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Contextualising a Problematic Relationship between Narrative Therapy  
and Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Evaluation in Psychology

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## Abstract

This thesis problematises a conflict between two discourses: narrative therapy and evidence-based psychotherapy evaluation in psychology. To answer the research question of how narrative therapy can be evaluated, I contextualise both discourses by historically situating them in and through a genealogical examination. Narrative therapy is a postmodern therapy that draws from a diverse history of knowledge involving a range of interpretivist theoretical influences that are resistances to positivist social science. In contrast, evidence-based practice in psychology, the latest model of evidence-based psychotherapy evaluation, is modelled from evidence-based medicine. Evidence-based practice is understood as an improved evaluation model from the empirically-supported treatment movement, and operates within a positivist philosophy that privileges objective methodology over interpretative research approaches. A genealogy enables a power relationship between narrative therapy and evidence-based psychotherapy evaluation to be made visible that indicates an incommensurable conflict (a *differend*) due to their divergent philosophies on the formation and practice of human knowledge (epistemology). However, a genealogy also enables a fragmentation of the meaning of evaluation and narrative therapy and in doing so pluralises the meaning of evaluation, narrative therapy, and narrative therapy evaluation. I conclude by tentatively considering possibilities for the evaluation of narrative therapy while problematising them within (and reflecting on) the *differend* between narrative therapy and evidence-based psychotherapy evaluation in psychology.

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## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	IV
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VII
INTRODUCTION .....	1
(Re)Locating the Issue of Narrative Therapy and Evaluation.....	3
Overview .....	5
CHAPTER 1 PROBLEMATISATION .....	9
Competing Paradigms of the ‘Truth’ of Psychotherapy Evaluation.....	9
The Present State of Affairs of Psychotherapy Evaluation in Psychology.....	13
Narrative Therapy: Dissent on the Apparent Consensus of Evaluation .....	18
A Problematisation of a Differend formed from My Experience.....	21
Problematisation as a Strategy for Critical Historical Research .....	32
Reflecting on Formulating the (or an Emergence of) Research	
Question(ings) .....	37
A Location / Disclosure of My Values and a Reflection on My	
Experiences of Evaluation in Psychology .....	39
Has the Relation between Evaluation and Narrative Therapy been addressed	
in Psychology?.....	44
The Research Question(ing) .....	47
CHAPTER 2 GENEALOGY AS A METHODOLOGY AND A READING	
PRACTICE: TRANSVERTING THE EVIDENTIARY.....	49
Genealogy from Archaeology .....	51
Discontinuities in History.....	51
Rupturing Humanist and Modernist Progressivism .....	52
Conceptualising Relations between Discourse, Knowledge, and	
Power to Disrupt a Unified Concept/Practice .....	54
Disrupting Truth Regimes .....	58
Genealogy as Dissociative Transversion of the Evidentiary .....	59
A Dissociative Research Approach.....	59
Contingency and Conditions of Possibility .....	61
Identifying Contingent Discursive Practices: Subjugated	
Knowledges, Descent, and Emergence .....	63
Applying Genealogy in the Context of This Thesis .....	65
Collection and Analysis of Documents as Genealogical Method .....	66
Critiquing and Transforming My Disciplinary Location – Psychology:	
Genealogy and Reflexivity .....	68
A Reflection on Genealogy .....	70
Afterthought: Genealogy and (Transverting) Validity .....	71
Coda.....	73
CHAPTER 3 TRACING THE THEORETICAL DESCENT (AND	
EMERGENCE) OF NARRATIVE THERAPY .....	75



Tracing the Multiple Descents of Epistemology in Narrative Therapy as Emergent Moments of Resistance to Positivist Science.....	75
Symbolic Interactionist Descent: Performance of Meaning.....	80
Erving Goffman: Unique Outcomes and Performing Moral Careers.....	83
Victor Turner: Performance of Meaning through Liminality/Subjunctivation.....	87
Barbara Myerhoff: Symbolic Performances and Reflexivity / Reflexive Consciousness.....	90
Clifford Geertz: Textual Indeterminacy and Thick Description of Meaning.....	93
Cybernetic Descent: Meaning through Comparison and Patterns of Interaction.....	96
Constructivist Descent: Narratives as Constitutive of Lived Experience.....	101
Constructing Experience In and Through Narrative Meaning .....	103
Jerome Bruner: Modes of Thought .....	104
Edward Bruner: Narratives are Politically Constitutive.....	108
Foucaultian Descent: Normalising Practices of Evaluation .....	110
Towards a Conclusion .....	115
 CHAPTER 4 TRACING THE THEORETICAL DESCENT AND EMERGENCE OF RESISTANCES TO POSITIVIST EVALUATION IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES.....	117
Dissociating and Pluralising Evidence-Based Evaluation.....	119
Emergent Discontinuities in the Descent of Evaluation Theory .....	120
Bifurcations from within Positivist Evaluation .....	120
Resisting Reductionist Evaluation in the 1960s and 1970s.....	121
Emergences of New Meanings of Evaluation .....	122
Responsive Evaluation – Attending to Local Knowledges.....	123
Empowerment Evaluation – Fostering Self-determination.....	125
Evaluation as Practical Hermeneutics – Critical, Practical Understanding in and through Dialogue .....	126
Fourth-Generation Evaluation – Constructing Understanding through Values and Partnerships.....	128
Towards a Conclusion .....	131
 CHAPTER 5 TRACING THE CONTEMPORARY DESCENT AND EMERGENCES OF EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHOTHERAPY EVALUATION IN PSYCHOLOGY .....	133
Documenting and Tracing the Contemporary Descent and Emergence of Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Evaluation and its Resistances .....	133
Governmentality.....	137
Events before Empirically Supported Treatments.....	139
Emergence of Empirically Supported Treatments.....	142
Technologies of Standardisation .....	146
Technologies of Measurement and Experimental Methodolaty .....	156
Medicalising Technologies of Disorder-focused Prescription (and Proscription) .....	162
Discourse of Professional Competition.....	168
Interim Summary .....	175
Emergence of the EST Resistance Movements.....	176

Principles of Empirically Supported Interventions (PESI) .....	177
Empirically Supported Relationships .....	181
Humanistic Psychology Resistances .....	183
Discourses of Counter-Conducts of Evaluation .....	186
Evaluation at Present: Emergence of Evidence-Based Practice in Psychology (EBPP) .....	193
Towards a Conclusion .....	202
 CHAPTER 6 CONTEXTUALISING A GENEALOGICAL RELATIONSHIP: A DIFFEREND.....	207
A Problematisation of a Differend between Narrative Therapy ‘Evaluation’ Discourse and Psychotherapy Evaluation Discourse in Psychology .....	212
Juxtaposing Narrative Therapy Evaluation with Evidence-Based Psychotherapy Evaluation Discourse .....	215
 CHAPTER 7 ADDRESSING THE DIFFEREND: TOWARDS A CONCLUSION.	241
REFERENCES .....	251

