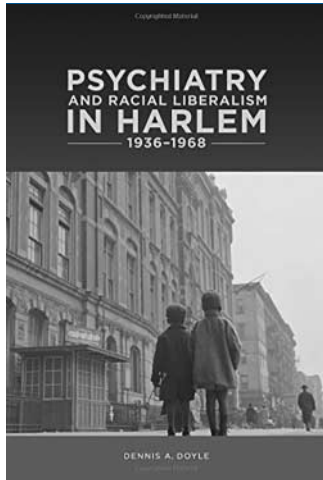


Book reviews

Edited by Allan Beveridge, Femi Oyeboode
and Rosalind Ramsay



Psychiatry and Racial Liberalism in Harlem, 1936–1968

By Dennis A. Doyle.
University of Rochester Press. 2016.
268pp. £80 (hb).
ISBN 9781580464925

Imagine Harlem in the borough of Manhattan, New York City in the early to mid-20th century, a throbbing and heaving ecosystem with polyphonic and diverse cultural groups permeating the social fabric. Visualise the increasingly ambitious and imposing horizon of giant skyscrapers leaving their shadows on the poverty, cacophony and hustle of the streets down below.

It is against this backdrop that this historiography of psychiatry and psychiatric services in New York has been written; a detailed narrative of African-American health needs amid social deprivation and marginalisation. 1940s Harlem, a high-density Black neighbourhood, was devoid of in-patient psychiatric resources. In the absence of local facilities, the predominantly African-American mentally ill from uptown Manhattan were treated in out-of-neighbourhood state hospitals – an alien world.

In 1935, higher New York mental hospital admission rates (ratio 2.3 to 1) of Black than White patients reinforced racial determinism theories of a susceptibility to psychosis. However, in 1936 it was observed that the majority of these hospitalised ‘negroes’ were from desegregated Southern states and the discrepancy more likely an economic and migration effect than racial. The immigrant search for opportunity and freedom produced a continuous demographic shift among Harlemites. Interestingly, ethnicity, migration and mental health debates still endure in contemporary psychiatric literature.

This book takes the reader on a journey through service disparity, coercive psychiatric care pathways and strained community relationships. Historical perceptions of a ‘Black psyche’ in a heterogeneous world of immigrants, unskilled labour, music and faith draw interesting comparisons with modern times. Vivid descriptions of over 90% Black Harlem neighbourhoods transport the reader into an ecological pocket of New York defined by marginalisation, poor schools, and inadequate healthcare with higher mortality rates. An environment in which mental illness and juvenile delinquency led to correctional care in one of the only hospitals in New York to offer psychiatric care to African-Americans: Bellevue Psychopathic Hospital. Only few walked in: voluntary hospitalisation, often out of helpless desperation, occurred only if an individual was too disturbed to be contained at home.

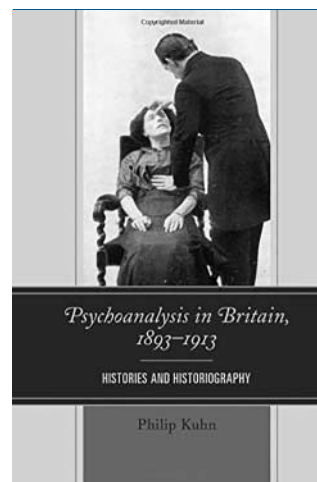
In the 1950s and early 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement of Martin Luther King and others was visible in American consciousness; nevertheless, this political movement did not unilaterally narrow the health gap for those in the dark shadows of Harlem. The emergent racial liberalism was, however, transformational on racial assumptions across the social sciences, psychology and medicine. This book recognises previously unsung heroes of the era who drew attention to health disparities, nudging health and social care policy across popular media, schools, courts, housing and hospitals. Through the convergence of these efforts, support of Columbia University’s Psychiatry and Public Health programmes, a sympathetic New York Mayor and a dynamic Hospitals Commissioner; psychiatry finally arrived in Harlem Hospital (Ward 9-K) in 1962.

This anthropological historiography challenges concepts of colour-blindness, equality and equity in healthcare. A compelling read for the mental health professional, historian, anthropologist, or scholar of mental health and policy.

Medical practice reflects knowledge and values in time and place. Ultimately, as the pages turn, one is left reflecting on how history may appraise our contribution.

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Psychoanalysis in Britain 1893–1913: Histories and Historiography

By Phillip Kuhn.
Lexington Books. 2017.
£80.00 (hb). 468 pp.
ISBN 9781498505222

On completing his psychiatry rotation as a 1960s medical student, your reviewer was presented by his consultant with a valedictory book. Not Freud or Jung, let alone Bleuler or Jaspers, but Bernard Hart’s 1912 *Psychology of Insanity*.

Kuhn, an independent historian, has unearthed an all-but ablated group of British psychiatrists, of whom Hart was the outstanding example. At the turn of the century, dissatisfied with the dominant ‘physiological’ school, Hart and others – Eder, Mitchell, Rivers – turned to the psychological approaches of Janet, Jung and Freud. They were especially drawn to Jung’s amalgam of scientific measurement (reaction times and skin conductance) with Freud’s free association. They deployed a mixture of hypnosis, suggestion and free association with their mainly ‘hysterical’ (i.e. somatising) patients. While respectful of Freud, they had reservations: psychoanalysis took exorbitant time and money; eclecticism rather than psychoanalytic purity was needed; sex was important, but so too, were ‘equally fundamental primary

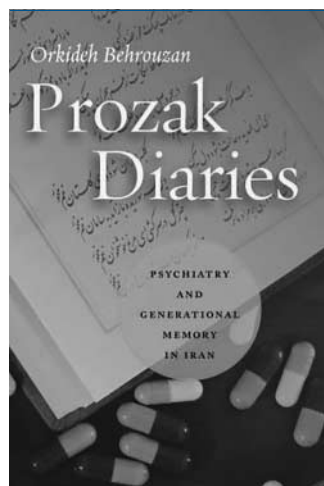
conative tendencies such as positive and negative self-feeling, curiosity, fear, disgust etc' (Mitchell 1913 – a century pre-Panksepp).

Here were the potential founders of a British school of psychotherapy, integrative, scientifically sceptical, influenced by psychoanalysis but not prepared to swallow it wholesale. Malan, Ryle, Hobson, Bateman, Fonagy are their heirs. Enter Ernest Jones, brilliant, controlling, ingratiating; quick to plug the gap created by Freud's expulsion of Jung; Freud's official biographer; founder of the British Psychoanalytical Society; Anna Freud's suitor; host to Melanie Klein. Jones, always ready to bend history to his own ends, is Kuhn's *diabolis ex machina*. Claiming to be the first to bring Freud to the English-speaking world, he shows how by 1906 psychoanalysis had already been championed by Hart, Eder and Mitchell. Jones' flight to Canada following accusations of sexual abuse of two adolescent girl patients was shamefully glossed over.

Kuhn's historical research is convincing and detailed. This is a story that needed telling. Jones set the tone for the elitism and sequestration of psychoanalysis within British psychiatry. The continuing uncertain status of psychoanalytic psychotherapy within psychiatry is in part due to his arrogant disparagement. Sadly, Kuhn's book itself is a mess: no clear narrative structure; tententiously lapsing into speculation; replete with typos. The reader is left to pick the wood from the trees. The whole enterprise needed a good editor with well-honed polemical skills – a latter-day Jones perhaps?

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Prozak Diaries: Psychiatry and Generational Memory in Iran

By Orkideh Behrouzan.
Stanford University Press. 2016.
328 pp (pb). \$27.95
ISBN 9780804799416

Politics and medicine remain uncomfortable bedfellows, especially in psychiatry, where social and anti-psychiatry theories have led to seismic shifts in practice and teaching. In *Prozak Diaries*, Orkideh Behrouzan, a physician and anthropologist, gives an informative account on how socio-historical contexts – post-1979 revolution and the 1980–1988 Iran–Iraq war – shaped psychiatry and in turn a social discourse on mood and affect in Iran.

Prozak Diaries offers a cultural critique of trauma theories in psychoanalysis as well as narrative psychiatry, by exploring generational memories of the Iranian youth and asking how generations are shaped in relation to an emerging biomedical model. The book combines clinical and anthropological outlooks in order to offer a historical analysis of shifting cultural

interpretations of *feeling states* into medicalised modes of thought, cultural remembering, media discourses, and about the unwritten history of modern psychiatry in Iran. French-trained psychiatrists who returned to Iran at the turn of the 20th century had introduced mainly neurobiological theories, with psychotherapeutic theories being later arrivals. During the Iranian Cultural Revolution (1980–1983) most universities closed and biomedical models became further entrenched. Shifting mental healthcare policies of the 1980s then contributed to a public psychiatric discourse in the media as well as several pedagogical milestones within academic psychiatry.

Psychiatric nomenclature has now become part of everyday discourse, pervasive among ordinary Iranians as well as the political and clerical hierarchy. *Depreshen*, with related symptoms and treatments, despite early antagonism and stigma, is set as the main example; this is poignant, given Gallup's recent ranking of Iran with highest negative emotions in the world second to Iraq! *Prozak Diaries* also looks at the diagnosis of ADHD and high rates of antidepressant prescription with pervasive over-medicalisation, in order to provide a critique of the DSM in different historical and cultural contexts. Behrouzan researched the Persian blogosphere and cultural and artistic productions, in particular the publications of the '1980s generation'.

The book will interest doctors at all levels of training, especially those interested in cross-cultural, historical and political aspects of psychiatry. As a UK-trained Iranian psychiatrist, and an immigrant of the 1980s generation, I specially related to *Prozak Diaries*. The book is a valuable adjunct in assisting the management of patients affected by the recent Middle Eastern conflicts.

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Transgender Children and Youth

cultivating pride and joy
with families in transition

Elijah C. Nealy



Transgender Children and Youth: Cultivating Pride and Joy with Families in Transition

By Elijah C. Nealy.
WW Norton & Co. 2017.
£21.00 (hb). 448pp.
ISBN 9780393711394

Introduced as a comprehensive guide to the medical, emotional and social issues of transgendered children, this new book by Elijah C. Nealy provides a thorough introduction to issues in transgender health, regardless of age group. It goes on to identify and contextualise many of the pressing issues facing transgendered patients including harassment, physical violence, adverse employment status, HIV infection rates, inequitable access to medical care and high lifetime rates of mental illness. For a non-specialist