

# THINKING SPACE

PROMOTING THINKING ABOUT RACE, CULTURE, AND  
DIVERSITY IN PSYCHOTHERAPY AND BEYOND



EDITED BY  
FRANK LOWE

ROUTLEDGE

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# THINKING SPACE

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Promoting Thinking about  
Race, Culture, and Diversity  
in Psychotherapy and Beyond

Edited by  
*Frank Lowe*

Foreword by  
*M. Fakhry Davids*

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*To my children:  
Kwame, Yohannes, and Moyenda*



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## SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

*Margot Waddell*

Since it was founded in 1920, the Tavistock Clinic has developed a wide range of developmental approaches to mental health which have been strongly influenced by the ideas of psychoanalysis. It has also adopted systemic family therapy as a theoretical model and a clinical approach to family problems. The Clinic is now the largest training institution in Britain for mental health, providing postgraduate and qualifying courses in social work, psychology, psychiatry, and child, adolescent, and adult psychotherapy, as well as in nursing and primary care. It trains about 1,700 students each year in over 60 courses.

The Clinic's philosophy aims at promoting therapeutic methods in mental health. Its work is based on the clinical expertise that is also the basis of its consultancy and research activities. The aim of this Series is to make available to the reading public the clinical, theoretical, and research work that is most influential at the Tavistock Clinic. The Series sets out new approaches in the understanding and treatment of psychological disturbance in children, adolescents, and adults, both as individuals and in families.

*Thinking Space* springs from the collaborative work of the "Thinking Space" discussion forum, initiated by the volume's editor, Frank Lowe, twelve years ago and run by him ever since. As

the book makes clear, this is a very distinctive forum, bringing together, as it does, a broad spectrum of thinkers and writers from a wide variety of disciplines. The hallmarks are honesty, courage, loyalty, and a shared commitment to facing the uncomfortable truths that are expressed in the areas examined. These areas are those of diversity, race, and culture, and the truths are about hard-to-acknowledge and not always conscious attitudes and beliefs of one's own, but also those of others—hence the subtle interlacing of internal worlds and external realities.

These choppy waters have been beautifully and consistently navigated over the years, as is attested in the pages that follow. The forum does, indeed, as the editor states, constitute a “container for thought”—a “mental space” (Young, 1994a) in which the participants can learn and develop, in a wide variety of settings. In the current world climate, the scope of the book feels acutely topical, as a wide range of experiences and contexts are examined and reflected upon. As befits public sector work, several chapters concentrate on racial differences between clinician and patient. But the net is cast far wider than such contexts, complex though they may be. Other chapters explore, with sensitivity and learning, issues of class in psychotherapeutic work; of homosexuality and psychoanalysis; of Irish identity in British organizations and society; of group dynamics in relation, for example, to Israel, Palestine, and the West; of the recent riots in Tottenham and elsewhere. When these huge issues are swirling around, it can be difficult to think straight—or indeed to think at all—in the consulting room. These pages address such areas too, with a depth, honesty, and quality rarely seen, nor available to read about, in clinical, by contrast with academic, settings. These are topics that are more easily evaded than engaged with. But in *Thinking Space* the engagement *is* undertaken. The fruits of years of serious discussion, driven by the absolute necessity to understand the world more deeply and more thoroughly, are laid out in the chapters of this book. How important it is to have such a publication in the Tavistock Clinic Series, a book that proudly gives voice to so much that underpins the Clinic's work and identity and hopefully will do so more extensively in the future.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is the product of people who have supported Thinking Space out of recognition that certain disadvantaged groups or their experiences have been excluded or marginalized in psychotherapy as in wider society. They are too numerous to mention by name, but they include those who have contributed chapters to this book, as well as those who have spoken at, chaired, and attended Thinking Space meetings during the past eleven years. There are, however, some individuals who have been critical in helping to create and run Thinking Space whose contribution must be acknowledged. They are Onel Brooks for his solid support and comradeship; Beverly-Foster Davis and Vicky Howells for their excellent administrative support; Agnes Bryan and Maxine Dennis for their helpful critical perspectives; Lois Thomas for helping to organize and develop Thinking Space over the past two years; and Deirdre Moylan, Louise Lyon, Jeannie Milligan, Robin Anderson, and Matthew Patrick for their vital professional and managerial support.

In putting together this book, I have been privileged to have had the editorial support of Margot Waddell, whose wisdom and attention to detail helped to make my task easier. I would like to thank Aideen Lucy and particularly Martin Kemp for their helpful comments on chapter drafts and for their support in bringing the

book to completion. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my sister, Doris, and brothers, Godwin and Carlisle, for their unwavering support and to my wife, Gloria, for her patience, assistance, and belief in the project at every stage.

## ABOUT THE EDITOR AND CONTRIBUTORS

**Jonathan Bradley** is a consultant child and adolescent psychotherapist working with adolescents and young adults at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust. His clinical work has been carried out in both clinic and school settings, among ethnically diverse populations. He has played a major role in trainings linked to child psychotherapy, including the lead role in a 2- to 3-year MA in Psychoanalytic Observational Studies. He is joint editor with Margaret Rustin of *Work Discussion: Learning from Reflective Practice on Work with Children and Families* (2008), a book that is linked to an element in the Observation Course. He has held a number of roles within the Tavistock: he was Chair of the Race and Equality Committee, with the task of formulating and developing the Trust's response to Race Relations legislation, and has played a prominent role in the running of Group Relations Events (Leicester model), which offer the possibility of experiential learning in areas such as equality and ethnicity.

**Onel Brooks** completed a doctorate in philosophy before working in the field of psychotherapy, then training as a psychoanalytic social worker and as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. He is a UKP-registered psychoanalytic psychotherapist in independent practice and a senior lecturer in Psychotherapy, Counselling and

Counselling Psychology at Roehampton University, where he contributes to the Research Centre for Therapeutic Education, which is in the Psychology Department. He is a member of the Philadelphia Association and contributes to the training there.

**Martin Kemp** is a psychoanalyst and psychoanalytic psychotherapist (BCP, BPF, BPA). He worked in Africa as a teacher and as a support to technical aid projects before spending ten years as Director of The Lorrimore, a voluntary organization based in the London Borough of Southwark providing social support to people with long-term mental health difficulties. He has worked at Open Door, the adolescent therapy service, and as a staff consultant to several residential facilities for young people. He is currently in private practice in South London.

**Inga-Britt Krause** is a social and medical anthropologist and a Consultant Systemic Psychotherapist. She has carried out ethnographic work with high-caste Hindus in Nepal and with British Sikhs. As a systemic psychotherapist she has worked for over twenty years in the NHS and has helped set up Specialist Services for Asian Communities in London. Her publications include *Therapy Across Culture* (1998), *Culture and System in Family Therapy* (2002), and *Culture and Reflexivity in Systemic Psychotherapy: Mutual Perspectives* (2013, editor), as well as many papers on medical anthropology and cross-cultural psychotherapy. She is currently a Training and Development Consultant in the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

**Frank Lowe** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and Head of Social Work in the Adolescent and Adult Directorate at the Tavistock Clinic. Before joining the Tavistock in 2001, he was a Social Services Inspector with the Department of Health and had been a manager for over twelve years of local authority mental health and children services. He has developed services at the Tavistock to help improve access to psychotherapy for black and minority ethnic young people, teaches on several Tavistock courses, and is the Course Organizer of Understanding the Emotional Needs of Care Leavers. He has written several papers on working with adolescence, race, and psychotherapy and has a long-standing interest in making psychotherapy more accessible to poor and marginalized communities.

**Aideen Lucey** is an independent organizational consultant and executive coach. She is an associate at Tavistock Consulting, where she was previously a principal consultant. She is a visiting consultant at IMD and Insead European business schools. She provides consultancy to a diverse group of clients, from practitioners and managers in the mental health field to executives in large international organizations. Her primary area of interest relates to how people make (or fail to make) meaning at work, and she is currently pursuing a professional doctorate on this topic. Her practice is underpinned by a first-class degree in social science and a Master's degree in psychodynamic approaches to consultancy. She co-edited (with Laurence Gould and Lionel Stapley) *The Reflective Citizen: Organizational and Social Dynamics* (2011).

**David Morgan** is a Fellow of the British Psychoanalytical Society and a training analyst with the BPA and the IPA. He was formerly a Consultant Psychotherapist at the Portman Clinic for over twenty years and is now a Consultant Psychotherapist for WBUK, a support organization for Whistleblowers. He is Joint Editor (with Stan Ruszczynsky) of *Violence, Perversion and Delinquency* (2007). He is in private practice.

**Helen Morgan** is a Fellow of the British Psychotherapy Foundation and is a training analyst and supervisor for the Jungian Analytic Association within the BPF. She works mainly in private practice as an analyst and also supervises in both the individual and the group setting. Her background is in therapeutic communities with adolescents and in adult mental health. She was chair of the British Association of Psychotherapists for four years until February 2008, during which time she was involved in setting up an ongoing project to explore issues of race and ethnicity in the organization. She has written on issues of racism within the supervisory relationship and in psychoanalytic psychotherapy organizations as well as in the clinical setting.

**Juliet Newbigin** is a senior Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy member of the British Psychotherapy Foundation and a member of the Foundation for Psychotherapy and Counselling. She works in private practice. She has taught seminars for a number of years at WPF Counselling and Therapy on the impact of significant



differences—those of gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity, for example—on the clinical relationship.

**Joanna Ryan** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, supervisor, and researcher. She is a member of the Site for Contemporary Psychoanalysis and trained at the Philadelphia Association, London. She was Visiting Fellow at Goldsmith's College, University of London, from 2004 to 2008, while conducting a research project on social class and psychoanalysis. She is co-author (with N. O'Connor) of *Wild Desires and Mistaken Identities: Lesbianism and Psychoanalysis* (reprinted 2003), and author of *The Politics of Mental Handicap* (1987), as well as many other publications. Her recent publications include "Elision and Disavowal: The Extrusion of Class from Psychoanalytic Discourse and Practice" (*Sitegeist*, 2009).

## FOREWORD

*M. Fakhry Davids*

To those of us troubled by the collective silence in our discipline on matters of race and diversity, it is a special pleasure to welcome this timely and thoughtful book. It is not only the fact that its editor, Frank Lowe, has brought together a number of excellent professionals who raise their voices, mostly in a highly personal way, in this neglected area that is so impressive. Significant as it is, this contribution from Lowe is surpassed by an even greater one: namely, his initiative in setting up the Thinking Space project—described fully in his introductory chapter—at the Tavistock Clinic, which is the premier psychotherapy training institution in the NHS. Most of the contributions in this volume originated in the Thinking Space forum. The significance of this achievement can be appreciated by reminding ourselves of the context in which it occurred.

In 1983, recognizing how poorly the needs of minority patients were being served within mainstream psychotherapy services in the capital, Jafar Kareem established the Nafsiyat Intercultural Therapy Centre here in London. A sense of being marginalized,

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M. Fakhry Davids, a psychoanalyst, is the author of *Internal Racism: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Race and Difference*, published in 2011.

misunderstood, and treated in a racist way ran as a common thread through these patients' experience of seeking help, which exacerbated their psychological difficulties. There was therefore an urgent need to provide for them—hence the need for *Nafsiyat*—but as the experience of these patients became known, it also underlined the failure of mainstream services to adapt to the changing demographic of the capital. There was some considerable anxiety that a service catering specifically for minority patients might in itself contribute to the marginalization of their needs and undermine their legitimate demand—as citizens—to be accommodated within the mainstream.

In the intervening thirty years, the face of London has changed even further into what is now a truly multiracial and multicultural metropolis. Its inclusive ambience, which is even more remarkable for acknowledging difference and containing points of tension that inevitably arise, was even lauded as an asset in the capital's successful bid for the 2012 Olympic Games. Many of the contributors to this volume remind us, however, that within our predominantly white profession issues of race and diversity remain largely invisible. Yesteryear's struggle to address our minority group patients is mirrored by today's struggle to attract minority group professionals to our ranks, with the perspective they might bring currently beyond reach. Yet we seem oblivious to this as a difficulty, as if we were colour blind, and pay a heavy price for it. When it comes to considering and debating matters across the boundaries of race, class, and culture—not academically, but in the more personal way that our profession demands—we freeze up and become defensive. It may seem obvious, but it is worth stating that we then enter a vicious circle: the more these issues remain invisible, the less familiarity we have with them; the less our familiarity, the less our ability to bring them into a proper psychoanalytic conversation. This shortcoming, in turn, is easily covered over by conceptualizations of racial difference that make them secondary to supposed psychological essences. As a profession interested in depth psychology, our non-engagement with these issues is thus justified on the grounds that they are "more superficial"; this in turn limits our opportunities for engaging fully and properly with them. Compare this with how we are able to engage with issues of gender and generation difference that arise in the consulting room and beyond, where we are able to free associate and to think creatively and at

depth. This capacity flows directly from the fact that in consulting rooms up and down the land, oedipal dynamics, when they arise, are assiduously pursued and worked with. The same cannot be said of our attitude to racial difference.

The problem about racial difference is indeed complex, difficult to address, and resistant to change. As if to remind me of this, as I write fresh revelations are surfacing that, despite all the time and money that has already been invested in trying to uncover what went wrong in the police handling of the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, there has been yet a further cover-up, this time of police attempts to smear the Lawrence family when resources should have gone into apprehending his killers. Again, there are to be two inquiries . . .

Trying to bring these issues into the open is, therefore, a daunting task. When it is a black person who undertakes it, a further layer of complexity is added in the form of an assumption—mostly unspoken—that he has a personal issue about his race, a chip on his shoulder. And so there is a further danger that his attempt to bring things into the open may itself become marginalized.

Seen in this context, we can appreciate the magnitude of the achievement that Frank Lowe's development of his Thinking Space initiative represents. What I find so impressive is that though one could make a political case that this development is essential both for our profession and in a *national* health service required to serve all without prejudice, this is not the path he chooses. Instead, he makes a clear and measured psychoanalytic case for a Thinking Space dedicated to issues of working with racial and cultural difference. I find his argument both coherent and compelling, and it is easy to see how this clarity of purpose succeeded in creating an atmosphere experienced by presenters—myself included—as clearly tolerant, respectful, and facilitating. It is also marked by intense curiosity and interest in the subject that leads to lively debate and engagement. Creating and sustaining such an atmosphere speaks to Lowe's deep inner strength and quiet determination to pursue a difficult, not to say daunting, task whose rightness he never doubts. His admirably steady hand is revealed in some of the vignettes he discusses.

Lowe's achievement in creating a Thinking Space thus speaks for itself. That he has been able to do so within the mainstream represents very significant progress in the attempt to get race and

difference taken seriously. Publishing some of the work that arose from that initiative takes things a step further: it allows the conversation to extend beyond the events themselves. The result is this book, *Thinking Space*, with rich, varied, and thought-provoking chapters that make a real contribution to bringing this subject out of the shadows. It deserves to be widely read by newcomers and experienced practitioners alike—in our profession and beyond—and I hope that they might be stimulated to join in.

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# THINKING SPACE

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*In human affairs, however, thinking is but a snare and a delusion unless the unconscious is taken into account. I refer to both meanings of the word, 'unconscious' meaning deep and not readily available because of the pain that belongs to its acceptance as part of the self.*

D. W. Winnicott,  
"Thinking and the Unconscious" (1945, p. 169)

# Introduction

*Frank Lowe*

“Socrates . . . introduced the idea that individuals could not be intelligent on their own, that they needed someone else to stimulate them. . . . His brilliant idea was that if two unsure individuals were put together, they could achieve what they could not do separately: the truth, their own truth for themselves. By questioning each other, dividing each of these into parts, finding the flaws, never attacking or insulting, but always seeking what they could agree between them. . . .”

Theodore Zeldin (1995, pp. 33–34)

**A**nti-discriminatory practice was an important part of my training as a social worker in the 1980s. Racism, sexism, ageism, and other forms of discrimination were accepted as external and internal realities that had a negative impact on the health and social well-being of individuals, families, and communities. However imperfect this aspect of the training might have been, race equality and anti-discriminatory practice were and still remain at the core of social work values. In contrast, my training as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist during the 1990s treated the issues of cultural diversity, racism, and other forms of discrimination as of little importance or not meriting serious thought and attention in the training of psychotherapists.



During four years of psychoanalytic theory and practice seminars, my year group had one seminar on intercultural therapy, facilitated by Jafar Kareem, a pioneer of intercultural therapy in the UK. Jafar was angry about there being only one seminar on the subject and communicated to us his ambivalence about accepting the invitation to teach. On the one hand, he saw agreeing to teach this single seminar as colluding with tokenism; on the other, he felt that on balance he should use the opportunity to impress on trainees—the future leaders of the profession—the importance of thinking about how psychotherapy should become more accessible and helpful in its practice to more disadvantaged groups in society. While there has been some improvement, it would not be an exaggeration to say that thinking about racism and other forms of discrimination towards “the other” continues to be a marginal issue in psychotherapy.

In April 2002, I started a monthly learning forum called “Thinking Space” at the Tavistock Clinic, in order to promote thinking about race, culture, and diversity in psychotherapy. There was growing recognition that there was little or no real exploration of these subjects at the Tavistock Clinic or in many psychotherapy, health, and social care organizations in the UK (Audit Commission, 2004b; Gordon, 1993a, 2004; SCIE, 2006). Race, culture, and diversity are complex, emotionally charged, and anxiety-provoking subjects, and thinking about racism and other forms of hatred of difference is beset by difficulties inside and outside the individual. Internally, we all carry blind spots, including blind spots about our destructiveness—in particular, a propensity to project on to others characteristics that we cannot bear in ourselves. Externally, it is difficult to find a space where one could really talk and think with others about diversity<sup>1</sup> in a way that is emotionally truthful and that helps one to learn and develop.

I had learnt from previous experiences, both as a participant and as a facilitator of diversity learning events, that facilitating discussion, thinking, and learning about these subjects was extremely challenging and required an ability to work with immense complexity, including unbearable feelings or states of mind. Perhaps in an attempt to avoid the discomfort of this complexity, there exists in many organizations an essentially superficial approach to matters of race, culture, and diversity. First, staff learning and development needs in these areas tend to be addressed in a tokenistic way

at brief or “one-off” learning events, often held in order for the organization to be seen to comply with diversity legislation or in response to a complaint or crisis around diversity. Second, good-quality diversity training is rare. Professionals regularly report feeling that the complexities and challenges they face in working with diversity are either poorly addressed or not addressed at all. Instead, they often feel “preached at” or report that courses simply provide basic information about dos and don’ts regarding diversity legislation or, even worse, attempt to teach about “other cultures” in ways that seem close to promoting cultural stereotypes.

Furthermore, at such learning events, there is often a stressful atmosphere, which paralyses thinking and learning. In such spaces, it can feel as if one’s survival is at stake, and a fright, fight, or flight response tends to predominate. At one extreme, participants can be frightened of speaking their minds out of anxiety that it will cause offence and lead to catastrophe. At another extreme, there can often be immense hurt and anger when participants speak openly; discussion and thinking may then quickly deteriorate into a war-like atmosphere of attack and counter-attack around a perception that a participant had, for example, expressed a racist view. This unpleasant experience can reinforce the view that it is unsafe and unwise to share one’s thoughts and engage in meaningful discussion about diversity issues.

Another difficulty with the subject of diversity is that it is frequently plagued by “black-and-white” or “them-and-us” thinking. For example, it is common to split people into those who are anti-racist or racist, feminist or sexist, in support of homosexuality or homophobic. These divisions encourage stereotyping and mutual projections between individuals on both sides of the divide, and this is another barrier to thinking and learning. It is as if we cannot be good and bad, loving and hateful, anti-racist and racist, rather than either/or. This habit of splitting people into “goodies” and “baddies” is a childish type of thinking, which is a form of lying or of not facing the truth about ourselves and others.

Having said that, it is, of course, important to distinguish between what people think and what they actually do. For example, a person who consistently supports anti-racist initiatives is arguably more helpful than someone who opposes all anti-racist initiatives on the basis that they are unnecessary. The danger is for

this anti-racist person or others to assume that because someone is an anti-racist activist, she or he can never be racist.

It seems that underlying the numerous difficulties that beset thinking about diversity is our ability unconsciously to tell lies—not least to ourselves—which is a fundamental human problem regarding our capacity to look at and think about the whole self honestly, including our hateful and destructive aspects. It is therefore ironic, distressing, but in some ways also chastening that a profession that possesses expertise helping people to think about, understand, and find better ways of dealing with their problems should be so uninterested in thinking about racism and other forms of hatred and their psychological impact. There was and still is a need for more “mental space” (Young, 1994a),<sup>2</sup> individually and socially, to develop thinking about diversity. Despite some increase in thinking about diversity within the psychotherapy profession in recent years, there continues to be a severe lack of mental space, especially *regular space*, to discuss and think about the challenges of diversity. This is, to me, a major barrier to learning and one that reinforces the culture of superficial engagement with these issues.

Given the many obstacles to thinking about diversity, it was clear that if the Thinking Space forum was to succeed in achieving its core objective of promoting thinking and learning in this area, it was imperative that its organizers created and maintained a safe and emotionally containing environment—or, in the words of Young (1994a), a place that was “a container for thought”. The atmosphere and boundaries that promote engagement, discussion, thinking, and learning would need to be consistently held, if participants were to feel able to speak openly and to learn, without fear that they would be attacked for doing so.

This book is a celebration of eleven years of Thinking Space at the Tavistock Clinic<sup>3</sup> and a way of sharing some of the thinking, experience, and learning gained over these years. Thinking Space functions, among other things, as a test-bed for ideas, and many of the chapters began as presentations or discussions at Thinking Space (the exceptions being chapters 3, 7, and 8) and were encouraged and developed by the experience. Chapter 11, in fact, was born out of two Thinking Space discussions about the August 2011 Riots. These chapters do not seek to provide a coherent theory or set of views. On the contrary, they are very diverse—and decidedly so, as finding, expressing, and developing one’s own personal idiom

(Bollas, 1992) involves emotional truthfulness and is an important part of getting to know oneself, both of which are important prerequisites to getting to know the other.

In chapter 1, I describe Thinking Space: its aims, theoretical underpinning, practice methods, and values. Drawing largely on psychoanalysis—in particular, the ideas of Melanie Klein and Wilfred Bion—I describe how we sought to develop thinking, not as an abstract activity, but as a means of better getting to know the self and the different other. This involves meeting with others to reflect on and reconsider our relations with ourselves and diversity in a facilitative environment. I emphasize that knowledge of ourselves—particularly our capacity to use others for our benefit, be it to cope with primitive anxieties or for power, money, or glory—is critical to an understanding of racism and other forms of hatred towards people categorized as being different.

In chapter 2, Onel Brooks cautions us to take seriously our capacity for self-illusion and to not believe that we—especially psychotherapists—are necessarily thinking when we say we are thinking. He argues that being psychoanalytically sophisticated or trained does not enable someone to think better about race or other forms of hatred. Onel shows that this is because our identifications and idealizations of theories and models can become a way of evading thoughtful engagement with many things, including racism or diversity. Drawing on Wittgenstein, he questions whether we can really think if we do not want to hurt ourselves.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 are explorations by white therapists of their responses to race and cultural differences in the consulting room. Helen Morgan (chapter 3) was one of the first white British therapists to explore how a white therapist thinks about and works with racism in her clinical work. In this updated version of her paper first published in 1998, Helen identifies difficulties that include how feelings of shame and guilt can prevent the white therapist acknowledging racism and exploring issues concerning difference that arise from the transference. David Morgan (chapter 4) provides a candid personal reflection on how unprepared he was to work with patients from different cultural and racial backgrounds. He identifies how his work with such patients was threatened at times by his cultural bias and prejudices. David does not attempt to airbrush his difficulties in working with difference; while his frankness at times may make

uncomfortable reading, it has an authenticity that is rare and necessary if we are to make progress.

Jonathan Bradley (chapter 5) describes how his understanding and technique as a white psychotherapist was challenged in his work with two patients (one black, one white)—in particular, by images from dreams that came up in the process of their therapy. In one case, he was treated as if he were a black nanny in the transference, and he had to think what this meant, how to respond, and whether he would be colluding with racism. Jonathan demonstrates well the complexity of this terrain, which can feel like a mental minefield and requires great patience, care, and thought with the patient to carefully gather, one step at a time, aspects of truth as a means towards finding a way through. He demonstrates the clinical value of the concepts of projection and projective identification to understand the unconscious getting rid of unwanted and unbearable feelings. But Jonathan is also aware that these concepts can be used defensively by psychotherapists as a way of not looking at or of defending against their own evacuations of unwanted and unbearable feelings on to the patient. This chapter convincingly shows that these pitfalls can be avoided if therapists continually find the space to review their practice (probably especially with patients from different racial and cultural backgrounds to themselves, given the history of silence, avoidance, guilt, and shame in this area) and explore the meaning of their reactions and responses to their patients.

Chapter 6 focuses on culture in ways that highlight the complexity of the concept, as a process that is both unconscious and conscious, has internal and external meanings, and is dynamic and contextual. Inga-Britt Krause helpfully sketches this out and argues against a superficial, tick-box approach to cultural competence. She shows, however, that tick-box approaches have a powerful appeal because they absolve individuals both from developing an understanding of diversity as well as from self-reflection.

Chapter 7 is a rare paper on social class in psychotherapy, which has been updated by the author. Drawing on a research study, Joanna Ryan reports that although there is much knowledge and experience of social class in psychotherapy, it is seldom formally discussed or written about in the profession. She argues that class has a far-reaching psychological impact, but there seems to be a class-blind ideology within psychotherapy that obscures or denies