

Should we teach ‘critical psychology’ or ‘the psychology of human being’?

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SUMMARY: In this article I make a case for presenting what we do as a psychology of human being, an alternative approach to teaching critical psychology. It is one that remains critical but concentrates on what make us human.

KEY WORDS: binary, oppositional, Othering, human, human being

Teaching Critical Psychology: International perspectives is a motley book, full of all sorts of goodies for people seeking to teach critical psychology and/or to teach psychology critically. Its chapters are intellectually challenging and offer real practical advice and insight to help us with the way we teach and train in psychology. Given its editors are both working in the counselling/clinical field, the collection is fairly heavy on these topics, but these chapters are written in ways that have broader interest and applicability and are well worth reading whatever your specialism. The collection also includes chapters on the fundamental principles of critical psychology, including human rights, liberation pedagogy and critical approaches to training; as well as chapters that focus on teaching with and about Othered groups, where psychology has a history of mistreatment, including Indigenous peoples, addicts, people with disability and child ‘victims’ of domestic violence. But I think it would have been useful to have also included specific chapters on how to teach psychology in the context of neoliberalism, patriarchy and structural racism, given how pervasive these three ideologies have become entrenched within mainstream psychology’s assumptions and curricula, as well as in the culture of many of our students.

Wendy Stainton Rogers is Professor Emerita at the Open University. She was active in the development of critical psychology, especially through the dissident group, the Beryl Curt Fan Club, which collectively authored the book *Textuality and Tectonics* which took criticality very seriously but did so with great fun and panache! Email address: w.stainton.rogers@icloud.com