Considering Poststructuralist Discursive Community Psychology

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Abstract

Although critical community psychology (CCP) has embraced several discursive paradigms (e.g., critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, Foucauldian discourse analysis), there remains little CCP work that attempts to conceive of CCP through a poststructuralist discursive lens, a lens that extends beyond, but certainly does not ignore, the analysis of data. In this article, we consider what we are calling *poststructuralist discursive community psychology* through a synthesis of poststructuralist discourse theory (PDT) and CCP. Such a psychology is one that conceives of social phenomena, and indeed conceives of itself, through a poststructuralist understanding of discourse. We offer two pathways through which to consider poststructuralist discursive community psychology: re-envisioning community and discursive consciousness-raising. We conclude by considering some of the theoretical limitations of our discussion, as well as the areas that future work into poststructuralist discursive community psychology may enter into.

Critical community psychology (CCP) has embraced several paradigms (e.g., postmodernism, empiricism, interpretivism). Many of these paradigms have been supplemented and realized through different kinds of discourse analysis (e.g., critical discourse analysis, discursive psychology, Foucauldian discourse analysis). However, perhaps somewhat curiously, there remains a dearth of CCP work that assumes a poststructuralist approach to discourse. This is to say, there have been few attempts to conceive of the principles and actually existing formations of CCP through a poststructuralist discursive lens, a lens that extends beyond, but certainly does not ignore, the analysis of data. In speaking to this gap, we attempt to formulate a CCP of this kind (i.e., one that conceives of social phenomena, and indeed conceives of itself, through a poststructuralist understanding of discourse) by creating a kind of synthesis between poststructuralist discourse theory (PDT) and CCP to form what we are calling poststructuralist discursive community psychology. We do not, in this article, endeavor to provide a complete, foreclosed, or entirely systematic model for this kind of psychology. As we shall see, a static goal of this sort runs counter to the kinds of contingent meaning-making practices upon which PDT depends. Instead, we seek to not only orient critical community psychologists to PDT (a wholly neglected paradigm within CCP), but also

to begin a broader conversation on how we might draw on the synthesized logics of CCP and PDT to conceive of community-based psychological work—and the politics therein—in novel and liberatory ways.

In what follows, we provide necessarily brief outlines of CCP and PDT. We do not intend to provide compre- hensive accounts of either. Rather, each is described as it relates to the proceeding discussion on poststructuralist discursive community psychology. Following this, we make connections between elements of both CCP and PDT in an attempt to form a poststructuralist discursive community psychology. We then offer two pathways through which our consideration of poststructuralist discursive community psychology can be realized, namely: re-envisioning community and discursive consciousness-raising. These pathways represent two of many ways by which to actualize poststructuralist discursive community psychology. As such, our consideration of each serves to provoke further discussion here. Finally, we conclude this study by reflecting on potential future of work in poststructuralist discur- sive community psychology.

1.1 | What is critical community psychology?

In reaction to the institutionalization and conservative impulses that came to characterize much community psychology in the 1960s, the 1970s saw critical modes of community psychology emerge all over the world (Evans et al., 2017). These critical modalities of community psychology are what we today refer to as CCP. Broadly speaking, CCP denotes approaches to community psychology that are rooted in critical theory and acknowledge the limits of mainstream, or ameliorative, community psychology. Although CCP employs central theories and tenets of commu- nity psychology, it also works to disrupt, question and reformulate many of the traditionally accepted theories, prac- tices, and methods from the mainstream of the discipline (Evans et al., 2017; Montero, 2004).

CCP encompasses various approaches and draws on a range of theoretical frameworks, as are required by diverse "communities and groups that comprise differing social, cultural, and geographical locations at different historical moments" (Watkins & Ciofalo, 2011, p. 11). It is because of this plethora of frameworks and approaches that CCP has emerged as a multidisciplinary kind of psychology praxis (Davidson et al., 2006; Malherbe & Dlamini, 2020; Watkins & Ciofalo, 2011). There are, however, several key themes that underlie the diversity of approaches to CCP. Perhaps the most central of these themes is a commitment to

systematizing social justice and the overall improvement of society (Burton & Kagan, 2015; Davidson et al., 2006; Evans et al., 2017; Kagan et al., 2020; Watkins & Ciofalo, 2011). As Kagan et al. (2020), assert, the "aims of social justice and a just society are the standard against which the adequacy of critical community psychology should be measured" (p. 35). Crucially, while CCP works to challenge the exclusionary status quo at the level of theory, it also extends beyond theory to actioning social change (Davidson et al., 2006). CCP is thus practically oriented and directly seeks out transformational change for people and communities living in structurally oppressive conditions (Burton & Kagan, 2015; Watkins & Ciofalo, 2011). In this way, CCP rejects the supposed neutrality and depoliticized assumptions that dominate much mainstream community psychology in favor of explicitly political approaches and actions (Evans et al., 2017; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2009).

Another theme that can be found among the different approaches to CCP is an attentiveness to the broader power relations which underpin and constitute unjust social arrangements (Burton & Kagan, 2015; Evans et al., 2017). While mainstream community psychology is concerned with empowerment, it does not always engage the structural nature of power (Evans et al., 2017). By contrast, CCP takes a critical approach to the

empowerment of groups and communities, which is premised on surfacing the "domains of power that constrain certain groups" (Evans et al., 2017, p. 116). Therefore, where traditional community psychology tends to emphasize individual-level change,

CCP foregrounds ecological thinking and focuses on surfacing structural and systematic explanations for conditions of oppression; with the psychological always understood as psychosocial (Burton & Kagan, 2015; Evans et al., 2017). To this end, CCP seeks to expose the broader societal structures—such as racism, patriarchy, capitalism and neoliberal globalization—that underlie unequal societal conditions (Evans et al., 2017). Indeed, CCP assumes that "the roots of most community problems lie in patterns of systemic poverty, disadvantage, social exclusion, and oppression that are manifestations of structural inequalities and social divisions within society as a whole" (Evans et al., 2017, p. 357).

In addressing change at the structural level, CCP looks to work with groups of people to develop critical consciousness (Butcher et al., 2007; Evans, 2015; Freire, 1970), that is, an intensified recognition of "oppressive polit- ical conditions of existence" (Hook, 2004, p. 105). Critical consciousness comprises two key processes: critique of the dominant societal arrangements that generate suffering and oppression

and—importantly—an understanding that these conditions can be challenged and changed (Evans, 2015; Freire, 1970). Within CCP praxes, critical conscious- ness can serve as an important mechanism through which critical community psychologists can work with communi- ties in "challenging disempowering discourses and exposing and problematizing dominant narratives in organizations that hinder critical practice" (Evans, 2015, p. 363).

CCP approaches stress the need to critique the discipline of community psychology itself and to explore the ideological underpinnings of mainstream, dominant iterations of community psychology, many of which act in the service of oppressive powers (Davidson et al., 2006; Evans, 2015; Evans et al., 2017). In this way, CCP strives to hold the field of community psychology accountable to marginalized groups and communities (Evans et al., 2017). As such, critical reflexivity is an important component of CCP research and praxis (Burton & Kagan, 2015; Evans et al., 2017). A CCP approach thereby necessitates that community psychologists are cognizant of their own positionalities and the broader matrices of power in which they are embedded (Burton & Kagan, 2015).

It appears, then, that despite the vastly different ways by which CCP has been practiced and conceptualized, it remains committed to

several principles (e.g., multidisciplinarity, reflexivity, critical consciousness, sensitivity toward the flows of power, and systems-focused approaches), most of which defy mainstream practices of community psychology. CCP's commitment to these principles ensures that it remains open to many different critical disciplines, traditions and theories.

1.2 | What is poststructuralist discourse theory?

Emerging in the late 1970s as a reaction to the kinds of structural determinism, economic reductionism and method- ological individualism which—at the time—loomed large over critical scholarly traditions (Panizza & Miorelli, 2013), PDT seeks to reject clear concepts and delineated taxonomies, offering instead a new analytic approach for exam- ining the discursive conditions of social being, that is, the grammar and logic of social, political and cultural identity (Howarth, 2005; Torfing, 2005a). Here, identity does not only refer to what or who people are or whom they wish to be. Rather, within PDT, identity is understood as the meanings attached to people, experiences, objects, and events (Torfing, 2005b). Something only becomes meaningful to us once it has been connected with an identity (De Cleen et al., 2021). It is because we construct identity within specific linguistic systems that such identity is

shaped and reshaped in relation to other identities that exist in particular contexts. These historically specific and relational identities are what we mean by discourses (Torfing, 2005b). Discourse, in this sense, does not merely denote words or language, but rather all social practices (Panizza & Miorelli, 2013). As such, although discourse has a material basis (i.e., all discourse is constituted by actions and social relations that exist in the world), discourse should not be mistaken for a stable, timeless, or unchanging reality (Carpentier, 2010; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Discourses exem- plify the contingent nature of reality.

Discourses have implications for the formation of the psychological subject (i.e., autonomous political agents, Panizza & Miorelli, 2013). The subject cannot obtain the complete identity promised by social structures because the stability of meaning is impossible. The subject is, therefore, always a failed—or split—subject and feels traumatized by its inherent lack of subjective fullness (Torfing, 2005a). This trauma associated with such subjective lack is often harnessed politically, whereby the Other—rather than social systems—is constructed as blocking the subject's attain- ment of full identity (Herschinger, 2012; Torfing, 2005b). For instance, it is the foreign national, rather than an exploit- ative and alienating capitalist political economy, that is blamed for one's psychological and material

suffering. Here, ideology plays a vital role in how collective identities are constructed in ways that antagonize and homogenize the Other. Through ideology, it can be plausibly insisted that a coherent sense of self may be achieved via the elimination of the Other (Herschinger, 2012). At the same time, it is also because social structures will not confer to us a complete identity that subjects can exercise agency. It is in this negative space that our subjective lack (i.e., our failure to fully embody the kinds of identifications that are offered to us through the static medium of language) can be harnessed toward remaking, challenging and subverting dominant identifications which, in turn, opens up the possibility for social change (Carpentier, 2010; Panizza & Miorelli, 2013).

PDT understands the ordering of discursive space with respect to either a logic of difference (which arises from a situation where a group makes political demands that are specific to that group, and thus results in little contact with the demands of other groups) or a chain of equivalence (where the political demands of different groups are consid- ered to be equally salient, and therefore connections are made between these groups so that the multifaceted nature of systemic oppression can be adequately addressed). Political struggle determines whether a logic of difference or a chain of equivalence is made prominent within meaning-making activity

(Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Accordingly, sometimes the ways by which identities differ from one another are emphasized (i.e., the logic of difference is made salient), and sometimes what is emphasized is the way that identities, in relation to something else, have a common equivalence, meaning that these identities form a chain of equivalence (Herschinger, 2012; Torfing, 2005b). As we shall see, although the chain of equivalence is not inherently emancipatory, it is only the chain of equivalence that accepts the antagonisms that are part and parcel of identification, which makes it crucial to the articulation and link- ing of multiple, seemingly disparate, struggles.

Discourse has no fixed essence, which means that it is continually being challenged and reconstituted (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Discourses are, therefore, always in competition with one another (De Cleen et al., 2021). This struggle for social dominance is known as hegemony. Central to struggles for hegemony are what are known as nodal points (also known as empty signifiers), which are words without precise or agreed upon meaning (e.g., "the people"; "globalization"; "democracy"; "socialism"). Nodal points establish knots of meaning that attempt to fix an identity with which others can then identify (Torfing, 2005b). When nodal points, and the discourses behind them, become socially dominant and stable, they

become hegemonic, that is, they come to represent a socially dominant chain of equivalence (Carpentier, 2010; Panizza & Miorelli, 2013). Who and what is excluded from a hegemonic chain of equivalence (i.e., that which poses a threat to the discursive system of this chain) is a central part of politics (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), and has implications for how meanings and identities are shaped, as well as which social antagonisms and political frontiers are made available (Torfing, 2005a). Hegemony, in short, links identities into a common political project.

Although nodal points attempt to fix meaning, this is only ever a partial, temporal fixity. In other words, nodal points are unable to capture the fullness of meaning. As such, there is always 'surplus meaning' that is not captured by discourse, and it is through this surplus meaning that counter-hegemony (i.e., attempts to dismantle dominant hegemonic power) is made possible (Torfing, 2005b). Indeed, hegemonic meaning is dislocated and revealed to be unstable when it is confronted with what it cannot signify, represent, or domesticate (Herschinger, 2012). When hegemonic meaning is dislocated we are urged to construct new discursive identifications and to create new ways of making sense of and acting in the world (Panizza & Miorelli, 2013; Torfing, 2005b). We can also dislocate hegemony with counter-hegemonic chains of equivalence that connect

different struggles together with nodal points that reject the promise of a mythic 'full' identity by embracing political commitments through ever-shifting and context-specific modes of identification (Torfing, 2005b). PDT, in short, is a theory of the social. It looks at the structures of meaning in a given society by examining the circulation, formation and disruption of discourses (De Cleen et al., 2021). It is macro-focused and thus does not provide a detailed or systematic approach to understanding sociolinguistics (Howarth, 2005). Instead, PDT offers us a toolbox to rethink a society's norms, values and symbols which can, in turn, assist us in collectively reformulating knowledge, democratic political struggle, identifications and the fixity of meaning (Torfing, 2005a).

1.3 | Poststructuralist discursive community psychology

The task of poststructuralist discursive community psychology requires us to make connections between PDT and CCP. In so doing, the identity of one morphs through the identity of the other. Both, now modified, identities may then operate alongside one another under a common signifier (i.e., poststructuralist discursive community psychology). Although CCP is perhaps more hospitable to being remade by different disciplinary and theoretical influences than PDT (see Burton & Kagan,

2015; Evans et al., 2017; Malherbe & Dlamini, 2020), there are also several ways by which we can stretch PDT to accommodate the principles of CCP. One way of considering poststructuralist discursive community psychology is through the various points of commonality between PDT and CCP. For instance, each is concerned with changing environments in order to change the self (Torfing, 2005a). Moreover, both PDT and CCP prioritize such psychosocial change by centralizing marginalized communities and the different, contesting, voices that comprise these communities (Evans, 2015; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Torfing, 2005a).

It could also be said that poststructuralist discursive community psychology seeks to harness the respective strengths of CCP and PDT to address the weaknesses of each. For example, CCP has, at times, struggled to break with the modes of individualization, psychologization, and political reformism that plague mainstream community psychology (Canham et al., 2021), with community psychologists, themselves, often deploying CCP as a "progressive identity space" conducive for self-promotion (González Rey, 2016). Weaknesses and politically regressive impulses of this kind can be addressed through PDT's emphasis on transformative social change, the political over the psycho- logical, and the contingency and lack inherent to identity (Herschinger, 2012; Laclau &

Mouffe, 1985). Moreover, the strengths of CCP—such as its rootedness in the materiality of day-to-day community life as well as its stress on practicality (Burton & Kagan, 2015)—can speak to PDT's idealism, its tendency to neglect the social in favor of the political, as well as its sometimes nebulous conceptualization of the individual in situ (see Carpentier, 2010; De Cleen et al., 2021). For example, community psychologists concerned with solidarity-building across communities can draw upon PDT's chain of equivalence as a useful theoretical tool for developing connections between geographically dispersed—but politically linked—social struggles.

Why should critical community psychologists embrace PDT? Critics may point to a seeming redundancy of post- structuralist discursive community psychology. After all, CCP has embraced poststructuralist and discursive traditions (Evans et al., 2017), and tends to consider identity, knowledge-making and transformation in ways that echo the principles of PDT (e.g., Goodley & Lawthom, 2005). Yet, there remains no work—to our knowledge—that considers CCP specifically in relation to PDT, which is to say, using PDT to transform how CCP engages with the social and itself through a poststructuralist approach to discourse. In this, community psychologists can take poststructuralist understandings of discourse beyond

the conventional realm of data analysis. Others may argue that PDT is not the only means by which to introduce a poststructuralist approach to discourse into CCP. Certainly, Lacanian psychoanalysis (a central theoretical tenet of PDT) as well as critical discourse analysis offer similar insights to PDT and have in fact been embraced by some community psychologists (see e.g., Caputo & Tomai, 2020; Malherbe et al., 2021a).

However, we wish to emphasize once again that these approaches are typically limited to analysis within CCP and are rarely used to transform how CCP itself is theorized and practiced. PDT's broad purview (which subsumes within it several traditions of poststructuralism) thus provides community psychologists with a context-specific and anti-dogmatic approach to understanding the discursive constitution of communities as well as community psychology itself. In what follows, we consider two pathways through which to imagine and actualize poststructuralist discursive community psychology. We certainly do not wish to limit poststructuralist discursive community psychology to these two pathways. Rather, for us, each serves as a point of departure for considering the nuances, deadlocks and emancipatory possibilities of this kind of psychology. As such, we hope that others will use these pathways to build upon, critique and extend our consideration of poststructuralist

discursive community psychology and, ideally, offer pathways of their own.

1.4 | Re-envisioning community

Mainstream community psychology regularly deploys a static conception of community, constructing it as a geopo- litical space that is either demonized or valorized; or patronized (Malherbe et al., 2021a). Dutta (2018) has suggested that mainstream community psychology's rather sterile engagement with the notion of community stems from a tendency within the discipline to sidestep the difficult work involved in the "re-envisioning of epistemic parameters that simultaneously disrupt and offer alternatives to essentialist notions of community" (p. 275). Although "commu- nity" as a construct has undergone serious and useful critique within CCP (see e.g., Kagan et al., 2020), this remains disparate work and lacks a systematized or formalized means of conceptualizing, or even approaching, community. We wish to suggest that PDT offers community psychologists a means for undertaking Dutta's (2018) call for a radical re-envisioning of community within CCP.

What use, then, is PDT for community psychologists concerned with re-envisioning community? Torfing (2005a) argues that PDT can

assist us in understanding how communities are formed in response to dislocation (i.e., how nodal points catalyze the formation of communities); which identities are included and which are excluded in a given community; and the kinds of meanings, struggles and identities that bind people together in a community (Herschinger, 2012). Thus, for our purposes, PDT offers community psychologists a notion of community that is discursively contingent. Such contingency is forged through social bonds, which are, themselves, assembled through identifications that are rooted in material reality. In this way, discourse is materially tangible and remains tethered to, rather than excluded from, the material. Following this, we are compelled to ask how it is that critical community psychologists can work with political subjects under PDT's conception of community (i.e., community as a process which is—simultaneously—contingent and actual; material and discursive)?

      For critical community psychologists concerned with working with people to catalyze social change, PDT's conception of community is, Torfing (2005a) insists, both necessary and impossible. Necessary because it affords us insights into the kinds of meanings and identifications around which political subjects must orient themselves to act collectively within community settings, and impossible because these same political subjects

are always displaced, interrupted and prevented from achieving full

identification. It is within this contradictory space that we can under- stand

community as a process that offers to us an empty signifier (i.e., a nodal

point, or a sign without precise or agreed upon content) around which

political subjects are able to mobilize. This empty signifier can then be

remade with respect to the political objectives of the moment, and can be

put to work for a more general emancipatory project. Moreover, when

"community" operates as an empty signifier within CCP praxes,

community psychologists and those they work with can more readily

incorporate political lessons and changing social circumstances into their

collective identifications.

It is perhaps, at this stage, instructive to look to an example of how

this conception of community can be employed within CCP work. In 2016,

residents of Thembelihle—a low-income community located in

Johannesburg, South Africa—worked with filmmakers as well as

researchers at UNISA's Institute for Social and Health Sciences to produce

a documentary film that sought to counter the inaccurate and damaging

discursive depictions of their community reproduced in mainstream

newspaper reports (Malherbe et al., 2021a). It was through this

documentary that residents of Thembelihle sought to construct different,

more nuanced, and contextually embedded discourses around their community. Malherbe et al. (2021b) found that at public screenings of the documentary—as well as within the documentary itself—community activists repeatedly evoked the name of their community, "Thembelihle," as a point of identity around which to organize different social movements. Those who identified with Thembelihle, whether they lived there or not, were invited to join in organized struggles for housing, sanitation, and electricity. As Thembelihle is by no means a monolithic community (there exists a range of ages, races, political affiliations, ethnic- ities and languages within this community, with some areas having more developed infrastructure than others), the name "Thembelihle" was able to operate as an especially meaningful nodal point. The activists who featured in this CCP project noted that during a particularly intense period of protest, several foreign nationals living in Thembelihle were beaten up and a number had their homes and workplaces looted. As depicted in the documentary, when social movement leaders learned of these xenophobic attacks, they temporarily suspended the protests and made efforts to return to foreign nationals their possessions, ensuring that they were protected for the next few months. Later, activists worked with foreign nationals to organize community events (e.g., friendly football tournaments) which

sought to facilitate cohesiveness within Thembelihle (Malherbe et al., 2021b).

In the above example, community identity was remade so that it encompassed a more expansive conception of belonging. The chain of equivalence upon which activists drew to construct their community was re-constructed to include the rights and freedoms of foreign nationals living in Thembelihle. Even more than this, the adversary (i.e., neoliberal State policy) against which this chain of equivalence was directed was expanded, and anti-capitalist struggle came to encompass not only the material well-being of South African citizens, but also the rights and dignity of all of those living in South Africa (Malherbe et al., 2021b). In other words, the plight of foreign nationals did not disrupt this chain of equivalence, it was incorporated into it. Struggles against capitalist austerity (which, in this case, constituted struggles for housing and infrastructure) were, in this way, rendered equivalent to the plight of poor foreign nationals living in South Africa. Thus, at public screenings, the documentary film—which was produced by local activists and foreign nationals in Thembelihle—served as a means to engage and understand community as a continually modified process of political belonging.

PDT can assist CCP work in allowing for a nuanced conception of community that stands in contrast to that of mainstream community psychology. For poststructuralist discursive community psychology, community is able to bend and contort under the shifting democratic demands of political struggle, while retaining its ability to catalyze commitment from political actors. It is here, we wish to argue, that poststructuralist discursive community psychology makes an important intervention into contemporary debates within CCP concerning the prioritization of a sense of community or diversity (see Mannarini & Salvatore, 2019). When community functions as a nodal point, community psychologists can work with people to build a sense of community that continually adapts to critical conceptions of diversity that reject liberal consensus and embrace partisan struggle (Malherbe & Dlamini, 2020). Thus, we are afforded a re-envisioning of community that does not concede to identitarian wholeness; prohibit the flourishing of diversity, or place community and diversity within a false binary. Instead, we are offered a means through which to work with people to construct a democratic, expansive and community-led resistance politics.

1.5 | Discursive consciousness-raising

Consciousness-raising is by no means a novel undertaking within CCP and has been recognized by some criti- cal community psychologists as a crucial step in the development of counter-hegemonies (Evans, 2015; Evans et al., 2017), although counter-hegemonic construction remains a somewhat peripheral concern within CCP more generally (Malherbe et al., 2021a). PDT, on the other hand, is perhaps not as explicitly invested in consciousness-rais- ing as CCP is, but it does have much to say on how subjects can understand the world so that they may change it, thereby altering their own subjectivity (see Herschinger, 2012). What, then, is PDT able to offer CCP in terms of consciousness-raising, and how does this relate to the construction of new, emancipatory modes of 'common sense' and identification?

Subjective lack, or the subject's inability to fully embody a given identification, represents one entry point into discursive consciousness-raising. We should not fetishize the consciousness-raising process, whereby understanding and changing the conditions of social oppression are conceptualized as holding the key to achieving complete identi- fication (i.e., full or complete knowledge of the world and ourselves in it). Centering lack within consciousness-raising does not do away with or

denigrate identity and identification, but instead emphasizes the subjective

alienation we all feel in failing to fully grasp identity, and to understand the

world through and from this sense of alienation. Our lack, in other words,

can serve as a point of solidarity that connects seemingly disparate

struggles and constructs new, constantly changing identifications that need

not map directly onto those hailed by present-day systems of oppression

(Carpentier, 2010; Panizza & Miorelli, 2013). Put differently, lack serves

as a shared psychological space within which community psychologists can

work with people to understand how systems of oppression impose

identifications onto us (e.g., those imposed by white supremacist capitalist

patriarchy). It is also within this space of lack that we can creatively and

imaginatively construct new, more egalitarian ways of being in and

identifying with the world, a world that may not bring us closer to any kind

of subjective wholeness, but that is more socially just (Kornbluh, 2019).

Once again, it is perhaps useful at this point to look at an example of how

discursive consciousness-raising has been harnessed within CCP work. In

their community-engaged work on a South African university campus,

Cornell et al. (2016) worked with student activists to foster critical

consciousness and engage oppressive university prac- tices by centralizing

subjective lack. By taking photographs of the university's exclusionary

spatial arrangements (e.g., the ways that bathrooms and student residences at the university hail student identity through cisgendered, heteropatriarchal signifiers), students were able to share with one another, as well as their wider community and university leadership, the failures of identification that the university system relies upon. As one student explained "the language to accommodate me does not exist in the vocab of the majority … There are only spaces that tell me who I am" (Cornell et al., 2016, p. 105). It was the critical consciousness, created in this space of lack, that resulted in interventions on the part of student activists to remake the university space in ways that emphasized this lack. For instance, several transgender and gender nonbinary students removed signs from campus bathroom doors which designated gender along a fixed "Male" or "Female" binary. Lack, here, served as an impetus not only for taking action but also for facilitating space within which to create new subjectivities that embraced identification beyond those imposed by the university.

In fostering critical consciousness through subjective lack (i.e., a poststructuralist discursive perspective), critical community psychologists can work with apparently disparate groups to dislocate dominant and dominating discur- sive reasoning (Herschinger, 2012). Lack, therefore, offers us an important mode of connection between struggles that is, at the

same time, conducive to imaginative social action that seeks to construct counter-hegemonic forms of common sense. In the above example, participants exhibited their photographs at their university. It was at these exhibitions that participants engaged directly with university management, offering their own counter-hegemonic visions of the university wherein the higher education space was not constituted by a stifling series of static identifications, but rather through a freeing sense of lack that organized the university space through open-ended and democratic notions of accessibility and acceptance. In this, a radical negativity was advanced that rejected any attempt at achieving full identity (Herschinger, 2012), and instead exposed the fragility of the university space while simultaneously offering new and emancipatory identifications that were premised on lack (Panizza & Miorelli, 2013). This work, as Cornell et al. (2016) demonstrate, presented considerable affect among students at the exhibition, which rendered CCP especially pertinent.

2 | CONCLUSION

In this article, we consider poststructuralist discursive community psychology by linking together the tenets of CCP with PDT. We should stress, once again, that we have not sought to offer the definitive content of poststructuralist discursive community psychology. Future work could take poststructuralist discursive community psychology in several different directions. For instance, such a psychology could be harnessed in attempts to move communities away from political inaction by challenging the seeming stability of hegemonic identifications; to build solidarity across communities by rejecting the logic of difference and embracing a chain of equivalence; or to strengthen marginalized indigenous knowledge's by making connections between different nodal points. The possibilities here are quite vast. As such, and in the spirit of PDT, we wish for others to challenge, undermine and reconstitute what we have called poststructuralist discursive community psychology so that it may accrue vitality as a legitimate way of enacting a psychology of community. As such, there are a plethora of directions future work into poststructuralist discursive community psychology can move. Indeed, pedagogy, best practice approaches, and intersections with local governance represent just some areas here. However, perhaps more pertinently, future work may wish to look into the incompatibilities of PDT and CCP, and what this means for

the theorization and practice of poststructuralist discursive community psychology. The notions of reflexivity (its centrality to CCP and its derision within PDT, Burton & Kagan, 2015; Torfing, 2005a) and poststructuralism (its obvious foundation in PDT and the suspicion with which some critical community psychologists hold poststructural idealism, Evans et al., 2017; Torfing, 2005b) may be two entry points here.

In considering poststructuralist discursive community psychology, we have attempted in this article to respond to calls from critical community psychologists (e.g., Evans et al., 2017) to envision new forms of CCP that build upon and extend the more established critical traditions within CCP. We acknowledge that in combining CCP and PDT we may violate some of the theoretical and philosophical assumptions associated with each, however, as Burton and Kagan (2015) propose, it is only through such theoretical cross-pollination that innovation can occur. We invite others to engage further with the provocations that we have offered here.

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