“I Don’t Need Advice or Lectures”

A Discursive Psychological Analysis of Men’s Posts in an Online Discussion Forum for Depression

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the Honours degree of Bachelor of Psychological Science

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October 2016

Word count: 10,665
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Abstract

Australian men are diagnosed with depression at half the rate of Australian women and, as such, depression in men has received less attention historically. Depression is often positioned as gendered, that is, as a psychological condition that women are more likely to experience. Many argue however that the disparity in depression diagnosis rates is not presentative of depression prevalence. Rather, such disparities have been suggested to be an artefact of inappropriate diagnostic criteria and societal norms about masculinity and help-seeking. The challenging nature of improving understanding of these gender differences, is that typical features of male depression which make diagnosis difficult (for example, reticence to discuss psychological distress openly), also make it difficult to study. Increasing use of online discussion forums on depression provides an opportunity to investigate how men describe their experiences with depression in ways that are not directed or influenced by researchers’ concerns. This thesis aims to examine how men routinely describe their experiences of depression and position themselves in relation to the condition in an online forum. A discursive psychological approach informed by membership categorisation analysis is used to analyse how men formulate initial posts on an online discussion forum for depression.
Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other University and to the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no materials published elsewhere except where due reference is made. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being available for loan and photocopying.

Phoebe Drioli-Phillips

October 2016
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor Amanda LeCouteur and Camille Short for their endless patience, feedback and support.

I would also like to thank Jacqui for always being there to commiserate, and laugh with. All my other friends too, thank you for making me laugh and keeping me sane.

Thank you to the Freemason’s Foundation Centre for Men’s Health for supporting me for these last few years. Marg, I can’t thank you enough for everything you have done for me. Diddle, thank you for putting up with me. I appreciate you so much.