Joint Annual Online Conference: Critical Psychotherapy Network (CPN) and Southern Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling (SAFPAC)

# **Diversity and Inclusion:**

Everything a psychotherapist may need to know about 'intersectional feminist, trans\*, critical race/whiteness, migration, (in)equality, queer, disability, post-colonial, decolonial, approaches and studies' but may be too afraid to ask?

> Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022 9:30 am for 10:00 to 5:30pm Zoom link to be sent after booking

Speakers include: Christian Buckland, Artemis Christinaki, Laura Evers, Nicole Chew-Helbig, Erene Hadjiioannou, Geourgiou Konstantinos, Del Loewenthal, Daryl Mahon, Anthony McSherry, Peter Meades, Silva Neves, Gillian Proctor, Julian-Pascal Saadi, James Sedgwick

£15 waged £5 unwaged

Booking and payment through Eventbrite: https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/joint-cpnsafpac-conference-diversity-andinclusion-tickets-408508218077

**Attendance: 6 hours CPD** 

If you have any particular access needs in order to be able to participate in the conference, please let us know now and/or at the start of the conference

# **SAFPAC/CPN Joint Zoom Conference**

**Diversity and Inclusion:** 

Everything a psychotherapist may need to know about 'intersectional feminist, trans\*, critical race/whiteness, migration, (in)equality, queer, disability, post-colonial, decolonial, approaches and studies' but may be too afraid to ask?

# Zoom conference Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2022

The current quest for 'Diversity and Inclusion' might be seen as both for the good and complex.

Yet for some to question how diversity and inclusion is conceptualised can be unacceptable as it questions their very right to exist, and; for others to get involved in any culture wars is to fiddle whilst Rome (the World) burns. As in the poster for this conference this quest for diversity and inclusion can too easily lead to culture war brick walling.

Our inability to be clear ourselves on such topics as psychotherapists may threaten our very project. This is where traditionally clients have been able to come to us to explore what they can't elsewhere. For clients may now find it difficult to find a therapist who is able to exploring with them their concerns around diversity and inclusion which can be complicated and may take time to consider.

So when is it diversity and when is it perversity and who decides? Similarly, who and what should be included and excluded from what and by whom? Other questions include whether these changes, in what might be considered cultural practices, become permanent or will they, as historically, continue to vary?

Diversity and inclusion can be considered as part of a growing cultural trend of being 'concerned with the ways in which literature and other cultural media reinforce or undermine the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of people...'. For psychotherapists/psychological therapists it would appear that these notions



increasingly are both important, and yet difficult, to be thought about with their clients? Furthermore are these difficulties to do with the biases of the person who is the psychotherapist and could it also sometimes be to do with how diversity, inclusion and related terms appear to be constructed?

How then do we explore our changing world which is so different to the one we were born into? Are psychotherapists no longer being appropriately curious for fear of being caught in trip wires? Do psychotherapists need if not a trip advisor somewhere where they can confidentially explore where they are as people and practitioners? The idea of the conference is that not only will there be speakers reporting on the cutting edge of these important developments but there will be space where participants can explore in small groups where they are in themselves and in their therapeutic practices.

Prof Del Loewenthal

Conference Chair Critical Psychotherapy Network & Southern Association of Psychotherapy and Counselling



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## PROGRAMME – Draft 2

9.30am - 10.00am:	Zoom log in
10.00am - 10.05am:	Welcome Prof Del Loewenthal - Conference Chair (Critical Psychotherapy Network and Southern Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling, UK)
10:05am – 10:20am:	Introduction: Everything you may want to know about diversity and inclusion but may be too afraid to ask? Prof Del Loewenthal - Conference Chair (Critical Psychotherapy Network and Southern Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling, UK)
10:20am – 10:40am:	Queer Minds Queer Needs Dr Julian-Pascal Saadi (NHS and Metanoia Institute, UK) and Erene Hadjiioannou, (Private Practice, UK)
10:40am - 11:00am:	Therapy and Diversity - An (un)therapeutic relationship? James Sedgwick (Newman University, UK)
11:00am – 11:10am:	Break
11:10am – 11:30am:	Irreconcilable Languages: Extending the dialogical imagination about autism inside and outside the clinic Georgiou Konstantinos (University of West Macedonia, Greece)
11:30am – 11:50am:	A Psychotherapist's Lived Experience In-Session with an Asylum Seeker and Translator: An Autoethnographic Case Study Nicole Chew-Helbig (Private Practice, Singapore)
11:50am - 12:10pm:	Being Seen? The lived experience of psychodynamic practitioners disclosing or not disclosing sight impairment <i>Laura Evers (Oxford University and Private Practice)</i>
12:10pm – 12:20pm:	Break
12:20pm - 12:50pm:	Response - Contemporary psychotherapy: evolution in our modern time Silva Neves (Contemporary Institute of Clinical Sexology, UK)
12:50pm – 1:20pm:	Lunch
1:20pm – 2.00pm:	Small Groups



2:00pm – 2:20pm:	Discrimination against the covid-unvaccinated: the contribution from psychotherapy and its professional bodies Dr Christian Buckland (Southern Association for Psychotehrapy and Counselling, Private Practice, Priory Hospital and NHS, UK)
2.20pm – 2.40pm:	Towards an Integrative Model of Multicultural Responsiveness Daryl Mahon (Oxford Brookes, Outcomes Matter and Genio)
2.40pm- 2:50pm:	Break
2:50pm - 3:10pm:	Deconstructing Humanitarian Compassion: Ψ as Method Artemis Christinaki (University of Manchester)
3:10pm – 3:30pm:	Diversity and Aggression: A reflection on sensual meanings and ameliorative law after Freud and Lacan Dr Anthony McSherry (Critical Psychotherapy Network and Southern Association for Psychotherapy and Counselling, UK)
3.30pm – 3.50pm:	An Exploration of Lesbian and Gay People's Experiences of Religion, and their Implications for Psychotherapy: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) <i>Dr Peter Meades (NHS and Private Practice, UK)</i>
3:50pm – 4:00pm:	Break
4:00pm – 4:30pm	Response Gillian Proctor (University of Leeds, UK)
4:30pm – 5:10pm:	Small groups
5:10pm - 5:30pm:	Plenary Presenters, respondents and all participants
5:30pm:	Conference close



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## SPEAKER ABSTRACTS AND BIOS

**Christian Buckland** – Discrimination against the covid-unvaccinated: the contribution from psychotherapy and its professional bodies

In this presentation it will be argued that discrimination against those who chose to exercise their legal right to decline a covid-19 vaccination has become the most recent form of targeted 'othering' by a majority against a minority. Such discrimination has been able to flourish due to government approval and active facilitation; and this has demonstrably led to considerable – and arguably quite unnecessary – emotional suffering and physical harm in a significant minority of the population. This form of discrimination commonly goes unheard, however, and often goes unaddressed during talks and seminars on equality, diversity and inclusion – highlighting the urgent need for an open, undefensive dialogue on this important topic, and to interrogate the cultural and professional silencing that currently exists around covid discrimination as a cultural phenomenon. Psychotherapy is one of the key cultural places where the unspeakable can be spoken, yet there is deeply concerning evidence that at least some practising psychotherapists refused to hear the words of anyone who chose their legal right to not take a covid-19 vaccination. This presentation will highlight the failures of the psychotherapeutic community to acknowledge and address this new cultural form of discrimination and shine a spotlight on key issues as well as the conditions that enabled this to occur.

Dr Christian Buckland is psychotherapist and has been in clinical practice for over ten years. He is the director of a psychological clinic working alongside a multi disciplinary team consisting of psychiatrists, psychologists and psychotherapists. Christian has held practising privileges at the Priory Hospital and has worked within the NHS. He is the psychological advisor to a national eating disorder charity and regularly speaks and writes on topics relating to eating disorders for children and adults. In addition, Christian works with an organisation consisting of over around 750 members who have been injured by the covid-19 vaccination, providing input into all psychological issues including suicide prevention; and he provides peer support for the group moderators

## **Artemis Christinaki** – Deconstructing Humanitarian Compassion: $\Psi$ as Method

This paper discusses humanitarian compassion (Redfield and Bornstein, 2010) within the Derridean notion of hospitality. Reflecting on the age of Imperial Humanitarianism (Barnett, 2011) where Evangelists formed administrative missions to save the souls of the slaves in the colonial provinces of Europe, it aims to address the link of compassion with Christianity and colonialism. Setting the Christian scene of humanitarianism, hospitality as a Derridean concept is introduced to depict that compassion and aid work in-between certain 'guest and host' territories. The impossibility of hospitality under these circumstances highlight the play of power relations in which the other is produced (Nayak, 2015). While Derrida argues that hospitality cannot be power-balanced unless the language of the host is deconstructed, psychology in the humanitarian sector performs an 'emotional hospitality' which seeks to extract a story of confession.  $\Psi$  as method works to open a discussion on suffering, Christianity, and colonialism as a modern form of conversion: the confession of truth in a psychological discourse. Challenging compassion and aid as constituted in psychological discourse, this paper invites therapists to rethink the contextualisation under which these ideals



emerged while introducing a discussion on what psychology does to refugees as well as courseling minorities'.

Artemis Christinaki is a lecturer in Global Health in the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute (HCRI) at the University of Manchester, UK. Her PhD research critically explores what are the politics or, the role of, psychosocial support in the refugee camps of Greece. It focuses chiefly on the way aid workers' subjectivities emerge amid the spatial temporality of camps and within the combined discourses of psychology and aid.

**Laura Evers** - Being Seen? The lived experience of psychodynamic practitioners disclosing or not disclosing sight impairment

The taboo of therapist self-disclosure and literature addressing disclosure issues from a psychodynamic perspective is explored. Research on disclosure decisions among physically impaired practitioners is limited. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis qualitative research methodology was employed to understand the lived experience of psychodynamic practitioners with sight impairment to understand disclosure decision-making processes in a therapeutic setting. Six participants self-identified as sight impaired psychodynamic practitioners and were interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. Findings showed that the experience of working as a practitioner with sight impairment is a tenacious endeavour, requiring high levels of self-awareness and determination in navigating the minefield of self-disclosure, daring to be seen by others, holding the patient's need to be seen and journeying through loss and acceptance of the changing self. Results showed that there is an inverse relationship between likelihood to self-disclose sight impairment and the extent to which practitioners work with unconscious process and transference.. Ultimately, reclamation of disavowed parts of the self, defined therapists' ability to make therapeutic disclosure decisions. Suggestions for future research, clinical and ethical implications are provided plus recommendations for impaired practitioners and those who work with difference.

Laura Evers has a MSt. in Psychodynamic Practice from Oxford University. She is a psychodynamic postgraduate course tutor at Oxford University, therapist and supervisor in private practice. She qualified in 2014 and has previous experience working in the secondary and tertiary education sectors counselling students, accredited by UKCP.

**Nicole Chew-Helbig** - A Psychotherapist's Lived Experience In-Session with an Asylum Seeker and Translator: An Autoethnographic Case Study

Featured in this article is a psychotherapy case study recounted from the lived experience of the psychotherapist working with an asylum seeker from Afghanistan, with the help of a translator. The methodology used is an aesthetic inquiry adapted from Autoethnography, which engages the practitioner as the researcher-autoethnographer who enters a "field", which is the therapy situation. The reflexive writing of the story which is integral to the method, sets off a heuristic process, integrating research and practice. From this case study, one grasp the nuances and the atmosphere of a linguistically and culturally challenged therapeutic situation. By entangling the story with Gestalt therapy theory the possibilities and the value of being present to suffering in therapy is demonstrated.



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is currently pursuing a doctorate in Psychotherapy Science in Sigmund Freud University in Vienna.

# **Georgiou Konstantinos** - Irreconcilable Languages: Extending the dialogical imagination about autism inside and outside the clinic

Autism spectrum disorders have deeply captured the public imagination for nearly eight decades producing a very ambiguous representational and thus political field. Committed to the rationale of malleable attributes, most of the clinical discourses emphasize the pathological characteristics of the condition. On the other hand, during the last decades a vast number of autism advocates and activists counter this view through an investment on ideas of neuro-diversity and human diversity. Broadly, the stories told within this extended discursive field have now established a rather dichotomized relational field with unforeseen consequences. In this paper the implications of this discursive polarization are explored. Through a critical discursive and a multimodal framework the language of the clinic and the language of the activist are thought together in order to provide the current conversational climate. Finally, through an imaginary dialogue between the two voices the prospect of exiting towards a less conflictual relational dynamic is considered.

Dr Georgiou Konstantinos, Occupational Therapist and Music Therapist, graduated from the Department of Occupational Therapy of the Technological Institution of Athens (currently University of Western Attica) Greece in 2004. Since then he has been developing a variable clinical experience in the field of pediatric occupational therapy, while he mainly worked with children with a pallet of developmental disabilities. In 2004, he also received his diploma in Violin Performance from the Contemporary Conservatory of Athens where he studied with the famous soloist Vladislav Halapsis. As a 8iolinist Dr Georgiou participated in several concert and theatrical plays such the theatrical play 'Peer Gynt' hosted by the National Theatre of Greece. After completing his undergraduate studies, Dr Georgiou undertook a music therapy degree which resulted in a Post-Graduate Diploma degree from the University of Cardiff. Since 2019, he received his PhD from the University of Hertfordshire in United Kingdom. His thesis concerned the way Autism is socially constructed in clinical and nonclinical settings and within psychoanalytic and activist discourses. His current research interests concern the way language and multimodal resources craft human materialities. In this respect he studies human occupation and disability in post-humanist and new-materialist philosophical frameworks. Since, 2020 he lectures in the Department of Occupational Therapy in Western Macedonia, Greece in a variety of subjects.

**Prof Del Loewenthal** – Everything you may want to know about diversity and inclusion but may be too afraid to ask?

#### See conference brief

Prof Del Loewenthal is is Chair of Southern Association For Psychotherapy And Counselling (SAFPAC)'s existential-analytic training (<u>www.safpac.co.uk</u>), co-founder Critical Psychotherapy Network (www.criticalpsychotherapy.wordpress.com) and Emeritus Professor Psychotherapy and Counselling, University of Roehampton, UK. His current books (all Routledge 2020/21): "Critical Existential-Analytic Psychotherapy: Some Implications for Practices, Theories and Research", "What is Paranormal?: Some Implications for Psychological Therapies", "Towards Transcultural Histories of



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rsychotherapies (with Shamaasani), Beyona the Therapeutic State (with Ness and Haray), and "Love, Sex and Psychotherapy in a Post-Romantic Era". Del has a private practice in Wimbledon and Brighton. (www.delloewenthal.com).

#### Dr Julian-Pascal Saadi and Erene Hadjiioannou - Queer Minds Queer Needs

Equal access to mental healthcare is a right held by all Britons, yet evidence suggests that individuals from the LGBTQIA+ population have poorer experiences compared to cisgender and heterosexual clients. This is problematic when considered alongside the impact of living in a societally disempowering world.Research highlights how our mental health systems perpetuate harm to LGBTQIA+ patients. One of these systems is the institution and practice of psychotherapy. We draw on our three fold positionalities to explore what change in the practice of psychotherapy could look like. Specifically, we consider what 'Queering' psychotherapy might mean in order to support the growing number of individuals identifying as LGBTQIA+. We also reflect on the binaries underpinning our discipline and discuss their role in perpetuating harm during psychotherapy. We propose that binary thinking restricts understanding our clients' needs and generates insufficient models of care. We advocate a practice of fluidity, rather than rigidity, to support equitable practice. By 'Queering' psychotherapy provision in Britain, we contribute to the evidence base for antioppressive and inclusive practice.

Dr Saadi (he/him) is a Specialist Counselling Psychologist working in a London-based Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) within the National Health Services. He is also a part-time academic lecturer on the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology at Metanoia Institute. Dr Saadi is a member of Pink Therapy and specialises in working with gender, sexual and relationship diverse (GSRD) people. He runs his own private practice where most of his clinical work is with the wider Queer community.research interests include working with diverse sexualities and gender identities in the therapeutic space. He is passionate about how to 'Queer' and diversify therapy to meet the needs of Queer patients, particularly in the public healthcare system where therapy is often standardised based on hetero- and cisnormative frameworks.

Erene Hadjiioannou (she/her) is an Integrative Psychotherapist offering psychotherapy, training, speaking, and writing services via her private practice in Leeds. Her focus is on supporting survivors of sexual violence of any gender, including within her latest publication: 'Psychotherapy with Survivors of Sexual Violence: Inside and Outside the Room'.

Knowing that the mental health system is largely inaccessible to many, including when it intersects with legal systems, Erene acts on her social responsibility as a psychotherapist. In particular, she is part of an independent steering group working to change the Crown Prosecution Service guidelines on pre-trial therapy, and engages in activism and community support.

## Daryl Mahon - Towards an Integrative Model of Multicultural Responsiveness

There is an increasing need for practitioners to be responsive to multicultural identities in clinical practice. Although the multicultural competency framework has been around for a number of decades, its overall utility and generalisability have not been consistently established. The book chapter approach to learning about the multicultural engagement is rather limited, not least because it is impossible to learn about the vast identities of the different cultures that the average practitioner will work within routine practice. In response to this gap in the literature, the current paper proposes an integrative model of multicultural responsiveness that brings together trans-





multicultural practices from the extant interature. In using so, this paper provides a model of multicultural practice that seeks to learn about the client's complex multicultural identity during the assessment phase, during therapy, and by monitoring the process and outcome of care. A case vignette is provided demonstrating the application and utility of this model

Daryl Mahon is a psychotherapist, lecturer and researcher. Prior to taking up his current role in research Daryl worked across the social inclusion sector, working with individuals and communities facing marginalisation. Much of his work has centred on substance use with people also involved in the criminal justice system, mental health difficulties and homelessness. Daryl also lectures in Health and Social Care and delivers training to national and international practitioners and organisations. He has published in various peer reviewed areas related to psychotherapy processes and outcomes, trauma and leadership.

# **Anthony McSherry** - Diversity and aggression: a reflection on sensual meanings and an ameliorative law after Freud and Lacan

The aim of this article is to explore phenomenologically how the 'inside' (psychical) and 'outside' (the other and/or society) interweave since it appears that sometimes those of us who favour diversity may also inadvertently shut it down. Phenomenology appears to open more easily onto what we don't want to know about in our everyday lives, or a turning away which impedes diversity. If we cannot hear our own thoughts that come to us from the 'inside', then how can we move towards diversity on the 'outside.' The tensions between turning away and turning towards leads into a Freudian look at conscience and aggression, and Lacan's idea of the ego being the seat of identification and misrecognition. Freud's observation of an 'original' aggression towards the other appears especially important. It is argued that this aggression always fragments the movement towards diversity. Two factors appear to mediate this movement, namely a 'negative' exclusion, and a 'positive' ameliorative 'law'. Two fictional accounts are given from everyday life reflecting societal and psychical aggression, including its 'privacy' or sensual meanings.

## Dr Tony McSherry is an Existential-Analytical Psychotherapist in private practice.

# **Peter Meades** - An Exploration of Lesbian and Gay People's Experiences of Religion, and their Implications for Psychotherapy: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

This qualitative research uses Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore lesbian and gay people's experiences of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, and the implications for psychotherapy. A total of six participants, three gay men and three lesbian women, were identified through an initial online survey and successive purposive sampling. Data were collected using unstructured interviews and analysed to determine three major themes: "Religious Tribalism", "Liminal Processes", and "Navigating Relationships".In the context of a wider social discourse regarding heterosexist hegemony, this project has the potential to increase psychotherapists' awareness of the intersection of homosexuality and religion, and the diverse ways in which this plays out. The research invites therapists to consider any potentially socially constructed positions, and encourages a life-course perspective. Recommendations include providing high-quality training for therapists to understand, appreciate and interact with people from different cultures or belief systems from their own. Suggestions for future research include exploring heterosexual perspectives within religious institutions and exploration of the positive role of religion for non-heterosexual people.



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Dr Peter Meades is a UKCP registered Integrative Psychotherapist and IPT accredited practitioner living in London. He is Head of Counselling/IPT for Cardiff & Vale NHS University Health Board, working remotely supporting a Digital First Service. He has a small private practice in London. As an Hispanophile, he is passionate about the Spanish language, food and culture. Further information is available at www.petermeades.co.uk

#### Silva Neves – Response - Contemporary psychotherapy: evolution in our modern time

Psychotherapists can work effectively with the GSRD populations with their existing modalities. However, there are specific core competencies to consider when working with LGBTQ+ people. This talk will clearly outline those GSRD competencies and the specific needs they meet in working with LGBTQ+ people. It will also be an opportunity for clinicians to self-reflect on their existing competencies and their professional development.

Silva Neves is a COSRT-accredited and UKCP-registered psychosexual and relationship psychotherapist and a trauma psychotherapist and a supervisor. He is a Pink Therapy Clinical Associate. Silva works extensively with the LGBTQ+ populations. He is a Course Director for CICS (Contemporary Institute of Clinical Sexology). He is also an author and speaks internationally. Silva is a member of the editorial board for the journal Sex and Relationship Therapy.

## Gillian Proctor - Diversity in counselling and psychotherapy

In this commentary prompted by engaging with the papers in this special issue, I critique the way that diversity and inclusion concepts can be used and recommend a critical diversity approach. I explore some difficulties for the profession of Counselling & Psychotherapy (C&P) in adopting a critical diversity agenda and suggest that we are also well-prepared for this work, resonating with our tradition of self and intersubjective awareness. I raise the issue of ableism as a particular example of the necessity for constant deconstruction of language and attitudes to truly challenge inequalities within and without the profession. I weave the papers from this special issue throughout, wherever they are relevant.

Dr Gillian Proctor is a lecturer in counselling and psychotherapy at the University of Leeds. She is also an independent clinical psychologist, offering psychotherapy, supervision and training. Her particular interests are in politics, ethics and power on which she has written two key text books ('The dynamics of power in counselling and psychotherapy' 2002/2017: PCCS Books. 'Values and ethics in counselling and psychotherapy' 2014: Sage) and many articles and book chapters. She is currently a research fellow, researching authenticity, belonging and inclusion in online teaching and learning. Before moving to academia, she worked in the NHS for 22 years and was passionate about the relationship between inequalities, deprivation and distress and how the power structures within psychiatry often compounded rather than relieve this distress. Navigating the complexities of understanding unique individuals whilst acknowledging the impact and power of the socio-political context keeps her very busy.



#### James Sedgwick - Therapy and Diversity - An (un)therapeutic relationship?

There is fundamental confusion and notable omissions within counselling and psychotherapy's adoption of diversity principles. This prevents the profession from achieving its aims of more respectful and efficacious clinical practice with certain populations. The article argues that uncritical over-reliance on ideas from outside the profession have resulted in a failure to appraise which groups might require specific attention. Unacknowledged confusion between celebratory and critical approaches to diversity are also identified as a source of practical muddle. Putatively radical assertions about understanding minority group experience are shown to actually exclude valuable ways of understanding social disadvantage which might better enhance our understanding and efficacy. The article concludes by suggesting that the multiple difficulties within the profession's embrace of diversity can be understood in terms of a refusal to reconsider the theoretical, economic and organisational foundations of our therapeutic work to which questions of diversity pose a serious challenge. A case is made for a more open discussion of the relevant issues accompanied by a call for revised professional organisation to support knowledge production.

James M. Sedgwick is a UKCP-registered psychotherapist and Senior Lecturer in Counselling and Psychotherapy at Newman University. The views expressed in this article are not those of his employer.



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