

Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

Polkinghorne, D. E. (2004). *Practice and the human sciences: The case for a judgment-based practice of care*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. ISBN: 0-7914-62005. 221 pages.

Reviewed by: Tanja Haley, Ph.D., Campus Alberta Applied Psychology Program

With the pressure on clinicians to move toward utilizing empirically supported treatments, Donald E. Polkinghorne's book *Practice and the Human Sciences* offers a sound argument for honouring the expertise of those who work in the practice of therapy. Polkinghorne strives to make the case for a movement away from a technical model toward a judgement-based practice of care, integrating the concepts of embodied reasoning and reflective understanding.

For years I have been a fan of Donald Polkinghorne's work, and this book is no exception. With his extensive background in training doctoral-level counsellors and his numerous contributions to the literature, this author is an expert in the field. In the introduction he openly states his thesis: The technical model of practice has limited applicability, and room needs to be made for human judgement. Technically-based practice is defined as the application of scientifically validated knowledge, whereas judgement-based practice entails actions informed by the situated judgements of clinicians. Polkinghorne skillfully builds his argument that the technical approach is not enough; the situated knowledge of practitioners is critical. This book takes the reader on a chapter-by-chapter history of the emergence of each approach and their critical impacts on the human sciences.

Written in clear, concise language, the book begins with an overview of the technical-judgement practice controversy. The subsequent chapters help the reader to clearly understand the origins of this controversy, and they effectively build the case for a judgement-based practice of care. Polkinghorne masterfully weaves together the major philosophies involved in the technification of culture, such as existential, hermeneutic, and social systems, as well as those that form the foundation for embodied reasoning and reflective understanding. The final chapter offers a glimpse of this technification in action in the field of psychotherapy and makes a powerful argument for retaining the human side of the practice of care.

The author's engaging style makes this work accessible to professionals from all areas of the human sciences. Polkinghorne leads the reader through the major themes by providing summaries throughout the book, linking the chapters together in a clear and logical fashion. Rather than the dry and theoretical writings one might expect, this book is an interesting read that is relevant in today's therapeutic climate. I thoroughly enjoyed it!

For anyone dealing with the tension of utilizing empirically supported treatments and meeting the demands of today's managed-care climate, this book is appropriate. I have struggled with the dilemma of making my own practice with clients

accountable, and Donald Polkinghorne's work offers a sound rationale for remembering the unique qualities of each client and situation. It is a book that I feel very comfortable recommending to students and colleagues alike, and one that will remain on my shelf for years to come.

Pedersen, P. B., Draguns, J. G., Lonner, W. J., & Trimble, J. E. (Eds.). (2002). *Counseling across cultures*, 5th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 0-7619-2086-2. 425 pages.

Reviewed by: Aida Miloti, Ph.D. candidate, University of Calgary

Practicing counsellors, counsellors in training, and counsellor educators position culture as central to any counselling experience, increasing the need for contemporary cross-cultural counselling literature. The editors of the fifth edition of *Counseling Across Cultures*, Pedersen, Draguns, Lonner, and Trimble—recognized contributors in the field of multicultural counselling—have assembled the writings of 39 authors from various cultural backgrounds in a single volume that incorporates and explores a broad range of issues central to the cross-cultural counselling field today.

Counseling Across Cultures consists of 18 chapters that are organized in five parts. Part I addresses some of the significant and basic issues relevant to multicultural counselling. More specifically, this part (a) aims to demonstrate the importance of culture-centredness to professional issues in cross-cultural counselling, (b) explores ethical and competency issues in cross-cultural counselling, and (c) addresses the need for indigenization of psychology as a necessary step toward effective culture-centred counselling. In addition, this part of the volume surveys the current state of etic and emic conceptualizations relevant to counselling across cultures. The authors review highlights of the partial progress as well as the persistent problems in the cross-cultural counselling field since the mid 1970s when the first edition of *Counseling Across Cultures* was published. This overview helps to contextualize the topics explored in the subsequent parts of the volume.

Part II of the edition is devoted exclusively to ethnocultural groups. It surveys the problems, issues, and perspectives associated with the counselling of Native American Indians, African Americans, Asian Americans, and the Latina/o population. In general, this part of the book provides information to help counsellors become more competent in their efforts to understand and to work with the aforementioned ethnocultural groups. Although information pertaining to particular ethnocultural groups tends to highlight differences among these groups, these differences are addressed in balance with cultural generalities. The basic assumption that counsellors should be aware of both similarities and differences among cultural groups seems inherent throughout the writings of this volume.

In most counselling textbooks, culture is closely associated with race and ethnicity, and as a consequence other cultural, contextual, and personal dimensions such