

Misread and misrepresented?

I write in reply to Ellen Goudsmit's review of my book *Psychologisation in Times of Globalisation* ('An unbalanced critique', February 2013).

Ellen Goudsmit does not like my book. She finds it hard to follow. She does not recommend it. I have no problem with this. She does, however, in her short review in *The Psychologist* seriously misread and misrepresent my book. I have a problem with that.

She writes: 'Apparently, we also obstruct "genuine ways of living" and people would be better off guided by intuition, elders and traditional healers.' I have by no means promoted intuition nor the guidance of elders and traditional healers. I actually have criticised psychologists (working in the field of humanitarian aid) who couple psychological aid to intuition, elders and traditional healers. My book is precisely an argument against such simplifying arguments, whether they come from critics of psychology or from psychologists themselves!

For the remaining, except for her being baffled, she does not offer much substantial argument in order to come to

her verdict that my book is 'an unbalanced critique'. When you don't like a book, the chance is big that you don't understand it (and probably vice versa). And then you read fast and you read wrong. Then you should not write a review.

If the reviewer would be a practitioner, then I should urge her to make the exercise: is it not so that when you don't like a person, chances are big that you don't understand him/her (and probably vice versa)? And then

you listen badly and make mistakes. However, rather than score easy points here (and make the as such valid argument that I would not recommend a practitioner who is unaware of these dynamics), one might still need to go one step further. For might it not be that misreadings, misquotations, misunderstandings... are a structural risk inherent to the psychological discourses? This, I'd argue, is directly related to the phenomenon of psychologisation – the issue my book attempts to address.

Dr Jan De Vos

*Ghent University Blandijnberg
Belgium*

