

In summary, although this is perhaps the best introductory short text available in this sub-specialty, it will be unlikely to improve mental healthcare services and service delivery for people with intellectual disability.

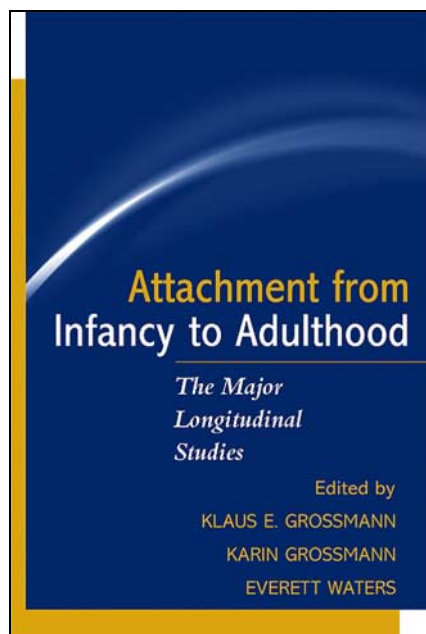
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Attachment from Infancy to Adulthood: The Major Longitudinal Studies

Edited by Klaus E. Grossmann, Karin Grossmann & Everett Waters.
Guilford Press. 2005. 332pp. £30.00 (hb).
ISBN 1593851456

Tracing the historical roots of attachment theory through its evolutionary stages, *Attachment from Infancy to Adulthood* brings the reader up to date with recent developments in the area as well as providing thoughts for the way forward into the future. It benefits greatly from contributions by people whose names are instantly recognisable for their seminal work within the area of attachment theory and it is interesting to learn about their diverse backgrounds and what motivated their interest in the subject. It is perhaps this eclectic mix of experience, and the synthesis of key disciplines including ethology, behavioural psychology and linguistics, that have enabled attachment theory to progress and develop to the extent it has over the years.

In addition to reporting findings from major longitudinal studies carried out in America and Europe, the authors discuss the many and complex methodological issues inherent in this type of research, particularly in relation to studying development across the lifespan. They examine the effects of mediating variables and their influence on the relationship between infant attachment and adult outcomes. The studies also show that it is not only mothers but fathers and, as discussed in chapter 7, multiple caregivers in the Kibbutz setting in Israel who influence and contribute to attachment outcomes in later life. Another important dimension, as outlined in chapter 11, is a focus on children who experience



disruptions as a result of their placement in foster care.

The book is accessible and is written in an approachable manner that will appeal to students, researchers and others at various stages in their careers. One criticism I have is that the extremely naïve reader has to wait until chapter 10 before a full description of the 'strange situation' experiment, referred to throughout the book, is given.

As a proponent of longitudinal research and a user of the recently introduced Northern Ireland Household Panel survey, I found this book interesting and informative about the relationship between early attachment processes and outcomes in later life. As a parent it has caused me to study, somewhat warily, my own adult children's attachment behaviours!

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Prevention and Treatment of Suicidal Behaviour: From Science to Practice

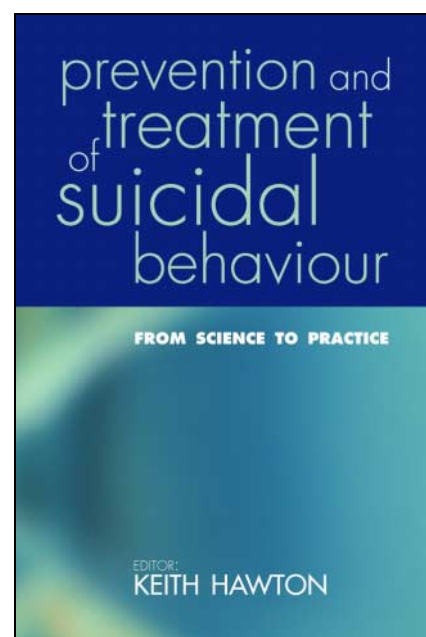
Edited by Keith Hawton. Oxford University Press. 2005. 400 pp. US\$69.50 (pb).
ISBN 0198529767

Prevention and Treatment of Suicidal Behaviour is an accessible book that will appeal to those working in the field and those with a more casual interest. From the

perspective of a trainee in psychiatry, it also clarifies the rationale behind the themes of the *National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England* (Department of Health, 2002). The editor, Keith Hawton, has drawn on the expertise of international authors; chapter by chapter they describe and critically appraise the evidence base, offer practical clinical guidance and identify areas in need of research.

Strategies for dealing with high-risk groups are addressed through the identification of risk factors for suicidal behaviour and chapters focusing on mental health service users, prisoners, and those who misuse substances. Qualitative research is used to identify population-based strategies for reducing suicide, which might also represent logical steps towards tackling mental illness in general. Other chapters explore the population-targeted interventions of restricted access to the means of suicide, the influence of the media's reporting, and controversies surrounding anti-depressant use and suicide rates.

In addition to the two-pronged epidemiological approach to the level of intervention, the authors also present a biopsychosocial exploration of suicide prevention strategies. Psychologically, the 'entrapment model' and the role that traumatic stress has in suicidal behaviour are emphasised. Biologically, the focus shifts to descriptions of neurobiological and genetic aspects of the predisposition to suicidal behaviour. The growing concerns about self-harm and psychosocial interventions intended to reduce repetition



are explored from adolescent, working-age and older-aged adult perspectives. To complete this 360-degree analysis, voluntary services and those bereaved by suicide are emotively discussed.

Keith Hawton has thoughtfully structured the book, allowing its themes to be developed in subsequent chapters and the authors to present differing critical appraisals. Midway through, I did become a little pessimistic about research into initiatives to prevent suicide, with the authors' repeated criticism of the lack of randomised controlled trials and the unacceptably low power of the existing trials. However, some optimism is introduced with the stance that preventive initiatives that are not based on evidence from clinical trials can contribute to our understanding of this area.

Inevitably, those familiar with the *International Handbook of Suicide and Attempted Suicide* (Hawton & Van Heeringen, 2000) will find some themes repeated, but *Prevention and Treatment of Suicidal Behaviour* is by no means a concise or rehashed version of this earlier book; it is a useful text with important ethical, societal and psychiatric messages.

Department of Health (2002) *National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England*. Department of Health.

Hawton, K. & Van Heeringen, K. (2000) *The International Handbook of Suicide and Attempted Suicide*. Wiley.

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Recovery Beyond Psychiatry

By David Whitwell.
Free Association Books. 2005. 192 pp.
£18.95 (pb). ISBN 1853439

David Whitwell and his publishers are to be congratulated for producing a book of rare and companionable honesty which, in being personal and specific, offers insight into the experience of every thoughtful clinician. To my knowledge this book is unique in being the reflections of a self-critical and highly experienced practitioner refracted through an understanding of the recovery movement and leading to a personal reevaluation of practice.

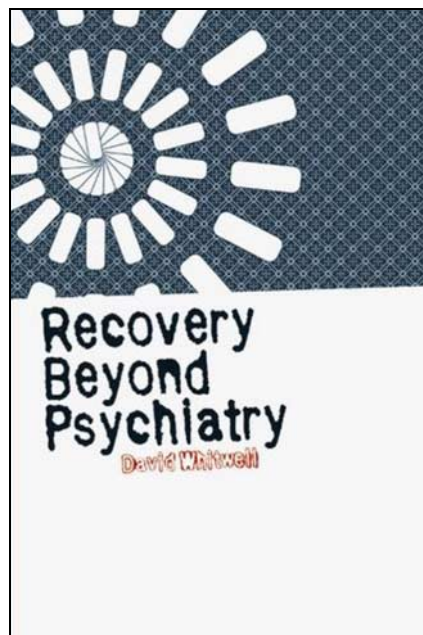
It is also a paradoxical text that resists many of our scientific conventions. It is

written simply and with restraint, lacking the dense referencing and citation that scholarly works depend upon for their credibility – as such it is radically unimpressive and befriending of the reader. The dedication to his family is a reminder that psychiatrists are people too, and more than a few have been touched deeply by the same issues as those they work with.

David has long been troubled by the gap between our apparent knowledge (what he calls 'naïve psychiatry') and our ineffectiveness in producing recovery through conventional psychiatric treatment, but found it 'easier to help people in distress once I had acknowledged my doubts'. His experience was that in learning how to be less knowledgeable he became better connected to the reality of peoples' lives and struggles. In turn he describes discovering that a recovery-based approach, focusing on people's aspirations, hopes and needs, and supporting the active role of the individual in their own recovery, on their own terms, was a better way to work.

In many ways this is a companion text to *Postpsychiatry: Mental Health in a Postmodern World* (Thomas & Bracken, 2005) which sees us as being caught up in and confined by science-based approaches that focus on the deficits of individuals and resort to technical solutions which relegate meanings, values and the social context to secondary consideration.

The Royal College of Psychiatrists has set 'recovery' as the theme for its annual meeting in 2007 and this will offer ample opportunity for both positive testimony



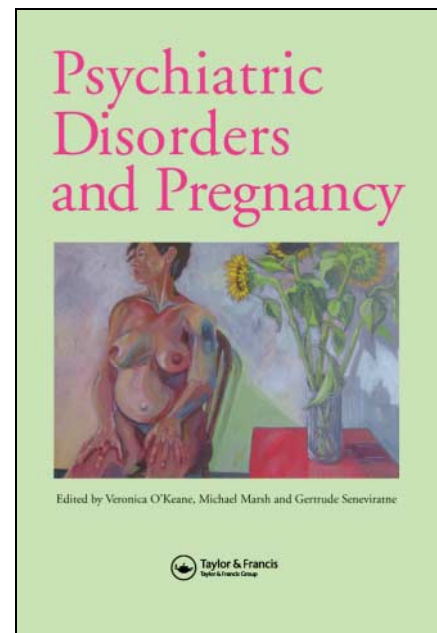
and critical evaluation. *Recovery Beyond Psychiatry* is an unusual, welcome and timely publication, which is a stimulus to this developing discourse and deserves wide readership and reaction.

Thomas, P. & Bracken, P. (2005) *Postpsychiatry: Mental Health in a Postmodern World*. Oxford University Press.

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Psychiatric Disorders and Pregnancy

Edited by V. O'Keane, M. Marsh & G. Seneviratne. Taylor & Francis.
2006. 336pp. £75.00 (hb).
ISBN 1841844624



In recent decades the relationship between childbirth and psychiatric disorders has come to greater prominence with postnatal (post-partum) depression becoming a generally recognised, if clinically imprecise, term. This has brought undoubted benefits in the fight for services and in reducing stigma for women with mood disorders at this time. A focus on postnatal depression, however, has not been without problems. First, the range of important disorders occurring in relationship to childbirth is