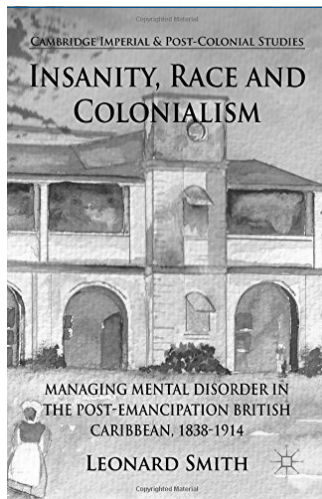


Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode
and Rosalind Ramsay



**Insanity, Race
and Colonialism:
Managing Mental
Disorder in the Post-
Emancipation British
Caribbean, 1838–1914**

By Leonard Smith.
Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
£60.00 (hb). 304 pp.
ISBN 9781137028624

This is explicitly an institutional study and so perhaps it misses out on some of the intellectual excitement we associate with Fisher (*Colonial Madness: Mental Health in the Barbadian Social Order*), André (*L'Inceste Focal dans La Famille Noire Antillaise*) or with Mahone and Vaughan (ed. *Psychiatry and Empire*). Its theoretical stance, briefly stated, is that the organisation and conditions in British Caribbean asylums after Emancipation in 1838 tended to follow those of the colonies themselves – declining economic significance, half-hearted colonial benevolence and benign neglect. Smith argues that the British mental health model, based on the asylum with watered down moral management emphasising non-restraint and organised occupation, was transported to the Empire, initially to the White settler communities and then, in the mid-19th century, to the Caribbean. There people with mental illness had previously been lodged in the prisons, and the early mental hospitals were often established in disused barracks where attendant problems of inadequate sewage (leading to cholera and dysentery) and physical restraint continued: metropolitan money went to the planters in compensation for the loss of their slaves rather than for local social and educational improvements.

In 1858, just before Jamaica's Morant Bay Rebellion, a scandal at the Kingston Lunatic Asylum reached the Colonial Office and the Commissioners in Lunacy in London. It involved partiality, violence ('tanking' – similar to waterboarding) and the non-discharge of patients, who remained economically useful. Smith offers poignant patient testimonies submitted to the subsequent inquiry. Reforms were enacted, particularly a laundry, bakery and a fishery with vegetable planting, a monthly magazine, sports days, dances and cricket, but complaints continued of overcrowding, understaffing and violence between patients and even periodic return to the use of restraint.

The patients admitted were predominantly from the 'labouring classes' (a non-racial euphemism for the darker skinned population) and indentured immigrants from India or from other West Indian islands. Alcohol and cannabis were blamed as immediate precipitating factors, along with a poor physical condition, but also religious revivalism: Smith discusses the famous case of Alexander Bedward, a pastor who said he would ascend into heaven and was then arrested for sedition

and sent to the asylum. Admission depended on such court orders or on certificates signed by a doctor and a magistrate, usually after violence or arson or the public stripping off of clothes. There is little extant information on physical treatment except citation of potassium bromide or chloral hydrate.

Explicit racism appears absent, concealed beneath a stuttering benevolence, indifference and random abuse. There is no evidence that local psychiatry contributed to a more informed debate on racial psychiatry as happened with the British African psychiatrists of the 1940s and 1950s. The Caribbean remained an imperial backwater: prejudice and neglect undoubtedly, but hardly practicable ideologies for racial or cultural inferiority.

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**A Humour of Love:
A Memoir**

By Robert Montagu.
Quartet, 2014.
£20.00 (hb). 296 pp.
ISBN: 9780704373662

The scale, ruthlessness and ingenuity of Savile's evil, a man close to those in power and honoured by them, has ensured that child sexual abuse is now a preoccupation of the popular media. A recent series of high-profile celebrity trials often appear as impotent retribution: too little too late. Here is the desperate hand-wringing of a failed and possibly even collusive society. Children's homes, Christian orders, the BBC and the highest levels of the government all seem to have been involved.

Robert Montagu's memoir is timely, for without sensationalism he bravely details his abuse between the age 7 and 11 by his father, the distinguished Conservative politician Victor Montagu, formerly Lord Hinchinbrooke.

He describes his father's loneliness and his own search for love and attention, which is so often exploited by grooming. The abuse became an integral part of his life, perpetuated over many years – even unwittingly supported by family members who do not suspect or cannot take the time to look again at strange absences, intimacies and rather too many gifts and treats. His family had busy lives. Sisters were grown up, brother off to Cambridge and mother was painting and living with her girlfriend in London. He implies that for some it was not the abuse so much as the reporting that was the sin: attention-seeking or false memory syndrome.

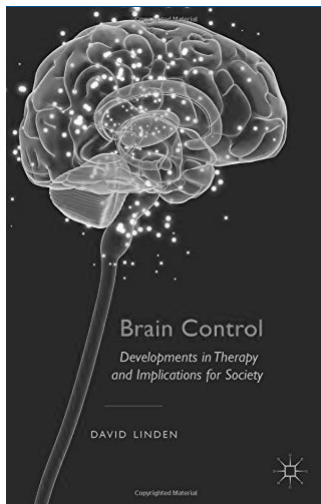
Later chapters report the author's bewilderment at how a Christian society could allow what often was a daily unwanted ritual, posing pertinent rhetorical questions to the church, his seducer and other family members.

This phenomenon is governed in part by cultural mores and has been widely explored in many disciplines – Plato discusses the Apollonian cult of sexual indulgence with prepubescent boys and the protocols for this in the context of marriage.

Robert Montagu's frank, honest and brave account should not be missed, especially by victims, therapists and doctors. Here is tragedy, but also justice, possibly forgiveness and redemption – and vital lessons for modern society.

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Brain Control: Developments in Therapy and Implications for Society

By David Linden.
Palgrave Macmillan. 2014.
£58.00 (hb). 208 pp.
ISBN: 9781137335326

The sun was high in the sky and the sand of the arena was boiling hot that afternoon in 1963 when a man and a raging bull faced each other in a ranch near Cordoba, Spain. The man was not an experienced *torero*, but a visionary neurophysiologist called José Delgado (1915–2011), and the bull had been implanted with a brain chip – an electronic device that can manipulate brain activity by receiving signals from a remote controller and transmitting them to neurons. In breath-taking footage which stood the test of time, the daring scientist was able to control the charging bull's actions by pressing buttons on a handheld transmitter, forcing the animal to skid to a halt only a few feet away from him by sending electrical signals to its caudate nucleus. The account of the event made the front page of the *New York Times*, which reported it as 'the most spectacular demonstration ever performed of the deliberate modification of animal behavior through external control of the brain'. This and several other interesting breakthroughs feature in David Linden's most recent book, which is devoted to the multifaceted aspects of brain control, from its historical backgrounds to clinical applications and ethical issues.

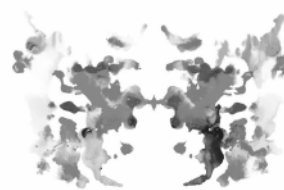
The introductory chapter discusses brain–computer interfaces, sophisticated devices that have significantly improved quality of life in patients with complete paralysis (e.g. locked-in syndrome and motor neuron disease) by enabling communication and control. There is an overview of innovations to influence brain and behaviour through neurosurgical procedures and electrical stimulation, encompassing both cortical and subcortical stimulation techniques. Over the past few decades, deep brain stimulation has replaced the lobotomies of the 1940s and 1950s as the largest programme of invasive brain control in terms of the number of

treated patients (Parkinson's disease and other movement disorders, especially tremor and dystonia). This chapter also outlines the modern history of psychosurgery through its applications to severe refractory psychiatric disorders (obsessive–compulsive disorder, depression and addiction) and conditions at the interface between neurology and psychiatry, such as Tourette syndrome. The author also outlines biofeedback and neurofeedback as new treatment options for neuropsychiatric disorders that enable patients to self-regulate their brain activity, including case histories from the successful neurofeedback programme which he developed at Cardiff University. The final chapter, on the ethics and politics of brain control, is equally informative and thought provoking: Linden explores the understandable fear that techniques for brain reading and control could violate privacy and be used to manipulate people's thoughts and behaviours.

David Linden's work is an accessible and beautifully written introductory book on the past, present and future of the technologies of brain stimulation and brain reading. At the end of this fascinating journey, readers cannot help but hope that the author's competence and compassion could serve as a model for anyone working with the growing number of patients who require brain control interventions.

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Breaking Down is Waking Up: Can Psychological Suffering be a Spiritual Gateway?

By Russell Razzaque.
Watkins. 2014.
£9.99 (pb). 272 pp.
ISBN: 9781780286662

**BREAKING DOWN
IS WAKING UP**

Can psychological suffering
be a spiritual gateway?

Dr Russell Razzaque

Psychiatry is experiencing an identity crisis. The recent publication of DSM-5 has revealed professional uneasiness and public anger regarding the subjectivity and arbitrariness of psychiatric diagnoses. The effectiveness of drug treatments is being questioned, funding for psychological therapy is evaporating and community services provision is being squeezed to such an extent that in places it is disappearing. Professional morale has dropped so low that, at one end of the spectrum, few medical students are entering the profession and at the other, many are looking forward to early retirement.

The subject of 'service provision' is often talked about. However, against this background one has to ask the question: what, exactly, is this 'service' which psychiatry now provides?

In this book, Dr Russell Razzaque offers an answer to this question. Razzaque himself is an NHS consultant psychiatrist of