivors who provide the narrative, and the importance of this narrative is explored in the next chapter. The focus then moves to social assumptions around impairment, and the way people express and survive the pain of their history. One of the most disturbing sections looks at organisational abuse, and the way abusive environments can develop. The question of who abuses and why also includes how perpetrators achieve their aim and why the disabled child is so at risk.

The complex issues behind establishing identity and the powerful role of the narrative are the subject of the next two chapters. Finally, implications for policy, practice and society are summarised from the findings.

This is an important and well written book which addresses subjects such as infanticide and false memory syndrome with a capable and compassionate attitude. The authors write of the need to distinguish between 'narrative truth' conveyed during the therapeutic

process as opposed to 'historical truth' which is associated with facts and the legal connotations. They also illustrate why the therapeutic relationship, with its focus on trust and safety, is crucial to the telling of the story; very relevant in the present climate of debate around the use of CBT.

The book draws on important research including that of van der Kolk and Etherington but never loses sight of the individuals whose stories form the heart of the work. The writers conclude with an acknowledgement of the experiences of the participants and how their narrative can provide a challenge to current policy and practice.

Two relatively minor points: I would have liked to see more on the place of neuroscience research, especially around the issue of attachment, as well as more on the role of the female abuser. Although recommended for those working in social and health services, this book is also highly relevant for counsellors working with young people with abuse issues without disability, as well as those coming into therapy as adults. *Angela Cooper is a BACP senior accredited counsellor and supervisor (group and individual)*

Essential 'how to' guide to research

Researching, reflecting and writing about work: guidance on training course assignments and research for psychotherapists and counsellors

Fiona Gardner and Steven J Coombs (eds)

Routledge 2009, £19.99

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Reviewed by James Costello



The timely arrival of this text accompanies the steadily growing pressure exerted by the IAPT directive for counsellors and psychotherapists to demonstrate and evaluate the therapeutic outcomes of what they do behind closed doors. The NICE endorsement of CBT reflects more the enthusiasm with which practitioners in this area have embraced a culture of inquiry, and less any unique claim this approach may have upon helping those in distress. With this in mind, we are asked to consider that 'the future of the

profession... hangs upon the successful education of the next generation of research-savvy practitioners'. This book provides an accessible 'how to do' social science research as a practising counsellor, psychotherapist, social worker or other caring professional.

With contributions from experienced practitioner-trainers/researchers, it successfully illustrates how therapeutic work is in itself a form of research, and research has an important role to play in personal development and organisational settings, as well as the voluntary and public sectors. The first four chapters address fundamental study skills and the ethical dilemmas of research.

All chapters conclude with useful reflective exercises. The rest of the book is concerned with material appropriate to postgraduate research. The challenging process of deciding which qualitative approach to use is clearly addressed in chapter five. What I like about this and subsequent sections are the examples used to illustrate how a given therapeutic situation lends itself to a particular methodology; the methodology fits the question, not the other way around. Chapter 10 reinforces the importance of publicising research findings.

James Costello is a counsellor, trainer, researcher and university lecturer

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