

...with Terry Dovey

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One moment that changed the course of your career

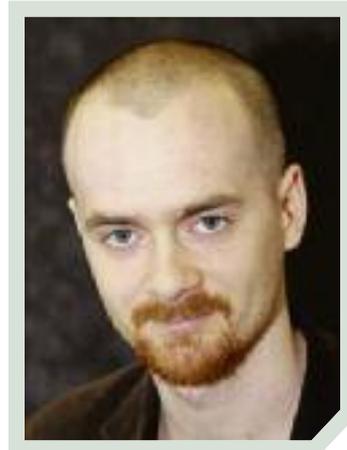
It was the moment I spoke to Professor Halford after I noticed the deadline for the PhD I wanted at Liverpool had passed. He kindly extended the application deadline for me. I would have walked a different path if it was not for that; probably ending up in neurobiology. I guess it was a lesson in if you don't ask...

One journal article or book that you think all psychologists should read

Other than mine? It has to be the 'White Bible' – Cooper, Heron and Heward's *Applied Behaviour Analysis*.

One thing that you would change about psychology

Just one thing? It would have to be understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of psychology. I meet a lot of psychologists travelling between hospitals and I have yet to be introduced to two that refer to themselves as same 'type' of psychologist.



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This is mirrored with over 400 different applied models identified in the literature. There really are only four. I think that speaks volumes. People are creating models without really understanding those already out there.

One misunderstood point about behaviour therapy

I think behavioural therapists

are the most misunderstood group of people in psychology. I have been accused of some horrible things by other psychologists, both in the clinical setting and at conferences. Things such as I punish children, I make kids taste their vomit, I do not engage with clients' emotions, what I do is unethical, or that I deny that the mind exists. I categorically deny all of these. Without exception, the same techniques are used in hospitals, schools or homes every day. We have just refined these techniques. The irony is that the behaviourist component within psychology is the only evidence base that would stand up to the medical model. Without measuring behavioural outcomes and changes we are simply having a nice conversation.

One challenge you think psychology faces

The main threat, I feel, to psychology as a profession is the lack of published efficacy lists. Good/bad/indifferent psychologists are, I feel, created more on egos than outcomes. I guess this extends into increasing evidence-based practice. Other professions are

ranked. In higher education my university is ranked based on league tables and as an individual I am ranked on my h-index. In clinic, I have a supervisor and no rank. Instead, I have had to publish the clinic's outcomes – which are awesome. If we do not embrace the efficacy measures, then I think we will be replaced by those that can do it cheaper, with fewer qualifications, less training and, as we do not measure efficacy, with equal outcomes.

One thing that 'organised psychology' could do better

Personally, I would like to see psychologists engage with philosophy a lot more. I would also like to see them purposefully taught the four separate applied areas of psychology (behavioural, emotional, cognitive, psychoanalytic) independently too. Once outside of the walls of the university the student is confronted with many multiple types of applied psychology and I am not convinced they are equipped to deal with this.

One hope for the future

I would hope that psychology applies behavioural techniques and fully embraces evidence-based practice and that all services publish their outcomes.

One final thought

To all those students and professional psychologists out there, go find a good behaviourist to talk to. You will be surprised at what you will find. We are good and we can prove it. If you want to prove how good you are, look to the behavioural school for guidance.

resource

'We recently released the FeedQ assessment for children's eating behaviour at www.feedq.org. I am very happy with this tool as it can assess a person against population norms. No other measure on the market can do that. It took a lot of work to create. Check it out.'

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