

example shows businessmen climbing up a ladder into a tree of elephant-trunks while a fat squirrel in the foreground clutches an acorn.

As citizens and as professional service-providers, we cannot ignore the emergent issues of planning both careers and personal lives. To do otherwise is to act in ways that are unethical. This book is therefore highly recommended reading for counsellors who work with clients in schools, community agencies, university and college counselling centres, and other institutions in which psychological counselling is practised.

“The Legacy of Childhood Trauma: Not Always Who They Seem.”
Video Produced by: Research Press, Champaign, IL.

Reviewed by: Carroll Ganam, Lousage Institute.

The videotape “The Legacy of Childhood Trauma: Not Always Who They Seem,” describes the impact of childhood trauma in adolescence. It is created in three 20-minute sections and comes with a discussion guide. Perhaps the most effective section of the documentary is the first one, which includes powerful first-person accounts from adolescents who experienced severe trauma living in families with danger and abuse. The simplicity of their story-telling, the frankness of their narration, and the specificity of their descriptions lend an eloquence and veracity to their accounts, and speak strongly of both the horrors that continue to be inflicted on children within their families, and the inherent resilience and strength of people. This opening section provides a strong first-heralding of the main message of the work—that those involved with adolescents must look behind their masks of defiance, indifference, rage and delinquency to see that these disguise a person who was denied safety, nurturing, and a sense of worth. The mask was a necessary and vital defence for the child at one time, and “not wanting to let anyone in” was a useful survival strategy. This has clear implications for treatment intervention.

The second part of the documentary features interviews with several professionals involved with troubled adolescents, while the third part is a return to the four youngsters who told their story in the first section, along with a number of significant adults who worked with them in their adolescence.

One of the goals of the producers of the documentary is to help those involved with troubled adolescents get past labels such as conduct disorder, and oppositional disorder, which they suggest can lead to a sense of hopelessness on the part of helpers and creates an attitude that kids with those labels are beyond help. Perhaps their goal would have been served better had the youth talked at an earlier time in their healing, when they might be seen as “beyond help,” and more recognizable as those youngsters who challenge mental health professionals, school personnel, child care staff, and parents. Because we meet them at a time when much healing has occurred, the pathos of their stories is not conveyed as richly as it would have been earlier.

What we experience is the maturity and openness of these young people—a far cry from “beyond help” youth.

Another concern about the video is its lack of clarity regarding the target audience. For clinicians experienced in working with post-traumatic symptoms, there is no new information here. In fact, there is no reference to some of the salient information regarding treatment of trauma such as treating intrusive memories and altering core beliefs. However, if the intended audience is school personnel, parents, child care workers or foster parents, the second part of this documentary has some worthwhile and important things to say.

On a final note, both the discussion guide and the documentary refer to the manner in which our society has betrayed children living in abusive, trauma-inducing homes. This is an important point, and one that cannot be overlooked in attempting to provide meaningful change and prevention of childhood trauma. The producers speak to the implicit consensus which develops around some kids who are labeled “beyond help.” Too often, this justifies our lack of effort and leaves one more child to be victimized yet again by the system designed to provide aid. Our society does not yet have zero tolerance for the family abuses which give rise to childhood trauma. This documentary is a useful contribution to the field, a good resource to stimulate discussion, and a good tool to educate.

Pedersen, P. B. (1997). *Culture-centred counselling interventions: Striving for accuracy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Reviewed by: Anju Anand, University of Alberta.

The title of this book leads the reader to expect a collection of multicultural therapy techniques; however its actual focus is the development of the author’s “culture-centered” theory of counselling. Pedersen’s central premise is that counsellors must consider the cultural context that gives meaning to their client’s behaviour; the ability to match client behaviour with the appropriate cultural context is the essence of the culture-centred approach. However, the term culture is used to refer not only to concepts of ethnicity and nationality but demographic (e.g., age) and status (e.g., economic) variables, among others. This broad definition of culture prepares counsellors to track the multiple and often shifting cultural referent groups that can be reflected (e.g., age to gender) during the course of an interview. For example, a client’s difficulties might be understood in the context of her struggles as a woman and/or as an ethnic minority individual.

This ambitious book is divided into three parts. The author sketches his culture-centred approach to counselling in Part One. Part Two expands on the approach’s assumptions through discussions of how it may be applied in different counselling contexts. Part Three consists of a discussion of ethical and training issues, along with a review of the principal content areas covered by the book.