

protection depending on the nature of early life experiences. Although the clinical chapters in part 2 follow a DSM-5 approach to categorisation, the author takes pains to underline the dimensional nature of psychiatric conditions, which is another important theme of this book. He explained that a different approach to categorisation based on evolutionary themes would have been too radical and would defy the purpose of this book as an introductory textbook of psychiatry.

I would personally recommend this book to psychiatrists, researchers and interested medical students. I think it would be of special importance for psychiatric trainees, because in addition to the classic knowledge base necessary for their training and exams, it will also provide them with a more coherent theoretical formulation and context than they can find in current mainstream texts.

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The Welfare Trait: How State Benefits Affect Personality

By Adam Perkins.
Palgrave Macmillan. 2016.
£20.00 (pb). 201 pp.
ISBN 9781137555281

In this book, Adam Perkins, neurobiologist of personality, makes a powerful claim: namely, that social policy structure can influence personality function: especially in those people whose dysfunctional personalities mean that they operate in antisocial ways. He specifically argues that high levels of child benefit encourage people with antisocial personality disorders (ASPD) to have more children; children that they cannot afford to care for, and who are at increased risk of neglect and abuse. These neglected and uncared for offspring are at increased risk of becoming the next generation of adults with personality dysfunction, who rarely engage in paid work, may commit more crime than those without such dysfunction, and who generally may be (as Perkins puts it) 'a drain on the public purse'.

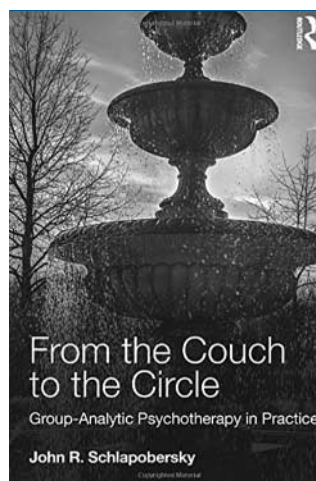
Perkins perfectly understands the political implications of what he is saying, and how his book will be used by political theorists who favour a smaller role for the state. He offers little evidence against his position, and I suspect he is not unhappy with the positive reviews of his book in the *Spectator* and other right-of-centre publications. But it is true that there is good-quality evidence for the transmission of dysfunctional personality traits by epigenetic means across generations, and also evidence that parental personality dysfunction negatively impacts on parenting sensitivity and attunement. If we really wanted to decrease future

crime rates and the incidence of child maltreatment in the years to come, we would discourage people with ASPD from having children. This would not be a complete or sufficient response; but in terms of utilitarian philosophy, it would be a start.

The key word here is 'utilitarian'; and Perkins' books suffers from a lack of any ethical critique of his claims. There are of course many counter-arguments to his position, too numerous to discuss in detail in a short book review. The main argument is that we could offer therapy to people with personality dysfunction, including people with ASPD. A national treatment trial is underway, which focuses on reduction of aggression; similar interventions are being offered that focus on parenting. Perkins presumably would argue that it's cheaper just to stop child benefit; which reminds me of the evidence that some researchers have found for a linear relationship between a tendency to utilitarian reasoning and scores for psychopathy.

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From the Couch to the Circle: Group-Analytic Psychotherapy in Practice

By John R. Schlapobersky.
Routledge. 2016.
£36.99 (pb). 498 pp.
ISBN 9780415672207

I was first exposed to the power of group therapy as a medical student, sitting in on the daily large patient group run every morning by the consultant psychiatrist on my in-patient ward. My interest in groups continued as a junior trainee psychiatrist, and although I benefitted from excellent supervision, I would have welcomed this book to help me make more sense of the theory underpinning the interventions I was learning to practise.

John Schlapobersky is a leading British group analyst and this book represents his work as a clinician, teacher and trainer of group-analytic psychotherapy in the NHS, private sector and other settings over the past 35 years. It is divided into three sections. The first covers the basic principles of group-analytic psychotherapy, which build the foundation from which the creative work of therapy can develop. These include its developmental nature, its language, speech and silence, and its various structural configurations in terms of frequency, duration and composition of groups. The second section further elaborates on the basic principles of analytic group therapy through the clinical concepts of structure, process and content. The third section explores in more depth the dynamic processes of change – the roles of transference, countertransference, containment, symbolisation, metaphor and meaning. Schlapobersky deftly integrates temporal

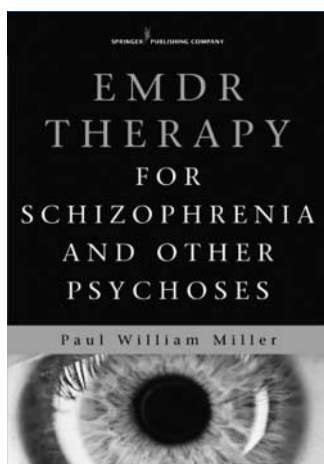
and spatial dimensions of group-analytic therapy in revealing how its developmental phasic nature – the group progressing through relational, reflective and reparative stages; from monologue to dialogue to discourse; and from cohesiveness to coherence – is intertwined with the group's complex interpersonal dynamics that form the relational matrix at any one time. Engaging clinical vignettes included throughout give voice to discussions on theory and technique and bring the text alive.

It is difficult to pay justice in this brief review to the book's value for not just being one of the most comprehensive and accessible textbooks about group therapy for many years, but also for its wisdom about human nature, the complexities of interpersonal relationships and the dynamics of groups. There is some repetition; however, the elegant prose greatly outweighs any minor irritation at too much cross-referencing to other chapters.

This book will be of use to psychiatrists and other mental health professionals at all stages of their career, and who are involved in any type of group work. It will hopefully inspire others to undertake such work and to become convinced of the centrality of the analytic group method within a model of therapeutic psychiatry that informs the totality of our field.

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EMDR Therapy for Schizophrenia and Other Psychoses

By Paul William Miller.
Springer Publishing Company.
2015.
\$65.00 (pb). 296 pp.
ISBN 9780826123176

Dr William Miller has written a beautifully presented and interesting introduction to eye movement desensitisation and reprocessing therapy (EMDR). Excitingly, it refers to the relatively new idea that EMDR might be a therapy useful for the treatment of psychotic disorders, but this risks disrupting the focus of the book.

For a work about EMDR, quite a bit of this text refers to more general topics. Early chapters explore the relationship between trauma, psychosis and schizophrenia, followed in later chapters by the psychopathology of dissociation and psychotic disorders, clinical skills in psychotic disorders, and a critique of modern psychotherapeutic methods within the framework of a slightly strained Disney metaphor ('Psychotherapy for psychosis and schizophrenia: the Wizard of Oz fallacy'). The extent to which this book is an advance of an argument that EMDR is effective, a model for the mechanism by which EMDR might work, or a manual for the implementation of EMDR in schizophrenia is

not clear. Finally, as a relatively junior psychiatrist and relative novice to EMDR, to me the book was a rich, characterful introduction to the development of EMDR as an intervention, but I was left uncertain about the empirical evidence, its applicability to EMDR in clinical settings, or the compatibility of EMDR with modern clinical practice.

Chapters are composed of short sections, are well referenced and clearly written. Each has a very short 'intention' at the beginning, which helps to orient the reader. Case descriptions of patients with psychosis treated with EMDR, presented at the end of the book, help to paint a picture of the therapy in action, but often emphasise an optimistic approach.

In conclusion, this book is not a destination for those of us who are interested in a dispassionate evaluation of the evidence base for EMDR. Rather, it is a description of an emerging treatment from a singularly interested observer and practitioner of this fascinating intervention.

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Small Acts of Disappearance: Essays on Hunger

By Fiona Wright.
Giramondo. 2015.
AUS\$24.95 (pb). 224 pp.
ISBN 9781922146939

Fiona Wright is an acclaimed writer from Sydney who is recovering from anorexia nervosa. In 2016, Wright was awarded the prestigious Kibble Literary Award for her semi-autobiographical essay collection, *Small Acts of Disappearance: Essays on Hunger*. I was curious about its success and wanted to see what it could teach a psychiatry trainee about the internal world of a person suffering from an eating disorder.

The collection consists of ten essays, in mostly chronological order, and progresses through the phases of Wright recognising she has a disorder, identifying its precipitating and maintaining factors, and starting the recovery process. The majority of the essays are Wright's reflections on her own illness, which lasted over 8 years. Wright also reviews the existing scientific and literary research on eating disorders, which provides an interesting and informative interlude while also illustrating her own intellectualisation of her disorder.

Small Acts explores how anorexia maintains its grip on an individual, beyond the textbook fear of fatness. Wright, interestingly, never uses terms such as 'fat' in reference to herself. Instead, she addresses two drives that maintained her illness: the sensation of hunger and the need to be small. From her opening lines onwards, we learn how hunger can be experienced as a positive internal sensation. The importance of being small is