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Experts debate therapy culture

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A University of Birmingham academic will debate if counselling can be used as a suitable response to rising unemployment in the face of recession, at the annual Battle of Ideas international conference on 31 October, in London.

Professor Kathryn Ecclestone, from the University's School of Education, is taking part and also producing a session on 'therapy culture' at this year's Battle of Ideas – an annual festival comprising debates and discussions confronting society's big issues and unresolved questions.

In another high profile session, Dr Stuart Derbyshire from the School of Psychology will be debating the controversial rise of behavioural psychology in what is called 'nudge nudge politics'.

The College of Social Sciences, University of Birmingham is sponsoring the 'therapy culture' session which is likely to attract hundreds of people.

According to recent research, funded by the Economic and Social Science Council, although more adults and young people like to talk about their emotions compared to the past, there is no evidence that they are using higher levels of therapeutic support. The findings reveal that fears of a 'therapy culture' are unfounded.

Professor Ecclestone, who joined the University of Birmingham in September 2009, says she is pleased to be part of the University's strong commitment to lively public debate.

"As a new professor of Education and Social Inclusion, I am very excited to work for a university with this commitment at a time when public debate is needed more than ever to address pressing social and educational problems," she reveals.

More details here: http://www.battleofideas.org.uk/index.php/2009/session_detail/2529/

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