Book Reviews


Drawing on a wealth of human infant research, including their own, Ruff and Rothbart’s book provides both a conceptual framework and an empirical basis for understanding the development of visual attention in the preschool years.

The early chapters approach the nebulous concept of attention through several theoretical constructs and their operationalised components. This functional analysis goes beyond aspects of looking, selecting, focusing, and shifting attention to consider first, how attention is related to internal “states” and the physiological, cognitive, and behavioural changes that accompany these; and second, how the independent and higher-level controls on attention develop along- side other emergent capacities such as self-awareness, language, and motivation. Later chapters address broader questions: how attentional capacities determine the acquisition of knowledge and skills; how individual differences arise; and the wider influence of the social environment. As well as a text replete with empirical findings and references (nearly 900), many of the illustrations, including photo sequences, are particularly compelling.

Although there is one chapter examining the role of early attention deficits across clinical populations, this is certainly not a clinically oriented book. However, the authors’ detailed focus on their specific area of interest has necessarily, and I think beautifully, illuminated many surrounding areas and their complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social processes, leaving one with a sense of the larger picture of early infant development. Furthermore, the inclusion of an introductory overview, concise chapter summaries, and a final recapitulation will allow the more casual reader to “see the wood for the trees”.

Some might contend that this book represents a “statement of the art” in a field that is advancing so rapidly that even constructs and methods can have a limited shelf-life. However, by gathering so much together, I believe the authors have provided us with a view that will embrace many of the theoretical and research initiatives that lie ahead. For developmental psychologists, infant researchers, and those concerned with early intervention, this timely volume should therefore serve as a valuable exposition and resource.

Bill Young


The editors have collected together papers from leading authors detailing the status of child witness research internationally, legal innovations currently used to accommodate child witnesses in the courtroom in different jurisdictions, and research investigating the effectiveness and implications of that research. They include Bull and Davies from England, and Flin, Kearney, and Murray from Scotland.

It is a theme of the book that civil law countries have more liberal policies towards the admission of children’s testimony, whereas common law countries like the United Kingdom and most of the United States have stricter requirements that inhibit the contributions of children, especially in the criminal courts. In the United States the constitutional right to confrontation of one’s accuser and in the United Kingdom rules of evidence, for example against hearsay, are so ingrained in the legal process that the rights of child witnesses are difficult to promote. Myers’ Child Witness Code, however, takes account of these problems and commands careful study.

Awareness of child sexual abuse has led to the more frequent appearance of children in the courts. It seems unlikely that numbers will decrease in the near future and yet the environment for children in the courts has become increasingly hostile in recent years. The Inquiry into allegations of child abuse in children’s homes in North Wales, which is likely to continue through 1997, may well attract further negative publicity, especially if some witnesses are perceived to be inventing their abuse. In these cases the lengthy delays and subsequent management of allegations obviously present particular problems, but the harm caused by the original abuse in any case is routinely increased by the operation of the system.

We have to get issues like early investigation of allegations, proper standards for therapeutic treatment, and the treatment of children, in courts or at inquiries, back on the political agenda. The progress made in practice in countries like New Zealand (see Pipe and Henaghan) and Canada (see Sas, Wolfe, and Gowdey), should provide us with material to develop our systems further. The key feature appears to be the ability to protect the child against the trauma involved in the trial and pretrial process without reducing the reliability of their evidence.

It is encouraging to have a book, published from a leading stable of authors in the United States, which has a genuine international perspective. It is well researched, referenced, and indexed. The book will be of interest to practitioners, researchers, and students in the wide range of fields affected by the activities of children in the courts. The papers should provide a source for inspiration, which seems to be much needed in the United Kingdom at present. Let us hope that lawyers, politicians, and civil servants, who seem to have been the primary obstacles to progress, will give it a glance.

Richard White


The assertion by the book’s Editor that in no other field is new information accumulating so rapidly as in child and adolescent psychiatry may be too bold, but this is clearly a growth area and there is scope for new textbook editions at comparatively short time periods. This second edition of a textbook published under the auspices of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry follows closely on the publication of DSM–IV in 1994 and represents the integration within the DSM–IV
framework of new findings from the American literature with established knowledge. The subject is covered comprehensively and chapter authors have kept well to a standardised format. Clinical conditions are defined fully according to DSM–IV and this is followed by differential diagnoses and by traditional features such as aetiological factors, treatment, and prognosis. In addition, chapters have a final section making suggestions for future research. This makes for an orderly presentation in a pleasantly printed format that is easy to read.

Overall, individual chapters convey well existing knowledge in North-American Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and there are also interesting comments on recent historical issues. For example, the fact that President J. F. Kennedy’s assassination by L. H. Oswald—who had been described as having been severely mentally ill in childhood but never treated—resulted in a 5-year Congressional Joint Commission on the Mental Health of Children to study the origins and causes of mental illness in children and adolescents. Inevitably some chapters are stronger than others. Those on assessment, developmental and mood disorders, schizophrenia, ADD, OCD, gender disorders, and pharmacological treatments, for example, are strong whereas those covering disorders of somatic function generally are not. Most problems described will be familiar to most child and adolescent psychiatrists whereas others are more idiosyncratic (i.e. feeding disorder of homeostasis, indicating infant temperamental awkwardness in feeding with failure to thrive, and feeding disorder of attachment, with poor mother–child attachment and failure to thrive).

This textbook will sit well in the library of a Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department or Mental Health Unit. It is clearly less academically strong in coverage than textbooks such as Rutter, Taylor, and Hersov’s and it is too extensive to be recommended over the several good short books available for undergraduates or those, such as Graham’s, which are very helpful for residents in training. It will, however, be helpful for many child and adolescents psychiatrists seeking an up-to-date, well-presented, comparatively succinct reference to DSM–IV and related knowledge from an American perspective.

Elena Garralda

References


**Treating Abused Adolescents. By E. Gil. Guilford Press, New York, 1996. pp. 228. £32.00 (hb).**

Eliana Gil has succeeded in providing an invaluable guide to treating abused adolescents. It is clear and easy to read and provides the reader with an excellent review of theories of adolescent development.

The book moves on to discuss the current versus cumulative effects of abuse on adolescents. This is a useful clinical discrimination to make as it influences both treatment and prognosis. She makes very clear the difference between being victimised and traumatised, emphasising that not all young people who have been sexually assaulted are traumatised, but they are indeed all victimised.

Gil gives a statement of her own theoretical framework, which is broadly systemic. Her theoretical practice is then backed up with clear clinical examples including transcripts. This brings the clinical material alive and is full of useful tips for practitioners. She encourages practitioners to learn to decode their clients’ symptoms to discover the symptom’s creative use. She also encourages them to find alternative responses. She stresses the importance of processing traumatic material and identifies this as the act of exploration of your feelings, tracing the origins, the predisposing variables, the triggers, and the perpetuating factors.

In considering the facts and impact of abuse, Gil identifies two of the most common errors she has observed in her clinical practice. One is the failure to address the specific details, and the other the premature and over-zealous pursuit of traumatic details.

She outlines her structured approach to processing trauma, again backing it up with ample clinical data. Her step-by-step guide gives clinicians many useful hints and should reassure less-experienced practitioners. However, there are also many useful hints for those people who have a great deal of experience in helping children recover from their traumatic pasts.

Gil also clearly identifies that, for therapists to facilitate structured trauma processing, it is essential that they are… physically fortified and emotionally present in order to assist the client. This means that when clinicians undertake this work they should be well rested, well nourished, and enjoying low stress and emotional wellbeing.

Your role as witness cannot be overemphasised, your unconditional acceptance of the client’s dignity must remain intact. (p. 154)

This issue of self-care is frequently overlooked.

This is an eminently readable book that I can highly recommend to experienced and inexperienced practitioners alike.

*Gerrilyn Smith*


*Child and adolescent psychiatry: A new century*—with such an inspiring title one may be led to expect a clarion call to the profession, lots of innovative ideas, and perhaps even a sniff of controversy. Sadly this is not that book. This is Occasional Paper (OP) No. 33 from the Royal College of Psychiatrists, “updating” a previous OP entitled *Child psychiatry: Into the 1990s*. It is divided into four sections of history, definition, management, and the future. Many of the chapters are straight reprints from the previous version, some are updates, and some are completely new. Most authors and their respective styles will be familiar to child psychiatrists: from the flamboyant and lucid prose of David Taylor and Mike Shooter to the wordy but worthy contributions of Richard Williams and William Parry-Jones. There are extremely useful summaries of some of the recent important documents relevant to child psychiatry, for example, the Health Advisory Service book *Together we stand*; the Children Act 1989; and Tony Cox on epidemiologically based needs assessment.

There are also clear expositions of audit, the limits of confidentiality, and economic appraisal. For those interested in systems and structures there are glimpses of the innards of the Department of Health from Bob Jezzard and the late Donald Brooksbank; of the dusty granite corridors of the Royal College from many august Fellows; and of the eager probings of the Health Advisory Service from Richard Williams and colleagues.

As a provincial consultant over the first flush of being one, with plenty of management experience and a leaning towards pushing things forward, I really *should* have been one of those engaged by this book. The book was taken out to read at least a dozen times and each time I found something more interesting, like the ironing, to do. The cover looks like a boring version of the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, the title is yet another reference to the millennium, and as noted before, the author list includes...
the same old names. That this review ever arrived at all comes from supervising a trainee and discussing the history of the profession (see the first chapters). I will certainly be recommending this as essential reading to specialist registrars coming up to their first consultant interview—they should be motivated to get beyond the bland presentation. Also such specialist registrars should know that this book is a useful source for the more dastardly interviewers’ questions: “Can you explain the difference between cost-effectiveness and cost-utility appraisal?”

Overall the book is utilitarian. It is a useful source for child and adolescent psychiatrists or other professionals preparing papers for management, business plans, etc. If one is looking for a vision of the future of child and adolescent psychiatry, one should look beyond this. Or perhaps after all this reviewer would rather be writing under such a title than reading it.

Paul Laking

References


Although this collection of papers is selected from presentations at the 1997 conference of the British Dyslexia Association, it suffers from none of the limitations that one usually associates with conference proceedings. The contributions are carefully selected, concise, and well edited.

Three “Biology” chapters cover recent work in functional and structural brain imaging and genetics. Frith is keen to show how brain and behaviour are related, and how understanding a disorder at one level can illuminate our understanding at another. This is nicely illustrated by an account of a functional imaging study of “compensated” adults with dyslexia. Although they could perform a rhyme judgement task, their pattern of neural activation was abnormal. Evidence for a genetic contribution to reading disability is now widely accepted, and interest has shifted to (1) specifying the heritable phenotype(s) more closely and (2) identifying the locus of relevant genes. The chapter by DeFries et al. emphasises the complexity of genetic studies of developmental disorders, where the heritability of disorder may change over time. Hynd and Hiemenz review studies demonstrating focal cerebral dysplasias and abnormal asymmetries in the cerebral cortex.

Hogben gives a clear and informative critique of research on visual transient function in dyslexia, arguing that although there is a consistent association between magnocellular deficits and reading difficulties in children, evidence for a causal role of visual impairment is still lacking.

Following a pioneering study by Hollis Scarborough, several centres have started studies of children at high genetic risk of reading difficulties, i.e., those with a parent who had been diagnosed as dyslexic. Preliminary results from three such studies are described in the chapters by Frith, Locke et al., and Lyytinen. All find evidence of some deficiencies in auditory or phonological processing in the high-risk group. The Finnish study sets an impressively high methodological standard, with a large sample recruited using an epidemiological approach.

Stanovich and colleagues devote particular attention to the distinction between surface and phonological dyslexia. They reanalysed data from other researchers and present new data of their own that converge on the conclusion that “developmental surface dyslexia” corresponds to a developmental lag, i.e. the pattern of reading errors is similar to that seen in younger, normally developing children at a similar reading level. However, “phonological dyslexia” seems to reflect true developmental deviance. Stanovich et al. also support a conclusion voiced in the chapter by Snowling and Nation, who commented: “in our view, there is no clear distinction between the patterns described as phonological dyslexia or surface dyslexia… Our view is essentially a unidimensional one with those children having the most severe phonological deficits also being more likely to display a phonological dyslexic pattern.” (p. 160).

Throughout this book, there is widespread acceptance of the view that ability to manipulate phonological segments of spoken language is of critical importance to reading. Goswami points out that there is substantial variability from one orthography to another in the way in which phonology is represented. In a series of studies with children learning English, Spanish, Greek, Dutch, and German she shows that, although there are differences in the units that children may operate with, a common thread in the different languages is that children with dyslexia have difficulties in forming high-quality phonological representations.

The next two chapters are concerned with links between language and literacy. Tallal et al. provide evidence for continuity between specific language impairment and developmental dyslexia, and make a plea that research on these conditions be integrated. Stackhouse and Wells consider underlying mechanisms, and present a model of phonological processing that accounts for both speech and reading difficulties.

The volume is nicely rounded off with three chapters on intervention and prevention. It is clear that, although phonological awareness can be trained, and has beneficial effects on reading development (chapters by Lindamood et al., and Borstrom and Elbro), it is not a panacea for children with developmental dyslexia. Wise et al. describe a series of studies evaluating the efficacy of computer-based intervention, and conclude that the challenge for the future is to get children reading not just accurately, but also fluently and automatically.

This book can be warmly recommended to anyone who wants an accessible update of research on children’s reading difficulties.

Dorothy Bishop


After a dearth of interest in this topic up to the late 1980s, there are now quite a number of books dealing with the topic of school bullying. Public awareness has been raised, probably irreversibly, over this last decade, fuelled by surveys showing the extent of bullying, and evidence indicating the suffering of victims, sometimes with long-term consequences into adult life (and occasionally, tragically, resulting in suicide during the adolescent years). The DFE has issued a pack, Don’t suffer in silence: An anti-bullying pack for schools, based on the DFE-funded Sheffield Anti-Bullying Project; OFSTED inspectors now ask questions about a school’s anti-bullying policy; and there are cases of legal action by victims of bullying, against schools and local education authorities (with one out of court settlement to date of £30,000).

Is there a niche for another book on school bullying? This book, originally published by the Australian Council for Educational Research in 1996, has deservedly been made available here by a British publisher. It is an excellent book in all important respects.
First, it is up to date with the research. Rigby often refers to the Australian research carried out by Phillip Slee and himself, naturally enough, but he is well acquainted with the Norwegian research of Olweus (1993), and the U.K. research carried out by Sonia Sharp and myself (Smith & Sharp, 1994; Sharp & Smith, 1994), which describe successful school-based interventions. Second, he is even handed, fair, and sensible in dealing with controversial matters. For example, approaches such as the Pikas Method of Shared Concern, and the No Blame approach, advocated for dealing with bullies, are controversial and can arouse quite heated opinions; Rigby both explains the techniques fully and gives a balanced account of the arguments. Third, it is clear and accessible; the prose is lucid and readable, keeping a personal style while not avoiding complexities of the issues involved. Fourth, it is well produced, with clear headings, attractive layout, and useful figures and tables.

The book is also comprehensive, covering both a general description of what bullying is, in Part One; and a discussion of the range of techniques and interventions available to tackle bullying, in Part Two. There is a useful list of resources at the end of the book.

As a general introduction to the topic, and a resource for students wanting an overview of the area, I would not hesitate to recommend it as the best book currently available. It does not replace the detailed accounts of the major intervention projects, referred to above; but it does give a clear and comprehensive view of the general issues, which will be of great use to students, and to teachers in schools who want an attractively presented, thorough account of contemporary research.

Peter K. Smith

References


This is an important book. A multidisciplinary conference including judges, analytically oriented psychiatrists, and other professionals concerned with child protection took part in an innovatory conference at Dartington Hall in September 1995. The papers presented have been edited by the Honourable Mr Justice Wall. The resultant essays provide education concerning the highest tier of court and some of the experts from the fields of psychology and psychiatry who give evidence in civil proceedings involving children.

The focus throughout is on a psychodynamic approach to assessment and decision-making within the system of family justice. Papers range from an overview of psychodynamic theories of the mind by Brian Jacobs, child sexual abuse (Judith Trowell), via assessment of parenting (Roger Kennedy), to a paper on childhood and social order by Clifford Yorke.

Lord Justice Thorpe discusses the impact of psychoanalytic practice on the family justice system, and Mr Justice Wall the presentation and evaluation of expert evidence, with an invaluable summary of recent judgements.

Patrick Gallwey, in an additional final chapter, addresses the issue of parents who are not going to do the job right within any time-scale relevant to the child or who (a considerable problem within the justice system) are able to present themselves in ways that conceal their injuriousness or failure.

This book is to be valued as an early step on the long and necessary road towards improved training, communication, and decision-making within the family justice system. It recognises, in an overview by Brian Waller, Director of Social Services, Leicestershire County Council, that only one perspective is provided. He is concerned about the dangers of generalisations from specialist work in the higher tiers of court, where judges and psychotherapists and psychiatrists deal with individual disturbed and dangerous young people. He views this symposium as based on single cases and exceptional situations. He is concerned that one judgement can alter the interpretation of law, comments acknowledged by Nicholas Wall in his introduction.

A broader comment, also made in brief by Brian Waller, is that social workers are under increased pressure to evaluate their work and to produce outcome data. This, and the requirement for empirical data research and evidence-based practice, will increasingly lead judges and magistrates to require a research-based setting for clinical evidence on specific cases.

This reviewer also would welcome a broader focus on the effects of violence and neglect upon children and, a point made within this publication, opportunities for judges, magistrates, and experts to hear about, learn from, and evaluate the recommendations and decisions that are made in court.

In summary, this publication is one important contribution to multidisciplinary education within the family justice system and will be helpful, as part of a broader curriculum, to trainees in all disciplines.

Jean Harris-Hendriks


There continues to be controversy about the diagnosis of severe dissociative disorders and, in particular, the concept of multiple personality. This book is about the phenomenon and the treatment of adults, sexually abused in childhood, with “multiple personality” or, in DSM-IV terminology, dissociative identity disorder. Margo Rivera, the author, who is an assistant professor of psychiatry at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario, and co-director of the Personality Disorders Service at Kingston Psychiatric Hospital, Ontario, makes clear at the outset that this is her story, rather than a definitive position about dissociation, treatment, or anything else. The book is aimed at professionals who treat survivors of abuse as well as their clients.

There is a discussion of the historical and social contexts of “multiple personality” and reference to the increasing concerns about the incidence of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse of children. The author argues that we are all capable of pretending to have a unified, non-contradictory identity and “life is about coping with this multiplicity, and celebrating it”. She considers problematic dissociation as “a disruption of the harmonious functioning of the multiplicity that makes up human consciousness”.

There is discussion of the differences between empathy and identification, on the need to understand and on the need to comprehend the limits of the “language” of severe dissociation. There are chapters on assessment, on the “healing processes” of psychotherapy and a particularly interesting chapter on boundaries in psychotherapy. There is some discussion on the subject of memory and on the false memory syndrome. Finally, ritual abuse and the treatment of the lesbian and gay survivor of abuse are considered.
I felt some initial anxiety when I read on the cover about the “historical, political, economic, social and cultural contexts in which the inequalities of capitalist patriarchy are construed and secured”. However, the reader who does not necessarily share all the author’s views will, I believe, still find the book accessible and thought-provoking. Personal anecdotes and experiences are used effectively.

Ultimately, though, this is a personal account of the author’s clinical work, not a definitive statement on diagnosis, research, and treatment. As such, it is not the place to look for an objective consideration of the arguments and doubts about the diagnosis and treatment of severe dissociative disorders, memory, and related topics. It should be considered in conjunction with more academic and research-based literature. I enjoyed reading this book, believe that it will stimulate discussion and enquiry and, at £18.50, the price is reasonable. I would venture to suggest that it would be helpful if the title on the book cover is changed so that it agrees with the first line of the preface, which starts “The subtitle of this book, Treating Severely Dissociative Abuse Survivors…”.

Martin Newman


The multidisciplinary approach to this book, with wide coverage of both clinical and developmental issues relating to the relationship between adolescents and their fathers, means that it will be of value to readers from many fields. Despite the obvious clinical experience of the authors, it is written in a way that makes even the more clinical focus accessible. Those without a clinical background should not be put off by the title. The less clinical, more developmental focus of some of the sections should be widely appreciated.

Although the title rightly suggests a focus on fathers and adolescents, the work encompasses wider family issues and delves into the childhood beginnings of many dysfunctional adolescent/father relationships. It is happily jargon free and well referenced, and the use of empirical evidence and dialogue, especially in Chapters 2 and 8, helps the reader through some more complicated issues.

Perhaps one of the few negative points to be attributed to the work is that it tries to cover too much. It may, therefore, present so many areas of interest as to be somewhat confusing for those new to the subject whilst not providing full enough coverage of any issue to satisfy those with a background in psychology. However, in light of the current demonising of youth, it brings into the open a range of developmental issues which might cause some of the behaviour which so concerns the general public and media at the moment. At £14.99 in paperback, it is well worth buying and may be of use to researchers, students, and practitioners from diverse fields such as education, child care, youth and community work, or social policy to name but a few, as well as from the more obvious fields of psychology and psychiatry.

Suzanne Speak


The editors have done an excellent job in bringing together the work of many of the leading researchers and clinicians in the U.K. in the field of psychological trauma. The 45 authors come from a range of professional backgrounds and theoretical perspectives, and together provide a comprehensive overview of the field from a largely British perspective.

The book follows a logical, if predictable, course. Part I begins with a historical overview of the subject, followed by a review of the accepted classification systems of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and then brief summaries of differing theoretical models of the origins and maintenance of PTSD. Part II presents reviews of clinical and research efforts emanating from a number of major disasters in the U.K. in recent years. There are absorbing and frequently moving accounts of the effects of disasters such as the Herald of Free Enterprise and the Lockerbie air disaster, on survivors, rescuers, and the bereaved. Findings from studies of these and other disasters are reviewed with regard to PTSD reactions, risk and protective factors, and interventions. Research on the psychological effects of road traffic accidents, sexual assaults, domestic violence, and war are also reviewed; and there is even a short chapter on post-traumatic stress disorder in the elderly.

Tools for assessment of PTSD in children and adults, and preventive and therapeutic approaches, are described in Part III of the book. Again, chapters cover a variety of theoretical perspectives, and there are useful reviews of studies on the effectiveness of a range of treatments, including cognitive and behavioural therapies and drug treatments. The fourth and final part of the book focuses on legal aspects, and will be particularly useful for mental health workers who contribute to medico-legal assessments of PTSD.

The chapters are, with a few exceptions, well written and well referenced. Of those I found particularly interesting and helpful in thinking about PTSD and its clinical implications were Murray Parkes’ model for explaining reactions to traumatic stress, Siegel’s chapter on memory and trauma, and Derek Summerfield’s ideas on responses to trauma amongst non-Western client groups. On the other hand, there are also a number of poorly written chapters, which lack clarity and add little if anything to the volume. We will no doubt be ready for a second edition in a few years, and some judicious pruning would be advised at that stage.

Orlee Udwin


This book should prove valuable for anyone involved in the teaching of children with autism. Many of the contributions are written by teachers, or former teachers, and the strategies described are not only innovative but also highly practical. Amongst the themes covered are communication, play, the use of computers, science, dance and drama, massage, and outdoor education. The contributors describe the teaching strategies used to develop children’s skills in these areas, and illustrate how the techniques can help to modify even some of the very basic problems associated with autism—especially those involving social interactions. At the same time, throughout the book, there is a recurring emphasis on the need to adapt any teaching programme to the needs and skills of an individual child.

Individual chapters themselves are not highly referenced, and are based mainly on descriptive reports. However, the excellent editing—there is a commentary by the Editors at the end of each chapter—helps to draw out the theoretical basis of much of the work described. The Editors’ two introductory chapters also stress the importance of taking into account individual needs and current information about the nature of autism, instead of relying too heavily on teaching packages.

Patricia Howlin

The area of “theory of mind” remains a hot topic in developmental psychology. It is interesting that almost 20 years have gone by since the publication of Premack and Woodruff’s article concerning whether chimpanzees have a theory of mind (Behaviour and Brain Sciences, 1978), almost 15 years have gone past since the classic Wimmer and Perner study was published providing the first clear test of a theory of mind in normal development (Cognition, 1983), and more than 10 years has gone by since the first demonstration of a theory of mind deficit in autism was reported (Cognition, 1985). These three landmarks probably contributed to “theory of mind” attracting so much research attention, and Peter Mitchell’s new book shows that the scientific interest and research activity into the questions that these studies generated continues apace.

The explosion of research can be difficult for the reader outside of this field to keep up with, and Mitchell provides a terrific service in reviewing these with admirable clarity and in a balanced fashion. The detail of his scholarship makes this text of primary value to students in psychology, since particular studies are examined and evaluated in just the way that students are encouraged to do. The book is also of value to researchers in the field because all of the key hypotheses surrounding theory of mind development and its dysfunction are addressed (modularity, executive function, central coherence, reality-masking, the role of language, and the role of joint attention). This will help to further the debate. Whilst there have been several edited sections on this topic, there are still rather few single authored monographs, so Mitchell’s book is a welcome addition.

Simon Baron-Cohen

References