

# Literature review on the anthropology of therapeutic intervention

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## **Introduction**

This paper is addressing the concept of psychotherapeutic intervention which according to the authors, is broader than just psychotherapy as some people sometimes confuse psychotherapeutic intervention for. The first writer argues that psychotherapeutic intervention is a very old concept in the United States of America and that the claims of someone in particular (Freud) having invented the idea of psychotherapeutic intervention is malice and cannot be ascertained. The first writer broadly looks at how the ethnocentric views and politics have tampered with the conception and application of the idea of psychotherapeutic intervention.

## **Quotation of parts that is central to the work:**

“ A corollary of the view that European doctors invented psychotherapeutic intervention is the view that ritual interventions of pre modern societies are “ precursors” that merely reflect the ignorance of people who still believe in magic rather than science (Frazer 1998).”

This quotation is central to the paper because it echoes the entire argument in the paper. This belief is a great impediment to the conception of psychotherapeutic intervention and it is a culturally and politically driven view which should have no place in the contemporary conception of the idea. What the writer puts forward is that the invention of the idea is a universal issue which cannot be credited to a particular culture or society.

“ The interrelationship of clinical knowledge and cultural ideology is revealed by the fact that, as society changes, psychiatric knowledge changes with it.”

This quotation is also central to the paper because this paper is about the

evolution of psychotherapeutic intervention over time. The key point is that psychotherapeutic intervention is not a stagnant issue but that it changes and advances with the changes in human society concerning clinical knowledge where we have psychotherapeutic intervention. Thus, the paper handles anthropology of the idea, looking at its evolution from the old days to date.

The points raised by the paper cannot be said to be argued to be in harmony with one another per se. A very good example is the issue the writer raises at the beginning of the paper that the idea of the origin of psychotherapeutic intervention cannot be traced to any particular culture in the world and that its universal having been practiced in and by many societies globally. As the paper advances, the writer then looks at how changes in human culture and their advancements have led to change in the understanding and practice of psychotherapeutic intervention. This is not in contrast with the initial argument of the paper but builds up even more to the subject the paper is discussing.

However, when the writer talks of how cultural changes and clashes between the euro-American culture and the Native American culture have led to paradigm shift in the notion of psychotherapeutic intervention, there is serious contradiction in his first proposition and this one. If in his initial argument the writer talks of the concept being universal and cannot be attached to any individual culture, then its cultural understanding and perception should be universal and not tied to any individual culture, then the concept should not have any paradigm shift as a result of cultural changes of any particular society.

**Question:**

1. If psychotherapeutic intervention or what is widely confused for psychotherapy cannot be traced to any one society for its origin or discovery, then where did it begin? Is it possible that an idea can start not in any particular place but everywhere at the same time?
2. If the origin of psychotherapeutic intervention cannot be traced to any culture, then is it logical that the cultural changes of different societies can cause a paradigm shift in the conception of the idea? This implies that the concept should have a culture that is universally modeled and unified and not being individualized to distinct cultures.

**Work cited**

Joseph D. C., Clinical Paradigm Clashes: Ethnocentric and Political Barriers to Native American Efforts at Self-Healing