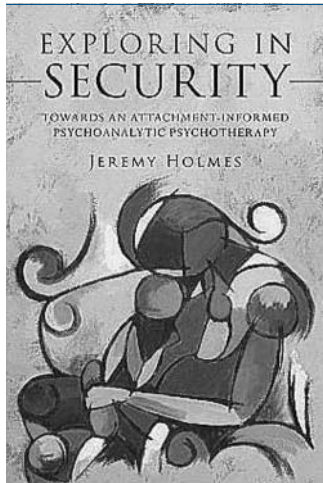


Book review

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode
and Rosalind Ramsay



**Exploring in Security:
Towards an Attachment-
Informed Psychoanalytic
Psychotherapy**

By Jeremy Holmes.
Routledge. 2009.
£21.99 (pb). 216pp.
ISBN: 9780415554152

Warnings about the consequences of filling old bottles with new wine are legion. The bottles will split, the wine will run out, to the ruin of both. Only 20 years ago, such concerns were used in defence of a clear separation between the containing vessel of psychoanalysis and the cocktail of ethology and developmental psychology known as attachment theory. Nowadays, discussion focuses less on whether attachment theory should be assimilated into analytic therapies, than on how. No one has done more than Jeremy Holmes to bring about such acceptance and to demonstrate its potential. In summarising relevant developments for his readers, Holmes's continuing refusal to be theoretically or geographically insular serves him well.

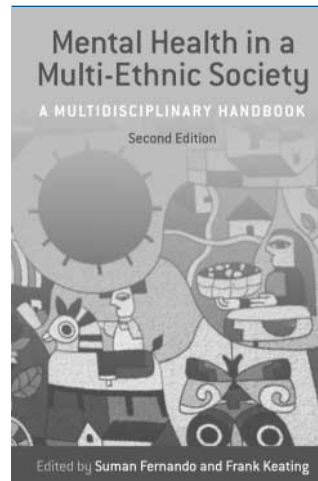
Exploring in Security concentrates on clinical uses of attachment theory within individual psychotherapy. Like its predecessors, it rarely disappoints. Within a basic frame of relationship, meaning and change, Holmes outlines a number of therapeutic principles that are pragmatic but potent. He avoids facile adherence to a small set of recipes or solutions, illustrating how therapists' success is likely to reflect their ability to act differently in different situations, as well as on their familiarity with a broad range of relevant theory. As he writes about these clinical lessons, what he offers is rich, complex and balanced in ways that soften conceptions of new or old. The book is not a manual and is likely to appeal especially to therapists of some experience willing to use the lens of attachment theory to 'better understand what they intuitively do in the consulting room'. They are likely to find the book helpful in conveying this understanding to those they supervise and teach.

Two small reservations may be signs of our time. The blurb on the book's cover makes reference to evidence-based practice and a brief consideration of research into psychotherapy outcomes is included within. However, this section fails to get beyond an unnecessary stand-off between demonstration of effectiveness and 'logic and theory'. Both are needed if promising outcomes in therapeutic trials are to be attributed to processes such as repair, mentalisation or reflective function that the book describes so well. A lack of analysis here means readers could confuse practices that are scientifically informed with ones that are strictly evidence-based. The other caveat is that copy-editing has been minimal and many kinds of typographical error will be found throughout. A

book of this quality deserved surer production. Still, it will amply repay most therapists' exploration.

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**Mental Health
in a Multi-Ethnic Society:
A Multidisciplinary
Handbook (2nd edn)**

Edited by Suman Fernando
& Frank Keating.
Routledge. 2009.
£21.99 (pb). 320pp.
ISBN: 9780415414876

Mental Health in a Multi-Ethnic Society: A Multidisciplinary Handbook addresses basic issues in mental healthcare for Black and minority ethnic communities in a sociopolitical context. Areas where those communities are at a disadvantage are critically analysed and ways of rectifying that are considered.

Contributions from over 20 authors, with backgrounds in sociology, psychology, psychiatry, psychotherapy, law and education, have succeeded in providing a wide perspective.

Suman Fernando sets the scene by classifying terms such as race, racism, culture and ethnicity, and provides a cultural perspective of mental health. He asserts his strong views on what he considers to be institutional racism. (I recommend readers to the opinion and debate articles in the October 2007 issue of the *Psychiatric Bulletin* (pp.363–70) to gain a balanced view of this highly controversial topic.)

There is a good critical commentary on the main legislation that affects mental healthcare. In analysing the impact of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and Human Rights Act 1998 disappointment is expressed that the new Mental Health Act 2007 does nothing at all to help redress racial inequalities.

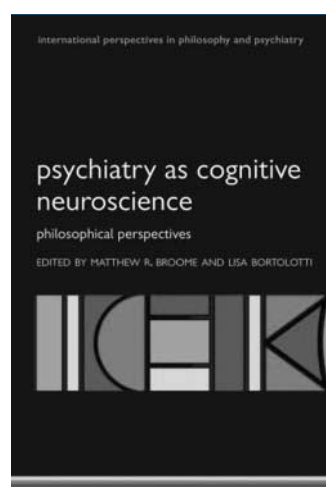
Almost half of the book is devoted to training issues and description of the various UK statutory and voluntary services. It provides the stimulus to organise programmes and innovations targeting the needs of different ethnic groups. Issues specific to Black and minority ethnic women are discussed and concern is expressed that they access services only at crisis points, experience them as inappropriate, lack confidence and trust in services and have an inadequate knowledge of what is available. Case studies of the Black Mental Health Project, the Muslim Women's Helpline and the Newham Asian Women's Project are good examples of innovative services. The Mellow Project, which started with the aim of helping to reduce the over-representation of young African-Caribbeans in mental health services in east London, describes the development of alternative and sustainable responses to mental distress. The Marlborough Cultural Therapy Centre has developed a specialist, culturally appropriate service for the South

Asian and Arab communities in north-west London. Mental health services for Chinese people, counselling and day care for South Asian people in Waltham Forest and services for African–Caribbean people in Manchester are worthwhile examples. Guidance is given on developing psychological services for refugee survivors of torture.

On the whole, this book stimulates critical analysis of areas of discontent while also providing a direction towards future training and service development. I would recommend it as a valuable resource for multidisciplinary training as well as for planners involved in mental health service provision.

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Psychiatry as Cognitive Neuroscience: Philosophical Perspectives

Edited by Matthew R. Broome & Lisa Bortolotti.
Oxford University Press.
2009. £34.95 (pb). 400pp.
ISBN: 9780199238033

When philosophers have applied their minds to mental illness, their aim has sometimes been to highlight the shortfalls and inconsistencies in prevalent concepts of the nature of mental disorders. At worst, this has led to the view that mental illness has no real existence and that it serves only as a means of stigmatising and excluding those who do not conform to expected patterns of behaviour. Although this has often been interesting and illuminating, it has been of little help to those of us who have to understand and treat those with mental illness. It has certainly not led to any reduction in the demand for psychiatric services. However, the approach in this book is refreshingly pragmatic and free of ivory-tower scepticism. As a result, it demonstrates the important contribution that philosophers can make when they accept the reality and complexity of mental illness.

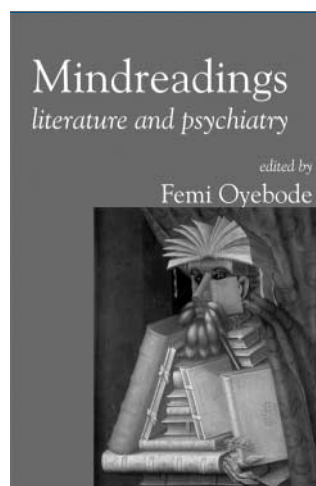
This contribution is one that is becoming of increasing importance with developments in neuroscience, such as brain imaging and molecular genetics, as applied to mental illness. Science is able to investigate normal and abnormal mental functioning in ways that are becoming increasingly fine-grained. This is throwing into sharp relief puzzles about the interface between brain disturbance and abnormal experience. It also emphasises the need for scientists to have a clear concept of what it is that they seek to investigate before they begin the process of framing testable hypotheses. One psychopathological phenomenon that is discussed at length in this book is delusions. Are these top-down, the products of disturbed information-processing, or bottom-up, an immediate, non-inferential experience? Or is the deluded patient better regarded as inhabiting an alternative reality

in which abnormal ideas arise in the context of a more pervasive disturbance of how the world is perceived? The experiments that are performed and the ways in which results are interpreted will depend on the answers that are given to questions such as these.

Matthew Broome and Lisa Bortolotti have assembled a stellar cast of contributors to this volume. They bring together philosophy and neuroscience in an attempt to give an account of psychopathology that is more detailed and penetrating than the standard descriptions and definitions. The quality of the writing and analysis is uniformly excellent without becoming inaccessible to a clinical readership. The combination of rigorous conceptual analysis and neuroscience will take psychiatry in new directions in future years. This book offers an important route map to that future.

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Mindreadings: Literature and Psychiatry

Edited by Femi Oyeboode.
RCPsych Publications. 2009.
£15.00 (pb). 142pp.
ISBN: 9781904671602

Why is a professor of psychiatry and former Chief Examiner of the Royal College of Psychiatrists recommending that psychiatrists should read novels and poems? In this century of the brain surely we should be gaining our continuing professional development tokens by studying neurochemistry and molecular biology – isn't literature just a frivolous and escapist retreat from the challenge of the hard sciences? As Clare Allan's Dr Diabolus says, 'Psychiatry is a science, pure science; I always say in its purest form one doesn't need patients at all'.¹

This interesting book provides abundant material to justify the reading of fiction as part of a psychiatrist's lifelong learning. As the neuroscientist, Maryanne Wolf, reminds us, 'reading enables us to try on, identify with and ultimately enter for a brief time the wholly different perspective of another person's consciousness'.²

The model psychiatrist in the College guidelines is an admirable person – humane, self-controlled, objective, patient and indefatigable. As the boy scout of mental hygiene he is pure in word, thought and deed. He does not become overinvolved, reveal personal details or violate boundaries. He readily seeks a second opinion. But as Samuel Johnson wrote in *The Rambler* in 1750, fiction conveys 'the knowledge of vice and virtue with more efficacy than axioms and definitions'.

The morality tales by Pat Barker, Will Self, Alastair Campbell, Patrick McGrath and Sebastian Faulks alert psychiatrists to our