

Recommended Reading

Review written by:

Alison L. Aubrecht, M.A., DCC, LPC

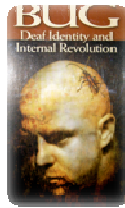
Mental Health Specialist, Minnesota

Gallaudet University Department of Counseling Alumnus, 2003

“BUG”

Deaf Identity and Internal Revolution

Author: Christopher Jon Heuer



In my current job, I encounter a lot of individuals who are just now finding the entrance to the road that leads to that path towards self-discovery; they are only now beginning to realize that ‘deaf’ has a presence and in some way defines their experiences. The book that I find myself reaching for time and again for discussion with clients is Christopher Jon Heuer’s “BUG.”

Heuer’s book has a Kafkaesque feel to it. What I enjoy about his collection of poetry and essays is that his writing is not a doctrine of one perspective or another; rather, he very honestly wrestles with all kinds of gremlins and demons, and the result is a twisted, sardonic expression of humor that can only begin to hint at the pain in between each carefully chosen sentence.

I have found that my clients, whether they accept or reject that ‘deaf’ presence, are able to identify several poems or essays that have meaningful connections to their lives. It is this gentle push that allows for deeper exploration in therapy. And in working with rural clients, I am finding this to be a valuable way to offer what individuals usually get from group counseling; that shared space where clients can identify similar experiences and walk away feeling a little bit lighter for having been given the opportunity to see that they are not alone in their pain.

Heuer’s book touches on a wide range of topics, from oppression to those rarely discussed bathroom-related insecurities. His book is also a wonderful resource for therapists working with deaf clients; he opens a window into an internal world that allows for seekers to engage in their own introspective work. And if we view cultural competence as an ongoing learning process where each new experience allows us to add a new section to our anthology, then Heuer’s book is sure to leave you with the beginnings of yet another chapter.