Midcontinuum

"Mid-Continuum - Being somewhere on the spectrum between multiple and singlet"(Dark Personalities, 2001 May 19).

Quick Details

Coined By: Vickis
Time Used: January 25, 1997 - 2002ish
Location Used: alt.support.dissociation, Dark Personalities, The Wonderful World of the MidContinuum

Term's Coining and Purpose

Midcontinuum is a term coined by the Vickis in 1997 because, in their own words, "one of the things we would like to do is start collecting peoples' descriptions of what it is like to be dissociative, especially for those who do not fit all the DID diagnostic criteria... midcontinuum folks, like us" (1997 January 25).

This should not be taken as a statement that midcontinuum is for dissociatives only. Vickis also stated "we begin to wonder whether 'plurality' and 'dissociation' are actually two different things. And we take as our starting point that *plurality* is *not* the problem" (1998, January 15).

The Wonderful World of the MidContinuum

In 1997, Vickis created their website, the Wonderful World of the MidContinuum, to try and document this phenomenon and gather other people's experiences of being midcontinuum. It existed until 2005, but seems to have ceased updating in 2001 (2005, February 4). Over that period of time, the term spread into use on alt.support.dissociation and Dark Personalities (2001, May 19).

Criticism and "Median"

Dark Personalities protested that "many people feel the idea of a continuum to be inaccurate, [and] many are seeking a new term instead of mid-continuum" (2001, May 19). Astraea would later plagiarize this definition wholesale in their own glossary (n.d., 2003), giving credit to the idea.

In 2002, Pavilion Hall members complained that "midcontinuum" was too fluid. "The original idea of Mid-Continuum was designed to be loose, and therein lay the problem - it was entirely /too/ loose. Multiples and Mid-Conts were not quite sure where the lines lay between them. It was used to describe a massive ‘shades of grey’ area between singlet and multiple. Unfortunately, there was no clear idea of where these ‘shades of grey’ actually ended, though they began at anything more than single" (Phoenix, 2002 December 13). Astraea concurred, stating, "Midcontinuum is helpful, but it's rather too limiting [...] you're still left with plurality as a linear continuum, with singlethood at one end and multiplicity at the other. The concept is thus two-dimensional" (2007, June 26).

In 2008, they revised their statement to focus on medicalization: "The reason we chose median, a word suggested by the Blackbirds, was that it seemed to encompass multiples who did not dissociate in addition to those who did" (2008, May 11). However, Vickis does not seem to have seen the term as dissociative-only.

In 2002, Blackbirds of Pavilion Hall coined the term "median" as a replacement. With the disappearance of Vicki's site and Astraea's preference for "median" in their glossary (n.d.), "median" eventually replaced "midcontinuum" and eventually ended up as fluid as the term it replaced.

Citations

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